Outer Hebrides Crafts Research Trip to Orkney

23rd - 28th September 2009

Final Report
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Information sources: Orkney Craft Trail visits and observations
Informal interviews/ Makers' Day presentations with/by Orkney Designer Crafts Association members
Presentations during the Makers' Day at The Pier Arts Centre
Orkney: The Brand website; ODCA Website; Visit Orkney Website; Hi-Arts Website
Project Summary

In September 2009 an e-mailed invitation to apply to take part in a trip to research the Orkney Designer Crafts Trail and attend a Makers’ Day at the Pier Arts Centre in Stromness was sent to around 90 craft-makers on the CnES Crafts Data Base.

Four funded places were offered to full-time or part-time craft-makers working in the Outer Hebrides; two from Lewis/Harris; two from Uists/Barra, with priority given to crafts makers that could represent a range of similar businesses operating in the Outer Hebrides, e.g. people actively involved in OH based art/craft associations, craft producers groups or similar networks.

Seven applications were received from Crafts Makers. Five were accepted that gave a broad representation of crafts groups and associations currently active in the Outer Hebrides:

Sheila Roderick from Harris
http://www.scalpaylinen.com
Representing Sassy Gaels

Annette Sopata from Lewis
http://www.diggorybrown.co.uk
http://www.harristweedartisanscooperative.co.uk
Representing Harris Tweed Artisans’ Co-operative

Corinna Krause from North Uist
http://www.sollasbooks.com
Representing Art on the Map/Uist Artists’ Association

Flora Macdonald from North Uist
http://www.calanas.co.uk
Representing the Wool Development Group
Also a participant in Art on the Map and a member of Uist Crafts Producers

Samantha Johnson from South Uist
http://www.outerhebridessoapshack.com
Representing Uist Crafts Producers

The 5 craft-makers joined CnES Arts Development Officer: Elsie Mitchell on a Crafts Research Trip to Orkney from 23rd to 28th September 2009.

The trip was funded by CnES Arts Development and Economic Development, HIE, and HI Arts with each of the Craft-makers contributing £50 towards the costs. The Makers’ Day at the Pier Arts Centre was organised and funded by HI Arts, Shetland Arts and Orkney Islands Council.

The main aims of the research trip were:

- To make recommendations for future Crafts Development in the Outer Hebrides.
- To provide a personal training opportunity to each of the participants.
- To gather information and learning to the benefit of Outer Hebrides crafts groups.
- To research ways to develop craft and associated marketing from an island perspective.
Recommendations for Crafts Development in the Outer Hebrides

The Orkney case study highlights the potential of the Crafts and Visual Arts Sector to make a significant contribution to the tourism sector, create sustainable self-employment particularly in remote rural areas, attract island graduates to return home and encourage in-migration. The Orkney example demonstrates that Craft businesses can expand to become employers within an island community and net exporters of goods.

The success of this sector within Orkney is a result of partnership working between members of a vibrant community of dedicated crafts and arts businesses producing a high quality of goods, that have been given a competitive advantage via a series of initiatives led by pro-active public agencies, primarily within the Economic Development sections of these agencies.

There is an opportunity for Comhairle nan Eilean Siar to take a pro-active role in supporting the visual arts and crafts sector within the Outer Hebrides.

Although resources are currently very limited in terms of both finance and staffing, some recommendations could be achievable using existing resources and improved partnership working between public agencies and the craft/art community; others will require the development of external funding applications. Rather than separate Crafts from Visual Arts both are included in the recommendations. Goals and aspirations are common to both areas and consideration of them as a whole gives a variety, depth and strength to the visual culture which can be promoted to the benefit of the local population and visitors to the island.

Recommendation 1

Implement initiatives to benefit and assist individual micro-enterprises within the Crafts and Visual Arts Sector, which support business growth and competitive advantage. Improving the quality and success rate of these individual businesses will strengthen the cultural sector and its economic contribution to the Outer Hebrides as a whole.

Recommendation 2

Continue to support well-considered initiatives by existing Arts and Crafts groupings which have developed as a result of geographic and art/craft form common interest, such as Harris Tweed Artisan’s Co-operative and Art on the Map.

Recommendation 3

Encourage the formation of an Outer Hebrides wide craft and visual art organisation for craft-makers and artists working on a professional basis to support the long term sustainability of the sector.

Recommendation 4

Continue to work in partnership with HI-Arts on training and networking initiatives and to guide individuals and organisations to HI Arts online advice, promotion and funding resources.

Recommendation 5

Continue to promote the existing Business Gateway and Live Hebrides services and increase the uptake of these services by the Visual Arts and Crafts community.
Recommendation 6

Deliver a series of practical training and networking events within the Outer Hebrides tailored to the needs of the crafts and visual arts community. Increase and improve the quality of internet presence and online sales by Outer Hebrides arts and crafts businesses by delivering practical workshops utilising the skills of the Live Hebrides Team.

Recommendation 7

Promote a **Made in the Outer Hebrides** brand as a marketing and tourist initiative.

Recommendation 8

**Made in the Outer Hebrides—Trade Fair and Art Fair presence**

Subsidise a stand at key mainland Trade Fairs and Art Fairs—Country Living in London; Scottish Trade Fair in Glasgow; Glasgow Art Fair to showcase Outer Hebrides Crafts and Visual Arts and enable businesses to develop retail/trade links.

Recommendation 9

**Made in the Outer Hebrides—Visual Arts and Crafts Guide**

Develop a general directory of locally made Crafts and Visual Arts from throughout the Outer Hebrides in the form of a printed booklet or postcard pack, for wide distribution to tourists and the general public at key entry points to the island—airports, ferry ports, ferries, tourist information offices, public venues including museums, arts centres, food/drink catering establishments and accommodation providers. The directory should include maps indicating locations of publicly accessible venues with opening times. The initial pilot could be funded and co-ordinated by CnES Arts Dev in Financial Year 09/10 to be available for distribution from April 2010. Small subscription fees would be required from participants for the pilot publication. The overall budget should be kept at a level which will be sustainable in future years via higher subscription fees from participants and a smaller percentage of public subsidy.

Recommendation 10

**Made in the Outer Hebrides—Visual Arts and Crafts Online Guide**

The information gathered for the printed publication should be made available on-line. Although there are a few existing on line directories:

- [An Lanntair](http://www.lanntair.com/component/option,com_rncontactform/Itemid,81)
- [Made in the Outer Hebrides](http://www.cnesiar.gov.uk/artsandculture/madeintheouterhebrides.asp)
- [Outer Hebrides Business Directory](http://www.businesshebrides.co.uk/)
- [Visit Hebrides](http://www.culturehebrides.com/arts/arts/index.php?qtcat=10&submit=list+all)

none provide a comprehensive guide to work made throughout the Outer Hebrides or provide an instant visual gallery to the work. Partnership working and consultation is needed to identify the most appropriate host for an on-line directory and the form this should take. The resources of the Live Hebrides Team should be utilised to identify the most efficient format and placement of an online guide.

Recommendation 11

**Made in the Outer Hebrides** displays of work at airport terminals, ferry ports, on inter-island ferries and tourist information offices. Potential sources of funding - Tourism Funds and Leader+.
Recommendation 12

A **Made in the Outer Hebrides** Signage Project to provide official road signage to existing craft and visual arts venues throughout the Outer Hebrides. Potential sources of funding - Tourism Funds and Leader+.

Recommendation 13

**Made in the Outer Hebrides** summer shop in a central location in Stornoway to act as showcase for products and a window on the crafts and visual arts available throughout the island chain. The feasibility of a chain of summer shops in Harris, the Uists and Barra should also be explored.

Recommendation 14

**Visual Arts and Crafts Travel Bursary Scheme**
To assist individuals with the costs of inter-island travel within the Outer Hebrides to attend training and networking events.
To assist individuals with the costs of mainland travel to take part in Art/Craft Exhibitions, Trade Fairs and networking/training events on the UK mainland.
To assist individuals with the costs of foreign travel to take part in Art/Craft Exhibitions and Trade Fairs abroad.

Pilot this scheme in 2010 utilising CNES Funds. By not seeking Scottish Arts Council Funding for this scheme this would enable successful applicants to apply for partnership funding from the Scottish Arts Council and/or HI Arts and the limited number of trust funds which consider applications from individuals. It would also strengthen these applications if individuals can show support from their local authority.

Recommendation 15

**Visual Artist and Craft-makers Awards Scheme**
Establish an Outer Hebrides Visual Arts and Crafts Makers Awards Scheme following the model which a number of other local authority areas have used e.g. Shetland, Fife, East Lothian, Dumfries and Galloway see http://www.scottisharts.org.uk/1/information/publications/1006620.aspx

Individual Awards usually range from between £75 to £1000 to develop new work. CnES Arts Dev should submit a funding application to the Scottish Arts Council in 2010 to develop this scheme.

Recommendation 16

Re-instate the capital and marketing grants that were previously available via Western Isles Enterprise to support micro-enterprises and small businesses.

Recommendation 17

Include a plan for the development and support of locally made art and craft within the Service Level agreements of An Lanntair and Taigh Chearsabhagh.

Recommendation 18

In partnership with local art and craft organisations develop exhibitions and residency opportunities within the Outer Hebrides designed to raise awareness of and engagement with contemporary craft.
Individual and Group Outcomes from the Research Trip

Following the research trip each of the Outer Hebrides crafts-makers who participated, completed evaluation forms, contributed photo documentation of the trip to this report and answered a detailed question sheet on their experiences of Crafts in Orkney and the information they had gathered during the process of Crafts Trail visits and the Makers’ Day. These contributions have been collated by CnES Arts Development Officer into this final report. Elsie Mitchell also undertook further research into some of the marketing initiatives recorded in Orkney via phone-calls, e-mails and the internet.

All the Outer Hebrides craft-makers reported that they had found the trip both inspiring and a self-confidence booster which had made them appreciate the quality of their own work and the potential for further developing both their own practice and the work of the crafts and art groups that each of them represents.

Friendships were formed between Crafts-makers from different OH crafts groups and different geographic areas of the OH - South Uist, North Uist, Lewis, Harris.

Professional working relationships were established between Crafts-makers from different OH crafts groups and different geographic areas of the OH - South Uist, North Uist, Lewis, Harris.

Awareness of crafts training, promotion and funding opportunities offered by HI-Arts Crafts Development were raised and have subsequently been applied for or taken-up by individuals and groups. E.g. Craft-makers awards, on-line advertising and promotion of Christmas events.

Sheila Roderick published an article in Events magazine detailing the trip, has become a member of the Harris Tweed Artisan’s Co-operative (Sheila is a highly skilled weaver) and has been discussing with other Sassy Gaels members the possibility of organising a mini Harris crafts trail in 2010.

Samantha Johnson encouraged the Uist Crafts Producers’ Shop to open in the lead up to Christmas for the first time. She has also been discussing with fellow Craft-makers in the Uists the idea of establishing a Made in the Outer Hebrides professional crafts association with quality standards in place, which could include businesses from throughout the island chain.

Corinna Crause has opted to be on the Uist Artists’ Association Committee as a crafts rep and is planning, through UAA and Art on the Map, an AotM website with a general directory of artists and makers from the Uists. This idea was there before the trip but has grown in strength given the presence of ‘Made in Orkney. A funding application for this is now in progress. Corinna also made a successful application for a HI-Arts Makers Award.

Flora Macdonald has been inspired to create more work for sale and display at the Uist Craft Producers’ shop in Kildonan and plans to give her support to the proposed Spinnery in the Uists.

The study of Orkney Crafts Association running procedures, income generation and marketing initiatives has provided useful information which each of the individual Outer Hebrides makers have fed back to their groups. Harris Tweed Artisan’s Co-operative and Sassy Gaels were particularly interested in the benefits to be gained from individual financial investment in group activity via membership fees and sales commissions and the potential for success via a centrally located group shop and shared marketing initiatives.

Annette Sopata and Corinna Crause collaborated on a crafts project. Annette had been asked by Saville Row tailor Patrick Grant to make a sample kilt in Harris Tweed for possible retail and display in his recently rebranded shop frontage in London. Following the Orkney trip Annette commissioned Corinna to make a handcrafted box for the kilt to ensure both safe transport and professional presentation. Subsequently the kilt has been inspected and accepted by the Tailors and Annette is due to meet them in late December to discuss design elements for the Harris Tweed Kilt that will be on display in their premises in the New Year. This is an excellent example of inter-island business co-operation. It also demonstrates the value of training initiatives which raise aspirations and boost self-confidence.
Within the evaluation forms each of the individuals was asked:

**Did the research trip give you any ideas for crafts initiatives that you would like to see happen in the Outer Hebrides or initiatives that could benefit craft makers in the Outer Hebrides?**

Some of the replies (detailed below) are incorporated into the recommendations on pages 4 to 6 of the report.

“Yes, a mini-craft trail in Harris possibly linked in with something larger for the OH – a bit like the Westray trails relationship with the main craft trail. Also I see the benefit of a craft shop which stocks, and is run by, several craft makers. I also now clearly see the benefit of displays at points of entry to the islands – ie the airport, and at other visitor venues.”

“I know of a group of people who wish to set up a professional group of craft makers with standards in place. Ensuring a vibrant craft organisation, within the community, passing on these crafts and giving younger people the opportunity to return to the islands and be able to make a living.

An overall "banner" with individual groups of **quality** craft makers represented like the "made in orkney" but obviously "made in the outer hebrides".

As a professional group with the proper set up in place, it would mean everyone is working for the same aim. My business is what pays the mortgage, but the hobby crafter does not have the same aim/need. A group of professional craft workers could also achieve the quality and recognition to build a thriving craft experience to promote the islands.”

“Yes, I thought it would be beneficial if a craft trail was to be set up which focused on Uist made crafts with a venue in South Uist, Benbecula and North Uist. The trail would be operational for the whole of the summer season and work in conjunction with Art on the Map and the local spinnery when it is developed. I also thought it would be beneficial to make/design a product which was specific to Uist – Uist made as a product from the spinnery, similar to Shetland and Orkney Fair Isle and Harris Tweed. Perhaps the craft trail could incorporate the whole of the Outer Isles.”

> Made in the Outer Hebrides
> funded trade and retail fair presence as it used to be (very very important) craft shop in North Uist
> funding for individuals to establish fully functioning workshops and shops which are able to invite in the general public (same sort of things hume sweet hume benefited from).”
Crafts Research Trip Itinerary

Wednesday 23rd September
Group flew from Outer Hebrides to Orkney via Inverness, looked at craft displays at Kirkwall airport, hired cars, booked into accommodation in Stromness

Thursday 24th September
Explored main shopping streets in Kirkwall visited
Judith Glue Shop
St Magnus Cathedrals
Orkney Designer Crafts Association Shop
Scapa Crafts (Orkney Chair w/shop) on outskirts of Kirkwall: Venue 10 on ODCT, spoke to Jackie Miller
Sheila Fleet Jewellery Shop
Joined HI Arts group and other makers from the Highlands to visit Westray
Took ferry from Kirkwall to Westray
Visited Hume Sweet Hume, shop and workshop: Venue 14 on ODCT: spoke to Lizza and Jenna Hume
Visited Westray Art Gallery
Ferry back to Kirkwall
Joined HI Arts group meal at Helgie’s restaurant in Kirkwall

Friday 25th September
10am – 4pm Makers Day at the Pier Arts Centre, Stromness (see programme on page 42)
4pm—5pm OH Group joined meeting with John Saich HI Arts re: assistance available for Artists’ Groups
Evening meal at Royal Hotel, Stromness. Visited a couple of Blues Acts at Blues Festival which was taking place in Stromness.

Saturday 26th September OH group split into two groups:
Elsie and Flora visited
Pier Arts Centre
Quernstone Shop
Northlights Tapestry Studio spoke to Ros Bryant
Fursbreck Pottery: Venue 5 on ODCT Harray Pottery 33 and a 1/3rd retrospective exhibition at Harray Community Centre
Hoxa Tapestry Gallery: Venue 13 on ODCT, spoke to Leila Thomson
The Workshop: Venue 12 on ODCT Craft producers co-operative specialising in knitwear and crafts, spoke to shop volunteer,
Netty, Sam, Corinna and Sheila visited
Northlights Tapestry Studio spoke to Ros Bryant
The Woolshed: Venue 3 on ODCT, spoke to Denise Dupres
OH group met up in South Ronaldsay to eat evening meal at a seafood restaurant The Creel (near The Workshop)

Sunday 27th September
Group visited Scara Brae and Skail House photographed crafts in the gift shop areas of both museums and spoke to shop workers.
Travelled to airport: returned hired cars, photographed airport craft displays.
Flight from Kirkwall to Inverness. Stayed overnight and ate evening meal together in Inverness

Monday 28th September
Return flights Inverness to the Outer Hebrides
Research Gathered on Orkney Designer Crafts Association

Orkney Designer Crafts Association: History

The Orkney Designer Crafts Association was formed in the early 1990’s with substantial support (both financially and administratively) from Orkney Islands Enterprise and Orkney Council. **Orkney Enterprise played a key role in initially starting Orkney Designer Crafts Association – it would not have started without them.** OIE had secured funding and approached businesses with the idea of forming an organisation of professional craft makers, which could demonstrate the quality and desirability of their Orkney inspired, designed and manufactured products. Until recently the organisation was known as Orkney Crafts Industries Association.

At this time several Orkney-based Makers were already well established and exhibiting at high profile national venues. Inspiration for this also came from ‘The Workshop’ Craft Producers Cooperative which was established in 1978. This organisation is still on – going today, has a shop in St. Margaret’s Hope in South Ronaldsay and is a member of ODCA but has kept its own membership criteria and governing rules.

Funding was given to the ODCA to employ a part-time co-ordinator. Without this post it is strongly believed by members of ODCA that they would have been unable to achieve what they have to date. This left the makers free to make and the co-ordinator to co-ordinate. Generous business capital grants were available to buy equipment and create workshop and retail facilities. The Enterprise Allowance Scheme (a payment of around £40 to £60 per week) was available to support makers in their first year of business; as were grants to produce marketing material. Makers were also supported to attend mainland craft fairs e.g. in 1998 and 1999 Orkney Islands Council paid for an Orkney stand at the Aviemore Trade Fair with makers contributing their own accommodation and travel; this provided a great exhibition space/testing ground for new businesses. Until 2 years ago an annual summer exhibition and shop selling the ODCA members work was located in a retail space across from the St Magnus Cathedral – now relocated to a shop closer to the harbour.

In addition to financial support the advice made available by OIE was highly valued. e.g. Hume Sweet Hume were advised at an early stage in their business by Ann Ritchie (a textile consultant employed by the Enterprise Company) on practical ways to improve design, cut costs, and general sharpening up of products. By taking a positive approach to constructive criticism they found it helped improve what they were making and therefore improved both their products and sales figures.

Orkney Designer Craft Trail

The Craft Trail developed from the Craft Association. The idea for the Craft Trail grew from the idea of the Whisky Trail. The main aim was to get visitors out to the rural areas. “One of our first projects was to help raise awareness of the quality and range of craft and jewellery products being designed and manufactured on the islands. We felt that this could best be achieved by highlighting the location of craft workshops throughout the mainland of Orkney initially and encouraging both visitors to Orkney and local people to visit these businesses to find out just how some of our quality products - pottery, jewellery, silverware, knitwear, etc - were produced and to find out more about the craftspeople, their businesses and their inspiration. " * The introduction of the Craft Trail increased the Craft Association membership to 30 it also boosted sales for some members by 50%.

Applicants had to be Craft Business’s whose main source of income was via their craft business. Accounts had to be submitted from the start. Quality Control was always regulated; initially applicant’s brought samples of their goods to a panel of Crafts Association Members. This was a daunting process. They now do this by studio visits or on recommendation. Applicant’s had to have a workshop which could be open to the public and meet all the legal, health and safety requirements for doing so. For some members these requirements were too much. Crafts Association membership dwindled to 20 and not all the members were on the craft trail. This situation has now changed and currently nearly all the members are on the trail.

The first brochure came out in 1997 – 1998 funded on a 2 yearly basis. Craft Trail road signs were installed at this stage. Initially the local enterprise company heavily funded the brochure and road signs which cost £34 000 to establish.

* Maureen Shearer: *Orkney The Brand*
A selection of Craft Trail venues showing the variety of scale, style and location

Scapa Crafts—Workshop and shop area extended onto owners home, located in residential street in Kirkwall

Northlights Studio—renovated shop premises to provide small gallery, workshop and accommodation, located in main road in Stromness

Hoxa Tapestry Gallery—extension on to owners home to provide large gallery and retail/workshop area. Located in rural village in South Ronaldsay

Fursbreck Pottery—renovated school building to provide pottery studio and shop area, located in rural village on Orkney mainland

Hume Sweet Hume—renovated house to provide shop area to front and workshop area at the back, located on the Isle of Westray (1.5 hr ferry from Orkney Mainland)
Orkney Designer Crafts Association: Current Situation

Orkney Designer Crafts Association currently has 25 members. Items produced by members include: Ceramics, Jewellery, Silverware, Photography, Paintings, Tapestry, Knitwear, Felt, Printed Textiles, Orkney Chairs, Traditional musical instruments, stained glass and illustration.

The main activities and outputs are:

- A website (http://www.orkneydesignercrafts.com) giving details and images of each of the members work searchable by craft form, has links to their individual websites, contact details for the organisation, a map showing where businesses are located and a news page which allows updated details such as additional opening times for Christmas, new members, special events or workshops. The Crafts Trail brochure is downloadable from the website as a PDF file.

- The crafts trail brochure and associated marketing material.

- ODCA shop in Kirkwall is open Mon to Sat, 10 to 5.30, from May to September. The shop is very much seen as a 'window' to what is available on the trail. It is however fully stocked, centrally located in the busiest part of Orkney and to some members forms a significant part of their sales figures.

- Displays showcasing members work at Kirkwall Airport and the Tourist Information Centres.

- Group Stalls at off-island Trade Fairs including the Country Living Fair and Glasgow Trade Fair

The organisation is run by a voluntary committee of about 10 people. They currently have a part-time co-ordinator, contracted and paid to work for a small amount of hours per week on a self-employed basis. (The co-ordinators hours have been reduced substantially since the funding support from HIE ended). The co-ordinator takes minutes of meetings and does the organisations accounts. The co-ordinators hours are increased to cope with workload at key times of year when the organisation has more income from the ODCA shop or on a project by project basis when grant funding is available. The ODCA also employs two sales staff on a part-time basis during the summer opening times in the Kirkwall shop.
Finance

The organisation no longer receives funding from the local authority or enterprise company and is fully independent, with the exception of occasional project funding. The finances to achieve all of the organisations main activities is raised via charges to members and a 5% commission taken on all items sold in the summer shop in Kirkwall.

The membership fee is set at different levels. First year of membership is £50 Ordinary Membership is £100.00 per year or £10.00 per month.

Each member with a display at the summer shop pays their equal share of rent/ insurance/ council tax/ bills/ wages.

The new website was funded with the profits made on the 5% shop sales commission. A committee member with web design skills, designed the site, maintains and updates it on a voluntary basis, receiving expenses only. Inclusion on the website is part of the membership fee.

The most recent crafts trail brochure cost £6—£7k (note: approx ball park figure) to produce on a 2 year basis, in a print run of 30,000 copies. A sub-committee organises the design and printing of the brochure. ODCA members provide the narrative for their page/third of a page in the brochure, photographs and their opening times. This information is collated by the design committee and then given to a design company who are paid to design the brochure, a printer is paid for the print run. The costs of designing and printing the brochure are divided amongst the members with a listing in the brochure. There are two rates of payment a higher one for businesses with a full page and a third of this charge to members with a third of a page entry. A local company are paid to distribute the brochure. Distribution charges are shared equally amongst every business listed in the brochure. The Co-ordinator handles the accounts for producing the brochure.

Trade Fairs are no longer a greater part of the craft association activity but do involve some of the members e.g. approx 13 members displayed their work on a ODCA stall in November 2009 “Country Living Fair” in London. 8 members paid £100 to have a small section of the stand. 4 or 5 members paid a much higher rate for a larger section of the stand. The group fees paid for the stand hire, transport of the work and the expenses for one member to man the stand during the trade fair. Orkney Islands Council provides support for exhibitions and an ODCA stand at the Glasgow Trade Fair and have done so on an annual basis for the last 25 years. In addition to selling work at the Trade Fairs and creating orders for individual businesses, the ODCA stall and distribution of trail brochures at the stall helps attract tourists to Orkney.

The ODCA displays at Kirkwall airport and the tourist information office in Stromness are changed annually. A committee member with display skills does this work voluntarily. Maintenance of the displays is also done voluntarily by committee members living nearby. The original costs of purchasing and installing the display cases were paid by Orkney Enterprise. Inclusion in these displays is part of the membership fee.

Total expenditure for a member to take advantage of every aspect of Orkney Designer Crafts Association activity is approximately £550.00 per year.

Membership Criteria

Income from Crafts/Art work has to be the main source of income.
Members must have public liability insurance and business books.
Members work is quality controlled.
New members join via recommendation and studio visits.
Prior to joining the Craft Trail an inspection of premises has to be carried out.
Display at Kirkwall Airport
Challenges faced by Orkney Designer Crafts Association and individuals members

Grants have diminished substantially in recent years. They are now only available for large projects. Not all makers are taken seriously by the Enterprise Company. There is no longer any funding in Orkney for Marketing. Funding for signs and the craft trail brochure ended in 2008. The Association has had to become self-financing and less grant dependant by increasing charges to members.

Although the organisation consists of 25 members the work of the organisation is carried out by a committee of around 10 people. Members are located in a wide geographic spread within Orkney, most are on the Orkney mainland but some are on the remoter islands. It can be difficult to attend meetings. E-mail is used to keep in contact and reduce the need for face to face meetings. A difficulty of running an organisation of total individuals is getting everyone to agree. However despite being a varied group, members of the organisation work very well together.

There are issues with participating in the craft trail for some makers. Loss of freedom – makers have to be present at their venue at scheduled hours, which takes away the attractiveness of being able to keep your own hours as a self-employed person. There is an impact on your lifestyle. Participating in the trail means that you have to be open at set times. People also turn up out-with opening hours. This stops you working/ making your products, as visitors want to speak and enquire about your lives.

Makers have had to do a personal search as to what they actually want, particularly in the past when OIE funding meant that business plans and accounts were scrutinised. Some makers were worried that they would lose their personal approach to their business.

Quality Control has always been important. Acceptance of lower standards would affect all organisation members. However makers emphasised that the criticism given should be constructive not just saying the work is not good enough; advice should be given on how to actually improve the product and benefit from membership in the future.

Trade Fairs are not necessarily the way that every business wants to go. They tend to generate demand for 200 copies of the same product. This suits the aspirations and working methods of some but not all of the Association members.

Fursbreck Pottery sign, reflecting some of the issues of business’s located in or next to the maker’s home
Advantages of being part of the Crafts Association and taking part in its activities

The joint pulling of resources enables individual businesses to market themselves effectively to a wider audience and customer base, than if they worked alone.

The crafts trail lets makers meet their customers. Visitors are interested in the lifestyles of the makers themselves. They like to make a special personal purchase that reminds them of Orkney.

Crafts Association and trail participation has increased the sales figures of individual businesses.

Being part of a committee and learning from other more experienced members in itself is a good enough reason to join.

Newer members benefit from the reputation for quality which more established businesses on the trail have built up. Customers searching on the website for an already well known craft product or picking up a brochure because they are particularly interested in one of the makers are able to view the work of all association members.

The variety of work made in Orkney by association members makes an interesting and attractive selling point to visitors.

Consistent joint working for over a decade has helped build an Orkney brand with a reputation for quality and excellence.

Photos show examples of individual business marketing leaflets
Visits to Art and Craft Venues in Orkney

**Scapa Crafts**

Scapa Crafts is a small business run by Jackie and Marlene Miller from their home in Kirkwall. They make traditional straw backed Orkney Chairs which retail at around £40 for an Orkney stool to £1400 for a chair. Their work is a beautifully constructed iconic product.

They have been in business for 16 years; sustaining 2 people in full-time self-employment throughout the year plus one full-time joiner. At times in the past they were able to employ 2 full-time joiners. They are passing on traditional Orkney crafts skills and maintaining a family business having trained their Son-in-law in the making of Orkney chairs. A second trainee has gone on to start his own crafts business – traditional Orkney chairs with a contemporary edge.

Scapa Crafts benefited from start up capital grants from the local enterprise company for their workshop space and marketing grants. This made it possible to start up in business. They think they would have been unable to get started without this initial assistance.

Scapa Crafts used to take part in the Highland Craft Fair at Aviemore but no longer participate in off-island fairs. Much of their sales are now done online and they sell to customers around the world.

**Belgarth Bodhrans**

Belgarth Bodhrans are not on the 2009/2010 trail but Eoin Leonard gave a talk at the Makers Day which illustrated the potential for a “hobby craft” to turn into a full-time sustainable business for a husband and wife team. They started by making a Bodhran for their daughter – a professional musician. Initially they had to teach themselves how to do this with advice from other craft-makers. Their first Bodhran led to requests for more from other musicians. They got a local blacksmith to invent a machine to both ease and speed up the process of skinning the drums. Gradually they found that they were making so many and enjoying the process so much that they were able to give up their regular employment and make the Bodhrans as their sole income. They make a traditional instrument but in their own unique way – Eoin makes the Bodhran and his wife Jane hand-paints and decorates them.

Although Belgarth Bodhrans experienced a 30% increase in income from joining the Crafts Trail, for the most recent 2009/2010 brochure they took a decision to leave the Crafts Trail. To stay included would have meant manning a shop area for the public, which would either mean employing a shop worker or stopping making work. Their sales were not enough to justify employing a shop worker. Craft Trail participation is time consuming. Visitors are always given a talk on the process of making the Bodhran, this ½ hour talk and demonstration of the process usually did result in sales but took too long and Eoin found it difficult not to talk at length to customers. Putting limited opening times of 2pm to 5pm didn’t make a difference, people continue to visit out-with opening times and it is very difficult to turn them away. Eoin gave the example of tourists even turning up at 11pm still hoping to be served and having to explain to them (in his pyjamas) that Belgarth Bodhran’s was closed.

They decided to come off the craft trail but remain a member of the Crafts Association. Unfortunately this has also coincided with the credit crunch and sales dropped drastically. The Orkney Designer Craft Association Shop in Kirkwall has been a key resource for Bodhran in 2009. Their work has continued to sell through the shop.
Scapa Crafts
Entry to Scapa Crafts is through the workshop area where work in progress can be viewed. This takes visitors through to a small showroom
Hoxa Tapestry Gallery

This is a substantial gallery space displaying the stunning tapestries of Leila Thomson an Edinburgh College of Art graduate. The work in the gallery area is not for sale. Entry Fees to the gallery area are £2.00, Concessions £1.50, Under 12’s free. Leila works to commission and has orders in place for the next 5 years, each tapestry taking from 2 to 3 months to weave. Her work is in private collections in Britain, Europe, America and Australia.

Entry is free to the adjoining studio/shop area where Leila sells a range of cards and prints of the tapestries. These cost from £1 to £60. The price of the tapestries themselves were not on display. The Hoxa Tapestry Gallery is another example of a successful Orkney crafts business that benefited from capital start-up grants to construct the workshop/gallery and buy equipment, which has also taken full advantage of the marketing opportunities presented by being part of the ODCA to bring customers to a remote part of Orkney. Leila also highlighted that the crafts trail signage had been a real help to her business which is sited at the end of a road, several junctions from the nearest main road.

Northlights Tapestry Studio

Ros Bryant has recently opened her tapestry studio and gallery in Stromness in a former shop premises; yet another variation on the type of craft venue to be found on the trail. Ros has a small workshop and display area in the shop front with shop windows to the street, private living accommodation is located to the back. She owns the space and therefore pays no rent. There are also no rates to be paid due to small business compensation. Ros plans to start weaving classes for beginners; one technique based and one landscape based. As the most recent member of ODCA she has found the organisation very welcoming to newcomers.
**Fursbreck Pottery**

This was closed at the time of our visit as Andrew Appleby was celebrating the thirty three and 1/3rd year of business for Fursbreck Pottery with a retro exhibition over the weekend at Harray Hall - the local community centre. This was an interesting and informal show with a “sale of work” feel of pottery ranges dating back to the fashions of the 1970’s presented with a great sense of humour. There was a call for the Orkney Community to bring ANY old pottery - Fursbreck Pottery or Orkney Porcelain - for identification; with each piece being photographed and recorded for the Orkney Archive, raffles were held and The Harray Vintage Club were showing a collection of old agricultural machinery. Soup, sandwiches, Orkney Bannocks (with an emphasis or Orkney made food products) teas and coffee were available and served from examples of Fursbreck Pottery. The event was busy during our visit. It was great to see a crafts business that has been on the go in Orkney for over three decades which seemed to be embedded within and valued by its local community.
Fursbreck Pottery Exhibition at Harray Hall
**Hume Sweet Hume**

Hume Sweet Hume are based on the island of Westray, which is a one and half hour ferry journey from the Orkney mainland - a previous Initiative on the Edge area with a population of approx 600. The business is run by two sisters Lizza and Jenna, both are professionally trained. Lizza has a Degree in Constructed Textile Design; Jenna a Fine Art Degree.

Rejecting advice from Arts Tutors who thought they would destroy their chances of an arts career, on leaving Art School they both returned to Orkney, starting in business together in 1998. They felt that it doesn’t matter where you are based, if determined you should be able to make and sell work even in a remote island location.

Hume Sweet Hume received a capital grant to set up their shop and workshop (in a building owned by their mother) and one year of enterprise allowance. This gave them the security to start up in the first place. In Oct 1998 they attended their first trade show at Aviemore. They had the opportunity to go for 2 years. Orkney Council paid for the stand. Makers paid their own accommodation and travel. This was a positive experience which enabled them to make connections and sales. They also self-financed a trip to London to meet with buyers and show them their products. They needed a great deal of commitment and drive in the early stages of the business. They did get knock backs but needed to keep trying. Also at an early stage in their business a textiles expert give them very constructive advice re: improving products and packaging. They took the criticism on board and found that it helped improve what they were making and therefore improved both their products and sales figures.

More recently they have taken part in the Country Living Fair and have been featured in the Country Living Magazine, which they have found is a good way to bring in sales. They had a beautifully designed and printed mail-order catalogue of their work, but only have a few copies left. In retrospect they feel their catalogue should have been more co-ordinated with their website, which they struggle to keep updated. They do plan to produce another printed catalogue and make their website work more efficiently for them.

The business now employs the sisters on a full-time basis plus other Westray islanders on a piece work basis. Hume Sweet Hume make contemporary knitwear interior accessories and garments. These unique designs, made from natural fibres are machine knitted and hand-stitched. Their product range includes their own stock jumpers and jackets selling at £150 to £200+, hats at £30 scarves £30 to £65, wrist warmers £29 cushions £30 to £65 purse £14 and throws. Their shop also stocks small bought in gift items and is an off-license. Their sales figures break-down as:

- 25% retail via their printed catalogue and online
- 25% from their shop this includes gift items made by others, cards, soap, wine etc
- 50% trade/wholesale
Participation in the Orkney Designer Crafts Trail doesn’t necessarily bring more visitors to their premises in Westray. Hume Sweet Hume see it as good value marketing, inclusion on a website and a printed brochure with a long shelf life. This increases knowledge of their products which are also on sale at other crafts trail venues on the Orkney mainland.

Hume Sweet Hume are members of both Orkney Designer Crafts Association and their local Westray and Papa Westray Crafts Association which has a Westray Craft and Heritage Trail.

Westray and Papa Westray Crafts Association membership is open to any full-time/part-time art businesses with premises that are open to the public. They find that this helps with overcoming issues of quality as only serious businesses can participate. More facilities and venues definitely attract visitors to Westray. The Crafts Trail has additional impact. Visitors drawn by the trail spend money in restaurants and other facilities.
Lizza Hume emphasised that the isolation of the island adds to what you sell – the product of the place.

“We already have a brilliant marketing story of life on a small island – use it”.

An article on Hume Sweet Hume published in The Guardian demonstrates the effectiveness of this strategy and how national attention is possible for a business located in one of the most remote parts of Scotland.

“Soul traders
They offer original, handmade homewares with a conscience - and you won't find them on the high street. Victoria Brookes meets the ultimate independents

Hume Sweet Hume

"Every item we sell, I can tell you exactly who knitted it, who finished it, who added all the little tweaks," Jenna Hume says. She and her sister, Lizza, run an interior accessories business on Westray, Orkney, a tiny island with a population of just 600. After graduating from art school with degrees in textile design and weaving, both sisters felt a strong pull to return to their native island, and in 1998 set up Hume Sweet Hume, turning a former fish and chip shop owned by their parents in Pierowall into a shop and workshop. “You assume you might not be back because you don't know what the job opportunities will be like,” says Jenna, 41. “We wanted to live on Westray, but needed something that would satisfy our ambitions - and make use of our degrees.”

They began designing and knitting tactile cushions and throws inspired by the Orkney land and seascape, using wool and silk yarns sourced from the Scottish Borders and pebble buttons found on local beaches. The cushions soon “grew straps” and the pair branched out into bags, hats and scarves. They now employ a "fantastic group" of part-time workers, six in the workshop and another 16 who work from home - all of them from Westray. “Sometimes when you live in a small place you can't be choosy about your work, but I like to think we've provided people with more choice in what they do - and boosted the local economy,” Jenna says.

“Small, independent producers are so important because they provide a different employment opportunity for people in remote locations and rural communities. And it's giving customers something that's not mass-produced.”

For the first few years, the business was mainly trade-based, but the advent of the internet has transformed Hume Sweet Hume’s fortunes. "We are very remote and need to sell to people," Jenna says matter-of-factly, "and the internet provides better access to market for people in remote locations."

While they still have a strong trade base, the sisters now sell as much through their own shop and website, and they recently launched their first mail-order catalogue.

The Guardian (by Victoria Brookes Saturday 6 October 2007)
The Workshop

The workshop is a craft producers co-operative situated in the picturesque village of St Margaret’s Hope. It was set up in 1978 for the benefit of local craftspeople and now specialises in high quality knitwear and crafts. A high percentage of members are from the local South Ronaldsay area.

The Workshop are tenants and pay a rent well below market value for the space to a private landlord. The shop is open all year and manned by volunteers. There is a Shop Manager who is on a part-time salary. The workshop has a core of approx 12 – 15 active members on the committee.

The Workshop takes work from both long established members and new producers who are starting off. The Committee take the decision on what to stock. They are experienced crafts folk and may take some things from a producer and not others in order to keep the overall balance of goods in the shop. Pricing is mostly decided by the producers with market demand. Most stock in the shop is sale or return. The Workshop commission varies from 30% to 40% dependant on the type of goods. This is not as high as The Waterfront Gallery in Stromness which takes 50% commission. The Committee decide the commission in conjunction with the producers.

The shop layout is done by the Shop Manager Jill Strutt. Jill does all The Workshop knitwear designs which are knitted by outworkers. Although the main emphasis is on hand-knitted clothing and textiles the range of goods on sale included printmaking, painting, ceramics, jewellery, felt-making, North Ronaldsay Wool Skeins made from wool from North Ronaldsay sheep/ spun at the North Ronaldsay mill, knitting instruction DVD’s for traditional patterns, published sheet music (composed by local musician), cards, soap and other small gift items. The price range of the goods varied from under a £1 to £200+. The shop also has a small gallery upstairs with a changing exhibition – at the time of our visit this was watercolours of birds by Tim Wooton. Knitwear is the best seller. Cards are also good sellers. One problem that the shop faces is that space is limited.

The Workshop benefits from cruise ship visits, receiving approx 20 tour buses throughout the summer. The Crafts Trail brochure is of real benefit bringing in more customers.

The Workshop is totally re-stocked for Christmas aiming for sales to local people doing their Christmas shopping. This is mostly bought in goods that people in Orkney don’t usually get the chance to shop for year round. They try where possible to mainly stock Fair Trade Goods. Money from these sales is ploughed back into the shop to buy crafts stock.

The Workshop used to go to off-island trade fairs but stopped as they couldn't cope with the volumes of orders that this generated.
The Workshop shop interior and product details
Marketing leaflets—The Wool Shed and Scapa Crafts
Kirkwall seems to support a great deal more crafts and art shops (selling work made locally) than are to be found in Stornoway. We visited or passed by:

1 shop selling hand-made (in Orkney) soap and beauty products
Each of the big Orkney Jewellers had dedicated shops;
Ortak—also had a workshop and visitor centre on the outskirts of Kirkwall
Ola Gorie
Sheila Fleet Jewellery Gallery in Kirkwall plus a workshop and showroom in Tankerness
This appears to be a thriving business, with professional looking displays of contemporary designer jewellery.
The Longship: Wine Shop selling wine made in Orkney, textiles by Tait and Style and Ola Gorie Jewellery

Orkney Designer Crafts Association Shop
Each member of the Association had their own display area in the shop. With the exception of the jewellery which was in glass display cabinets, this was less slickly presented than our group expected. The shop and display materials had a slightly run down appearance perhaps reflecting the loss of funding support in recent years. The work itself was of the same quality to be found throughout the craft trail but the presentation was definitely lacking.

Judith Glue Shop
This is located in a prime site across the road from the St Magnus Cathedral. The shop is packed with stock, craft goods made in Orkney, food made in Orkney, crafts from makers from other parts of Scotland including Rare-bird Harris Tweed Bags from the Outer Hebrides, plus shoes and children’s toys. The goods were presented in a chaotic way with too much packed into the space available, however there were plenty of attractive products and it gives the impression that it is a very successful business. Judith Glue has recently opened a branch in Inverness.

Similarly Stromness had a number of venues though not as many as Kirkwall. These included:

Northlights Studio (detailed earlier)
The Quernstone Shop
The Waterfront Gallery
Pier Arts Centre

The Pier Arts Centre is not a member of the ODCA but has worked with the local crafts community. They put out a call for Orkney based craft-makers to submit proposals to make a range of goods specifically for the Pier Arts Centre which take inspiration from the Fine Art Collection held by the Pier. For example Jewellery designer Ola Gorie has designed necklaces and earrings based on the symbols in Alan Davie paintings and prints. Within their shop area they now sell a range of crafts goods by Orkney based artists and crafts-people which are exclusive to the Pier.

Whether a true impression or not the number of retail outlets that appear to be able to sustain themselves may indicate that Orkney made visual arts and crafts are purchased by a greater number of Orkney residents than is currently the case for Outer Hebrides made work retailed within the Outer Hebrides, and Orkney can also rely on a higher number of visitors to make purchases.
Scara Brae and Skaill House

On our final day in Orkney we had several hours available before the return flight to Inverness. On an extremely wet Sunday we were able to visit, take shelter and eat at Scara Brae. This world heritage site is run by Historic Scotland. Skaill House is a Georgian mansion with furnishings from Georgian, Victorian and Edwardian times. Scara Brae has a café (run as a franchise) and a large shop which again had a strong emphasis on locally made craft products. Skaill House had a smaller shop area with many Orkney craft products for sale. Both shops had Made in Orkney displays—a marketing initiative by a private company supported financially by HIE and Orkney Islands Council.

Made in Orkney displays in Scara Brae Shop
Made in Orkney display at Scara Brae Shop
Skaill House Shop
Products by Orkney Crafts makers are stocked on a sale or return basis. Skaill House is privately owned. The shop is open for 6 months of the year.
Examples of product labelling which emphasise “Made in Orkney”
Product Labelling in Orkney is generally of a high standard.

These are examples of work retailing in The Workshop. Most labelling emphasises the Made in Orkney ethos, has a personal touch and makes a connection with Orkney in the product description.

The reverse side of The Marram Studio label reads

“Hand printed linen bags and purses
Designed and handmade in Orkney by Sarah Johnston. Inspired by the Orkney environment - wild flowers, pebbles on the beach, and the beautiful colours of the constantly changing sky and landscape.
Care instructions: spot clean only”
Further examples of Orkney crafts marketing material and an example of less sophisticated untidy labelling and poor quality goods
Ecommerce in Orkney

The research group were unable to get detailed information in terms of how successful or otherwise members of ODCA are at online sales. The individual business websites vary greatly. Some have no website, 17 have online shops, 4 also sell through [http://www.orkneystore.com](http://www.orkneystore.com) and Ortak also sell via Facebook. Marram Studio and Fluke Jewellery websites are particularly easy to navigate and buy from and are well designed.

**Jewellery and Silversmiths**

Aurora – [http://www.aurora-jewellery.co.uk/](http://www.aurora-jewellery.co.uk/) On line shop
Orkneying Silversmiths - [http://www.orkneyinga.com/](http://www.orkneyinga.com/) prices displayed on website but payment arranged by e-mail or telephone
Celina Rupp Jewellery - [http://www.celinaruppjewellery.co.uk](http://www.celinaruppjewellery.co.uk) On line shop
Ortak - [http://www.ortak.co.uk/](http://www.ortak.co.uk/) on line shop plus facebook page
Peter Rowland Silversmith [http://www.peterrowlandsilversmith.co.uk](http://www.peterrowlandsilversmith.co.uk) no online sales or prices online contact by e-mail to discuss commissions
Sheila Fleet [http://www.sheila-fleet.co.uk/](http://www.sheila-fleet.co.uk/) has a jewellery gallery in Edinburgh – On line shopping
Stewart Moar Jewellery unknown website not working

**Textiles and Knitwear**

Judith Glue - [http://www.judithglue.com/](http://www.judithglue.com/) on line shop and downloadable annual brochure
Marram Studio - [http://www.marramstudio.com](http://www.marramstudio.com) on line shop
Quernstone - [http://www.quernstone.co.uk](http://www.quernstone.co.uk) on line shop plus Quernstone customers can buy our knitwear online using Google Checkout, or use a mail order service, and via [http://www.orkneystore.com](http://www.orkneystore.com)
Recycled by Design - [http://www.recycledbydesign.com](http://www.recycledbydesign.com/) on line shop
Tait and Style – On line shop from own website not working, goods can also be bought on line via [http://www.notonthehighstreet.com/taitandstyle](http://www.notonthehighstreet.com/taitandstyle) although Tait and Style products not clearly identified and at [http://www.orkneystore.com](http://www.orkneystore.com) where the Tate and Style products are quite clear
The Woolshed – no website
The Workshop – no website

**Art and Photography**

Britt Harcus – illustrator [http://www.brittharcus.com](http://www.brittharcus.com) online shop
Hoxa Tapestry Gallery – prices for prints and cards listed online but you have to phone or e-mail to order
Northlights Studio – no website
Orkney Stained Glass – website not working
Pam Farmer Photography – [http://www.pamfarmer.co.uk](http://www.pamfarmer.co.uk) on line shop
Shoreline Gallery – Jane Glue watercolours [http://janeglue.co.uk/](http://janeglue.co.uk/) online shop

**Orkney Woodwork and Pottery**

Belgarth Bodhrans and woodturning – [http://www.belgarth.com](http://www.belgarth.com) online price list and images of products but ordering done by phone or e-mail no online shop
Fursbreck Pottery – [http://www.applepot.co.uk](http://www.applepot.co.uk/) online shop but a bit confusing
David Holmes Ceramics - [http://www.davidholmesceramics.co.uk](http://www.davidholmesceramics.co.uk)/ online shop
Orkney Handcrafted Furniture [http://www.orkneyhandcraftedfurniture.co.uk](http://www.orkneyhandcraftedfurniture.co.uk) prices images, methods of payment displayed on website but contact by e-mail or telephone to order
Scapa Crafts [http://www.scapacrafts.co.uk](http://www.scapacrafts.co.uk) online prices, images and order form - payment by cheque or BACS
This poster in Kirkwall Airport shows a web address that is no longer functioning. An internet search does reveal a similar idea http://www.orkneystore.com. 4 members of ODCA sell their products online via this site—Hume Sweet Hume, Aurora Jewellery, Quernstone, Tait and Style—a 5th craft maker Orkney Chairs by Robert Towers http://www.orkney-chair.co.uk sells online from this site but is not a member of ODCA.
# Makers’ Day

Friday 25th September 2009, 10am – 4pm The Pier Arts Centre, Victoria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10.00 – 10.30am</td>
<td>Coffee and introductions</td>
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<tr>
<td>10.30am – 10.35am</td>
<td>Welcome to The Pier Arts Centre</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:35am – 11.00am</td>
<td>Outline of Craft Development in the Highlands and Islands and plan for the day (Pamela Conacher, Craft Development Coordinator, Hi-Arts)</td>
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<td>Craft support in Orkney  (Clare Gee, Manager, Museums and Heritage / Arts Development, Orkney Islands Council and Carol Dunbar, Education Officer at The Pier Arts Centre, Stromness)</td>
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<td>Craft Development in Shetland (Hazel Hughson, Arts Development Officer - Craft, Shetland Arts)</td>
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<td>Craft support in the Western Isles (Elsie Mitchell , Arts Development Officer, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar)</td>
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<tr>
<td>11.00am – 1.00pm</td>
<td>Presentation about Orkney Craft Association and Craft Trail (11.00 – 11.15am) Denise Dupres (Vice Chair OCA)</td>
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<td>Makers’ Tales – talks by two Makers from Orkney (11.15 – 11.30 &amp; 11.30 – 11.45am) Lizza Hume and Eoin Leonard</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Presentation on Support for Artists’ and Makers’ Groups by John Saich, Arts Development Coordinator, Hi-Arts (11.45 – 12.00)</td>
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<td>Marketing and Websites - a presentation by Sian Jamieson – Audience Development Coordinator, Hi-Arts (12.00 – 12.40pm)</td>
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<td>● Questions and Answers session (12.40 – 1.00pm)</td>
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<td>1.00pm – 2.00pm</td>
<td>Lunch plus the opportunity to network with other makers</td>
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<td>2.00pm – 4.00pm</td>
<td>Makers’ Tales – talks by two Makers from Shetland (2.00 – 2.15 &amp; 2.15 - 2.30pm) Wendy Inkster and Emma Blain</td>
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<td>Craft Standards – a presentation by Philippa Hobson of Creative and Cultural Skills  (2.30 – 2.45pm)</td>
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<td>Makers’ Tales – talks by two Makers from the Highlands (2.45 -3.15pm) Laura West and Dawn Cawthra-Hewitt</td>
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<td>Summing up of the day plus Questions and Answers session (3.15 – 4.00pm)</td>
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Notes from Makers’ Day Presentations

Phillippa Hobson from Creative and Cultural Skills highlighted the Standards in Crafts consultation and gave a web-link for further information.


By March 2010 official standards are going to be set to regulate quality control within the Craft Industry. They are currently collating information from craft workers to assist in planning. Anyone interested in providing information/ideas should contact Phillipa at: phillipahobson@ccskills.org.uk (02070151812)

John Saich, Arts Development Coordinator, HI-Arts gave a presentation on Support for Artists’ and Makers’ Groups.

Details of this new HI-Arts initiative can be viewed at this link:

http://visualarts.hi-arts.co.uk/professional-groups-visual-arts.htm

Sian Jamieson - Audience Development Officer at HI-Arts gave a presentation on Marketing and Ecommerce which can now be viewed at this link:

http://www.hi-arts.co.uk/CRAFTS/Web%20Marketing%20Presentation%20Sian%20Jamieson%20Sep%202009.pdf

An Outer Hebrides based company Rock 'n' Retro http://www.rock-n-retro.co.uk/ is highlighted in the presentation for efficient use of social net-working sites. Sian has also prepared a comprehensive series of tip sheets on Audience Development and Marketing. These are available for download at this link:

http://www.hi-arts.co.uk/ads_tipsheets

Maker’s Tales

Presentations by Orkney Makers Lizza Hume and Eoin Leonard were collated into the earlier section of the report.

Dawn Cawthra-Hewitt: Diva Designs http://www.divadesignstudio.co.uk/

Started Diva Designs with three friends. Had a shop to sell from. Ran textiles courses from the shop and found these paid for the shop overheads. However found the success of the shop took too much time away from being crafts makers. Serving customers, doing accounts, running a group, whilst financially a good thing left no time to make work – the main reason why Dawn left a successful teaching career. Dawn has therefore taken the decision to drop out of the Diva Designs group and refocus on making work. Showed an interesting example of the perceived value of products. Dawn started making hand appliquéd and embroidered bags which retailed in the Diva Design shop at £40. Rather than turn one section of a bag she was preparing into a bag she framed the appliqué design. It sold as a picture at £240. Same amount of work essentially the same piece of textile but when marketed as a fine art piece rather than a functional bag it was able to achieve a much higher price bracket.

Laura West: http://www.laurawest.com/index.html

Laura West a book-binder based in Skye discussed the disastrous impact that the closure of An Tuireann had on the Visual Arts and Crafts community in Skye and Lochalsh and how this led to the formation of an artist’s group titled AOS creativity in collective Action. They chose Aos because it is both a Gaelic word and stands for Artists on Skye.
Joni Phippin – A highland based jewellery maker invited makers to take part in a simple and straightforward art project idea which could help market work. Distribute postcards of Art Works in pubs and café’s throughout Highlands and Islands, which customers can write on and post to friends.

Wendy Inkster: Burra Bears www.burrabears.co.uk

Burra Bears in Shetland started by making a bear from an old fair isle wool jumper as a gift for her sister. A friend then asked for another, then another friend asked for one. Gradually a hobby turned into a business and Wendy now makes a full-time living from her craft.

The Bears are sold as collectibles with a label asking the owner to send a card back with details of where the bear has “gone to live”. These cards are kept as a scrap book and show details of who is buying them. It has also helped establish a list of contacts.

Commercial waste re-cycling from the woollen mills in Shetland are used in the product.

Shetland Museum commissioned a special collection of bears with patterns and colours associated with the museum collection of fair-isle knitwear.

Wendy is a member of the Shetland crafts association. There are 70 members. 70 Associate members (who are not full-time craft-folk). 20 Full Members who are Full-time makers. A quality assessment process is offered via Shetland College. Once people have passed they can take part in the Shetland Crafts Association. This lets them be in a promotional leaflet, a website http://www.shetlandartsandcrafts.co.uk and join in a large annual craft fair which attracts approx 3000 visitors. The organisation is self-funded and run by a voluntary committee. It has been the same committee for a long time and everyone gets on very well.

Emma Blain: Amos Designs http://www.aamos-online.com/

After graduating from Glasgow School of Art, Emma Blain returned to Shetland and together with her friend Claire Henry set up a new company called Amos Designs. They found a great level of support in Shetland for young people coming home. They got financial support from the Economic Dev Dept of their local authority and HIE which allowed them to buy 2 looms. Despite the support it took 3 years to set up the business.

Amos make traditional woven structures with a contemporary twist, inspired by Fair Isle patterns. Amos are members of both the Shetland Arts and Craft Association and Veer North (another Shetland artists’ grouping). They enjoy both the creative side and the product business side, and get different things from being part of different artists’ groupings. E.g. Shetland Arts and Crafts Association are going to the Country Living Fair as a group.

Shetland textiles had a massive reputation in the past but it is no longer on the same level as it used to be. Amos want to reinstate and promote the Shetland textiles industry. They got together with a small group of friends – all fellow textile designers - who wanted to establish a more formal method of working and collaborating together and formed a Shetland Contemporary Textiles group called Text-Isles http://www.text-isles.com The Text-Isles group’s aim is actively promote Shetland textiles nationally and internationally, bringing global attention to the uniqueness of contemporary Shetland textiles.

The Highland Maker’s who received HI Arts Go and See Grants to attend the Orkney event have written reports on their experiences in Orkney which are available online at:

http://www.h...i-arts.co.uk/go-and-see-orkney-research-trip-reports.htm
Appendix 1

Questions on Return from Orkney
Outer Hebrides Crafts Research Trip to Orkney
Questions on Return

Questions that the members of the Outer Hebrides Group (and the organisations they were representing) had prior to visiting Orkney.

The colour coded answers are a compilation of replies written by:

Elsie Mitchell: Arts Development Officer, CNES
Annette Sopata: Harris Tweed Artisan's Co-operative
Samantha Johnson: Uist Crafts Producers
Sheila Roderick: Sassy Gaels
Flora Macdonald: Wool Development Group/ Art on the Map/ Uist Crafts Producers
Corinna Crause: Art on the Map/ Uist Artists' Association

Did you make any observations on:

1. The quality of the crafts in Orkney? What was the range of craft products produced in Orkney?

Range of products was varied. Within ODCA strict boundaries between craft/applied arts and visual fine art/photography are not made. In the trail booklet there are:

- 8 jewellers
- 1 ceramicist
- 1 stained glass artist
- 2 painters/illustrators
- 2 tapestry artists
- 2 textile designers
- 1 bodhran maker
- 1 photographer
- 2 Orkney Chair makers
- 4 Knitwear Designers/wool crafts

In addition The Workshop in South Ronaldsay, which is part of the trail, whilst having a strong emphasis on knitwear includes work by a wider no. of makers based in Orkney e.g. printmaking, painting, ceramics, jewellery, felt-making, knitwear, craft instruction DVD's, published sheet music (composed by local musician).

There are further Crafts and Visual Arts to be found out-with the ODCA trail e.g.

The islands of Westray and Papa Westray have their own trail, which include 3 painters, 1 Orkney chair maker, 2 makers selling photo-based crafts, 1 weaver and 1 textile design business. As we didn't have time to visit most of these can only judge the quality on the marketing material available.

Generally I thought the majority of crafts in Orkney were of a high standard. Within ODCA I was surprised to find examples of work that I personally thought were was not particularly well-made/ designed or presented. (Pam Farmer, Shoreline Gallery, Wool Shed products). This was alongside work which I thought was of outstanding quality (Scapa Crafts, Hume Sweet Hume, Sheila Fleet, Marram Studio). Quality judgments can be difficult as there is obviously an element of personal taste.
High quality of workmanship promoted through the ODCA. The range was varied i.e. Jewellery, Pottery, Furniture, Knitwear and each designer within these areas also had a distinct signature. Supports the theory that the more people there are working with the same/similar medium, the stronger the marketplace for those goods become.

Majority of the crafts in Orkney were of a very high standard. Within some individuals retail outlets there was the usual tourist "tat" but none of this was actually within the Orkney craft association shop. It seemed to have a variety of producers, and even when there were several of the same crafts they all said there was room for everyone and all had their own identity.

Quality was very similar to what we see in OH. Some was very high standard, others quite rough round the edges. Would have appealed to a wide range of customers.

Seemed rather top heavy with jewellery and lacking in locally produced woven textiles. Very similar range otherwise to those in OH. The traditional chairs were the outstanding product that doesn't have a counterpart here.

2. Ambience of the different venues visited on the crafts trail?

Huge variation, as per products being produced and type of people producing them. Work - spaces tend to reflect the way in which people create and their characteristics (which is why I think people are fascinated with them). Some had their ‘showcase front’ and then a work room behind. Others had the workroom first then a show room. All were very welcoming, informative and real.

All the craft workshops I visited were welcoming and all were happy to speak to us. Not one was closed. The also had a lot of information out for individuals to read on their specific processes or materials used.

Generally friendly and welcoming. Most people seemed to be interested in selling. Considering it was coming to the end of a busy season I was impressed by their liveliness and freshness.

Scapa Crafts and Hume Sweet Hume both had an authentic Orkney charm which made visiting both interesting and enjoyable. Although I couldn’t afford to purchase anything from them at the time, I came home wanting to save up for an Orkney chair and some designer knitwear. I know that both do online sales so that is a possibility even if I can’t get back to Orkney.

Welcoming, Supportive, Informative

Hoxa Tapestry Gallery – Inspirational - demonstrated professionalism, dedication skill and pride in one’s own landscape but it lacked the warmth of a small cottage industry. At Scapa Crafts there was a good welcome, explanation and the personal touch of being in a small space where quality Orkney produce is made. Judith Glue – big and overwhelming removed from Cottage Industry “small is beautiful” as at e.g. Hume Sweet Hume. Northernlight – unique skill, entrepreneurship aesthetically presented in a light airy space. Use of space when owner uses the gallery as part of her home. There was no weaving on the loom and the studio lacked the evidence of being a workshop.

3. How did the businesses interact with their customers?

Very well in relation to workshops and tourist attractions.

Some of the more remote workshop/shops were much more interactive with customers. Some of the bigger
shops (Judith Glue for instance) was like any other big shop. No interaction with customers but lots of local crafts for sale. Personally I preferred going to the small workshops/shops and actually meeting makers. The combined craft shop had a good representation of some of the crafters and the guy working did actually know about the crafters.

Friendly staff, demonstrations of work (Northlight Studio). A bit iffy (the wool shed) and rather rude about another craft maker who I happened to know. That was a bit strange. However, the chap at the chair workshop was also talking about the same person in a much more friendly and supportive way. That’s the sort of example we should all be following with our fellow craft workers.

I was not aware of this except in my own experience which was positive.

4. How were the venues visited on the trail staffed?

Adequately

Well. Although the ones we visited were aware that we were around.

The ones I went to were manned by the makers themselves, which did give a personal feel to the visit and one that tourists were more likely to remember. The association shop was staffed by an employee but was knowledgeable of the crafts and the makers

Mainly by the craftspeople themselves and their families. Sometimes with local staff bought in. The winery was a good example – the wine-maker himself was behind the counter being hospitable and friendly – we all left with packages!

5. Layout of shops – how they took the customer around the goods?

Judith Glue: Too jumbled. Couldn’t quite work out whether she made her own things and/or bought in other peoples. But there was a distinct separation of food/knitwear.

ODCA Shop: Not as polished as I expected. But still accommodating and professional, each business had their own area, which did act as a ‘window to their workshop’ as advertised. I think it could have been more cohesive without each member losing their individual display area.

All the shops were what you would expect from a craft shop (apart from the jewellery). All seemed to have nooks with things displayed in baskets and lovely vibrant displays. All looking a bit chaotic but managed to be organised and still customer friendly.

Some had products grouped by maker, others by product. Always difficult to know how to position stock especially within a small space, but most were effective in display and access to the stock.

The lay-out was very varied all of the above plus the slick minimal display at the Pier which appealed to an ‘arty’ type like me. The calm presentation of cards, prints and tapestries at Hoxa Tapestry Gallery that let you see, ponder and choose without being overwhelmed. I thought the Jewellery displays were original and stunning particularly Sheila Fleet, showed the Jewellery to good effect. Personally I think the more considered less jumbled approach implied that the goods were of higher quality and could justify a higher price.

6. What did you think of the shops that are open all year e.g. Judith Glue, Quernstone?
Carried a more diverse range of stock to appeal to the local market. I.e. produce not made in Orkney.

Judith Glue was a mixture between craft and holiday/tourist tat. It did have some lovely handmade products but had a variety of products and price. Quernstone was also a variety of craft work, but seemed slightly more up-market. More like a craft shop with no tourist tat that I noticed.

They stock non-Orkney items and therefore seem less Orkney orientated as a result, presumably to cater to the local market during the winter months.

Judith Glue had a big stock and would need to be open all year economically. Local people will probably do Xmas shopping in both shops.

7. Price Ranges – What price ranges were on offer at the different venues?

Prices on the trail ranged from £1.50 for cards £30 - £40ish for hats, scarves, over £150 for jumpers, Orkney Chairs as high as £1400. The jewellery ranged in price from £15 for small charms for a bracelet to around £1500 for jewelled rings (and other price levels in between).

8. What price ranges sell most? What price ranges make most profit?

We didn’t have enough time to go into this in any detail. The Workshop stated that knitwear is the best seller for them and cards also do well.

9. Presentation/labelling of goods – What do you think worked? What do you think didn’t? Was any of the work particularly well presented and labelled?

Everything I saw was labelled really well. Denise Dupre (Vice Chair ODCA) suggested that when running the Coop shop we should have ‘packaging standards’ on a list for everyone to comply with.

Majority of items all had “handmade in Orkney” on the label somewhere. They seemed to put lots of details on the labels - where the wool came from - who dyed it - a bit of local history or knowledge.

On the whole the presentations by the crafts association i.e. at the airport were professional and slick. Jewellery sticks in my mind as being eye-catching in cabinets in shops – but then jewellery is shiny and light reflects from it so maybe its more straightforward displaying it than other items. Some displays were a bit disappointing – clothes bunched on hangers in racks, some of them quite expensive. (Judith Glue) Yes, space is always at a premium but over-crowdedness with high priced items seems a shame.

Most of the work was labelled well, with good design values and Made in Orkney emphasised. Often including a story or description that related the work to its location e.g. inspiration from the landscape, flora and fauna, history, archaeology. The jewellery was really well presented and enticing. I thought it was particularly effective in the Sheila Fleet displays setting it against photos of waves which tied it in with the land and seascapes that inspire the designs. The Shoreline Gallery labelling was pretty shoddy, as was the Pam Farmer photo products and packaging.

Marketing and Branding

10. Do Orkney have a joint island marketing Strategy, if so how does it work?
Some of the small islands have their own craft groups, and if they met the criteria of the "Made in Orkney" ethos they can also join the Orkney craft association.

http://www.orkneythebrand.co.uk  This website gives a history of the branding project which included the setting up of Orkney Crafts Industries Association, Orkney Jewellery Group and Made in Orkney. Orkney the Brand was run jointly by Orkney Enterprise and Orkney Islands Council and was established in 2003 to formalise and continue the brand building work that was started by the Orkney Marketing Scheme in 1995.

The programme existed to promote the products of the Orkney Islands by means of trade and consumer promotions and press and public relations. Its focus in recent times has been to raise awareness of two of its sub-brands - Taste of Orkney and Made in Orkney.

Orkney the Brand’s work is led by John Clarke who headed up the Orkney Marketing Scheme from 1995 to 2000 and who then founded Orkney the Brand. It was fully supported by the public sector for the benefit of the private sector and the backers are represented by Maureen Shearer of Orkney Enterprise who assisted John in the work of the Marketing Scheme, and Morag Robertson of Orkney Islands’ Council.

11. Branding – Was an Orkney Crafts Brand noticeable throughout the trail and at other non crafts establishments e.g. restaurants, Scara Brae, hotels?

Everywhere. Not so much with the crafts individually. For example D.Dupre explained they had tried in the past to get members of the assoc. to have ODCA labels etc. to attach to their goods but, people believed it took something away from their individuality. The ‘craft brand’ was mainly noticeable when in their shop and looking at the craft trail brochure which then directed you to the individuals. It was the individuals within the craft assoc. that stood out when you were at other tourist locations. You recognised their name from the Craft Trail brochure etc. You also took note of who wasn't in it and wondered why, often automatically making the assumption, rightly or wrongly, that those goods were therefore not made in Orkney

Leaflets for the individual businesses were readily available in most places. But also the Craft Association leaflets would be along side.

Orkney branding is prominent – we visited a café on Saturday where there was a stand of pickles, jams etc that were all from Orkney and I bought quite a number of items because it looked so enticing.

The variety of crafts on offer and overall quality give the group its distinctive character.

I was not particularly aware.

12. How did Orkney Craft Association shake off the “craft” handle and adopt the strong “quality product” badge?

Time. Evolution. Having members who are running their businesses professionally on a profit making basis.

By putting guidelines in place and developing strong business strategies. Being seen as much as crafters and business people.

Various bodies working together to achieve a common goal – Orkney Islands Council, Orkney Enterprise and organisations such as the Orkney Jewellery Group and the Orkney Crafts Industries Association together with significant financial investment in marketing initiatives and capital costs.
Orkney has a history and culture of crafts and visitors select quality crafts from professionally presented packaged and labelled goods. Most of the crafts I saw focused on Orkney colours, which will enhance selling points and customers identifying the craft with the place.

13. How important is the Orkney Identity in the crafts?

I think the different makers use different elements of Orkney in their work. For example:
Hume Sweet Hume use the colours of the landscape in the colour palettes for their knitwear, many of the jewellers focus on Celtic/Viking designs, Andrew Appleby creates pottery that resemble Neolithic designs, The Wool Shed uses wool from the North Ronaldsay breed of sheep to create hand felted goods. The list is endless.
The people producing the crafts are living and working and producing in one area and as such the area is reflected sub-consciously in different ways through their chosen medium.

They definitely use their location and what is available to them locally with their crafts; this in turn confirms the identity for the tourist.

Very. So much craft is available these days that it is undoubtedly a selling point for it to be made in the location where it is sold.

Very important and the Makers stressed this on the Makers’ Day

14. How evident was it that the goods are handmade in Orkney?

A strong emphasis on this when you went into people’s work rooms...but not in a presented way...just in a 'well this is my workroom, this is what the wool looks like when it returns from the mill etc.' It was all very easy and natural.

There seemed to be signs everywhere showing "made in Orkney". They aren't afraid to shout about what they do.

Most goods were clearly labelled as hand-made in Orkney. Some items were a bit ambiguous – the wool shed was selling carded fibre that did not have its origin marked on it, looked as though it might have come from Orkney and by default one might have thought it was processed on the island too, yet when we spoke to the owner it turned out that the fleeces were all processed on mainland Scotland and it was quite difficult to find out whether the fleece itself was from sheep raised on Orkney or on Shetland.

At Orkney Chair Gallery, Tapestry Workshops and Hume Sweet Hume

15. Did the Orkney identity matter to makers or could they have been making the same work anywhere?

The 'Orkney Identity' has always been there but people's awareness of it has developed and increased over time.

Whilst some of the same work is available throughout the Highlands and Islands, they seem to make full use of their unique location. Without this the craft could purely be seen as the same as that done anywhere else.
I think the Orkney identity did matter to most of the makers we spoke to, but it has to be said that on the whole they could have been making the same things anywhere else.

The good thing about much of the work we saw was that it was very individual and had the makers own flair (i.e. the good work). Perhaps these people would make the same work wherever they were based but I don't think so. So much of the work took its inspiration from local history, archaeology and the island environment around them. It would be particularly difficult to make the Orkney Chairs in another location (apart from Shetland). They are specific to Orkney and Shetland and it really mattered that they were still being made in Orkney with oat straw grown in Orkney. These crafts people were working from an indigenous crafts tradition.

16. Do you think the Orkney identity matters to customers – does it increase sales of the craft makers work?

Yes. I placed an order for something and I very rarely buy anything. The reason I made a purchase was because I knew that the wool used to make the item had come from Orkney and that the item had been made on Orkney. Also, that I had met the person who would be making it.

Definitely. It's such a big part of Orkney. Everywhere are signs, leaflets, and promotional items shouting about the crafts available people want to take a bit of that home. Currently in the Uists I don't think we shout about it enough and people just don't know what local crafts are available.

Orkney identity seems to matter to customers – it did to me when I looked for gifts to take home. To see the place where a person lives and works and be able to take a little bit of their life home with you is something that a lot of customers want to do.

Discerning customers are certainly going to purchase Orkney made.

17. What crafts marketing material was available out-with the main craft venues e.g. airport, ferry, ferry terminal, cafes, restaurants, pubs?

Everything. Everywhere.
No exceptions. And, when it was not on prominent display it was actively promoted by people in other venues i.e. restaurants.
However, the ODCA pamphlets were not available at Scara Brae (Historic Scotland) or Orkney Wines.

In almost all public places there were stands full of marketing material advertising the craft makers and association. Local free papers ran ads and leaflets were available throughout the craft shops themselves.

In addition to the crafts trail brochure most businesses appeared to produce their own leaflets which were also prominently displayed in key places.

18. If you had arrived in Orkney unaware of the existence of the crafts trail how easy would it be to find out about it?

As soon as you walk through the doors at the airport and are waiting for your luggage you see three display cases showing current craft work and a historical archive of craft work from the islands (i.e. from the museum). The pamphlets for the trail are then directly below these displays.

Extremely easy. You could hardly miss it!!
Very, all the pubs, eateries etc. seemed to have lots of leaflets.

For me personally it would be difficult one would have to have the trail mapped and studied before setting off.

19. Was the Crafts Trail signposting effective?

Yes it was there but sometimes it was only posted well from one direction.

All the workshops I visited had a brown "craft trail sign".

To a certain extent. Like most rural signposting, some of it was quite difficult to follow unless you knew the area.

The instantly recognisable signage was very important. Just as you were trying to work out from maps which road to turn down there would be a sign at the road junction. This applied to both venues in remote rural villages and agricultural areas and the venues on the outskirts of Stromness and Kirkwall. Sometimes the signposting only worked if you'd chosen one route around the trail. You did find the venue eventually and I guess it would have doubled the expense of installing the signs to have 2 signs facing both traffic directions.

20. How do you integrate the craft marketing experience into the social fabric of members' lives so that they regard the selling as equally important and enjoyable as the making – any answers on this question from Orkney?

If someone is serious about making a living from producing a craft then they will regard the selling as important.

If someone is truly passionate about what they make/want to make/use to make things with they will want to share their knowledge with people who want to buy their goods or other makers. They are then marketing themselves and enjoying it.

When three people are in a room who work with Harris Tweed….it's very rare that we don't talk about it.

Most seemed to understand that without one you couldn't have the other. Although being part of the trail did keep crafters confined to their workshops most seemed to see it as a positive experience.

Hume Sweet Hume seem to have managed this one – they have off-sales on the side, so undoubtedly contribute to the social fabric of many islanders lives!

Yes I would say the social experience is very important. Production full-time would be tedious.

21. Any examples of effective marketing on a tight budget in Orkney?

I was not aware of any.

Collective Action = increased budget
Collective Action = increased availability of differing skills/levels of skills.
Collective Action = shared work load
Collective Action removes the constraints of a tight budget because of the above and because bartering power increases as does creative thought.

The ODCA is now fully sustainable. They have achieved this by charging a commission for the Assoc. on everything they do.

Didn’t see too much. Most printed material looked quite glossy and expensive.

Harray Potter celebration of 33 and a third year in business utilised the resources of his local community centre. It created a fun community event that would have been interesting to both locals and tourists. It would have taken time to organise but was presented in a way that looked relatively low cost yet I’m sure would have generated interest in and orders for his pottery. There was an article about the exhibition in the Orcadian.

Charm, charisma, a sense of humour, a warm welcome when you visited, able to tell a story. Although this comes down to individual personalities it also works as effective marketing - you want to buy because you like the person serving you.

22. Do they/have they received Grants/Loans/financial help for Marketing in print, adverts, websites?

See earlier section of report

Only at the start.

In the beginning they did receive funding but currently 5% is added to the costs of marketing to enable the group to employ someone to co-ordinate this. They all pay there share of the overall costs but design there own “page” for the brochures

In the past they have, but this year the assistance seems to have dried up so it will be interesting to observe how they fare in future years.

Most makers received financial aid in setting up and then became self-financing.

23. How do individual businesses maintain their websites?

Individually.

Hume Sweet Hume admitted to being lax in keeping their website up to date – suspect this is not just an Orkney phenomena!

24. How much do businesses invest in their websites and other marketing material?

Unknown apart from all but one have websites. 17 have an online sales facility on their website. All have produced individual leaflets for their own businesses in addition to the ODCA group marketing material.

25. Do they feel they get a good return for their investment?

As a member of the Orkney craft group they all seemed happy with the return they received from their investment. Many said that without the craft trail and support from other makers their income would not have increased.
It is evident if they are still in business and continue to subscribe.

26. How are members of the Orkney Craft Association doing with online sales, and sales at retail outlets, craft fairs, trade events out-with Orkney?

We weren’t able to ask this level of detail

27. Do Orkney link in with National Marketing Strategies UK wide and Scotland wide?

Both Orkney and Shetland do link in. Both attend the Country Living Fairs etc.

The ODCA seem to have a good relationship with Visit Scotland; their Trade Fair stand is located next to Orkney Food stands and the Orkney Tourist Board.

I would think so Orkney Crafts are well known.

Organisation

28. How much of the work done to coordinate and organise the crafts trail is a result of volunteer hours, how much of the work is done by someone in a paid post?

See earlier section of report. Minutes of meetings, accounts, and the summer shop staffing is paid work. Design and print and distribution of the brochure are contracted to companies the rest of the organising is all voluntary.

29. How many paid craft admin jobs are there to support the work done in Orkney?

There don’t seem to be any admin jobs exclusive to Crafts apart from the very part-time hours of the ODCA co-ordinator. People with wider job remits undertake occasional crafts projects, such as the local authority Arts Development Officer, (who has a very wide remit which includes all art forms, museums and heritage), The Pier Arts Centre Director and their Education Officer. The main support administratively seems to have been done in the past via the Marketing, Branding and Business grant initiatives by the Enterprise Company and local authority. It was Economic Development staff that led on this.

30. Does the admin work of the Orkney Crafts Association get shared out fairly or is it mainly the work of a few dedicated individuals?

There is a committee, who (I think) get paid for their time above the normal committee work.

According to the Wool shed proprietor it is the work of a very few individuals.

Various individuals gave slightly different answers to this question. The voluntary element of the work seems to be mainly carried out by the 10 committee members who take on different tasks as and when required and in relation to particular skills they may have such as website design. The committee has been the same people for the last few years. Other members although no longer involved in the committee work, contributed a lot of their time at the beginning of the organisation. More recent members are being encouraged to join the committee. The individuals that we met who were on the committee appeared happy enough with their workload and dedicated to keeping the ODCA running.
31. How do members of the Orkney Crafts Association balance/focus on their own businesses as individuals and work within the association.

This didn't seem to cause any problems. Most did as little or as much as they wanted too without stopping or forcing others.

32. How are new and younger members supported?

Advice/guidance/encouragement.

1st year of membership £50 rather than £100 to encourage new members

33. The 'Orkney Designer Crafts Summer Shop'
They established themselves in the 90's but when did the shop start up. How do they operate this in relation to division of rent/staffing/display control etc 
Does the shop take a commission/is it run via funding/individual investment
See earlier section of report

34. ODC Web Page; How do they manage it - i.e. who handles the enquiries that it generates?
See earlier section of report

35. Membership Criteria
How do they assess potential members...just quality or also design awareness or duration of producing work?

The quality was assessed separately by a panel of people not connected to the group.

Seems to be just on quality – i.e. the expertise in producing it. The local college provides a service to evaluate new members work.

36. What is their membership fee?
£100 per annum/£50 per annum for 1st year of membership

37. Do members then have to pay additional costs for advertisement in the brochure/participation in the shop etc?

Yes depending on what they take part in

38. Pricing Structures – Was there any experience in Orkney with similar products being sold at a wide range of prices? Does the Association have a pricing policy?

Unknown. But can establish via contacts made.

I didn't notice a wide range of prices for the same product, but some products were still on the cheap side compared to the mainland.

When I asked this question at The Workshop the answer was that didn't tend to happen – crafts people valued their work and wanted to get a good price for it, whether it was a hobby to them or a full-time business.
39. Business Rivalry - Generally crafts communities often have to deal with large numbers of producers competing for a small or limited number of sales. Did the makers in Orkney have to deal with these kinds of issues, e.g. copyright of designs? Did they find ways of overcoming them?

Didn't find any answers to this question.

I am not sure but quality and price will no doubt be overriding factors.

Relationship with Agencies

40. How much support do the Orkney Craft Community get from the local authority, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Scottish Arts Council, Pier Arts Centre, HI Arts?

None financially any more.

They seem to get lots of support and use it wisely. Unfortunately I think that’s where we let ourselves down.

Orkney Islands Enterprise and Orkney Council have invested a lot of worker time and money in supporting Orkney Crafts, but Orkney is now suffering as with all areas in the changed remit of HIE and Enterprise support is only available for large projects. Orkney Islands Council have subsidised for the past 25 years and continues to subsidise an Orkney Crafts stand at Glasgow Trade Fair. All the previous support and encouragement seems to have worked - many of the businesses are financially independent of grant aid and the crafts community in Orkney generally seem to use their initiative and have the confidence to access grants available from The Scottish Arts Council and HI Arts.

From Orkney Islands council website:

“Orkney craft producers have the opportunity to secure sought-after stand space at Scotland’s Trade Fair in January 2010.

The offer is open to any craft producer who has not exhibited on the Orkney Islands Council stand, or who have done so on one previous occasion.

Chair of the Development Committee, Councillor Ian Johnstone said: “The Council is pleased to be continuing this opportunity for local craft producers. It is a means of both supporting new business in Orkney to develop retail trade links, and of showcasing our rich and unique crafts traditions.”

Development Officer from the Council’s Economic Development team Morag Robertson urged: “People who are interested should get in contact with us sooner rather than later, as spaces in the trade fair fill quickly. Attendance on the Council stand is an excellent supported introduction to exhibiting at a show.”

“Orkney Islands Council cover the cost of stand space and haulage of goods to and from the show. However, exhibitors would need to pay for their own transport and accommodation.”

“The programme has run now for nearly 25 years, and many of the successful craft producers who form the bedrock of Orkney’s craft trade have attended at one time or another – and most have come back for a second time.”
41. Has there been/ are there Capital Grants for individual businesses in Orkney to help create w/shop spaces, retail spaces or purchase equipment?

There used to be. And every successful business we spoke to had received one in their early stages of development. See earlier section of report Highlands and Islands Enterprise have certainly invested.

42. Did any of the Orkney businesses benefit from start up grants from their local authority, HIE or other bodies?

Above

Quite a few of them – the chair maker, Hume Sweet Hume and a number of others took advantage of the old Enterprise Allowance scheme.

Yes, they indicated that they would be unable to start without financial help.

43. How do Orkney Islands Council see the Orkney Craft Association? Are they ‘local crafters’ or are they ‘net exporters’ with a lot to bring to the marketing of the islands?

They see them as a positive aspect this is reflected in the success of the craft industry there and the world’s awareness of it.

It seems like they have a huge amount of support for the association.

The previous backing and support given to the Orkney Crafts Industries Association, Orkney Jewellery Group and Made in Orkney Initiative would indicate that they are seen as net exporters with a lot to bring to the marketing of the Islands.

There are several crafts companies based in Orkney that have their own shops in mainland towns and cities.

Ortak Jewellery is not a member of the trail. They have 2 shops in Orkney and a large visitor centre in Kirkwall which can be toured. Ortak products are sold throughout the UK and worldwide. They have retail outlets in mainland cities - 1 Aberdeen, 1 Dundee, 1 Inverness, 2 Edinburgh, 4 Glasgow, 1 Livingstone, 1 Stirling, 1 Sheffield, 1 Newcastle. Their manufacturing base is still in Orkney.

Aurora Jewellery have shops in Kirkwall, Thurso, Elgin and Perth
Sheila Fleet has 2 shops in Orkney and 1 in Edinburgh
Judith Glue has 2 shops in Kirkwall and 1 in Inverness
Quernstone Knitwear is stocked at many outlets in Scotland and England.

As stated earlier in the report many of the smaller businesses sell their work in the UK and abroad.

Not sure but I think that the Crafts industry is viable.

44. Is the local tourist industry supportive of the Craft Makers?

Yes.
I would say mostly yes. But like everywhere there was still tourist trinkets from China....

There is good interlinking with Visit Orkney and the Orkney Tourist Board e.g. Trade Fair presence together, links to ODCA website straight from Visit Orkney which has an online gallery display of artist and crafts people’s work (including quite a few that are not members of ODCA) and an online map of studio and gallery locations. See http://www.visitorkney.com/creative/index.asp

Restaurants, cafes displayed locally made work plus all the crafts trail leaflets. Given the Made in Orkney emphasis in so many of the shops I thought there might have been more local crafts used as interior accessories in B and B’s but it was the same as here – supplied by mainland chain stores; John Lewis for an expensive look; Argos looking products at the more run down end of the market. I only saw work by one maker in the accommodation (coasters and mugs by Britt Arcus) I stayed in.

I am not sure but I would think it forms a slice of the local economy.

Inclusive/Exclusive

45. Can the needs of both the hobby crafter and small business be catered for within one group?

No. Orkney has the Craft Guild for hobbyists.

They have a two tier system. Hobby crafters are members of the guild and the businesses are part of the association. One member of the guild is on the committee of the association. Neither part force or hinder the other (so it seems).

Yes the hobby crafter can be advised on pricing, standards, etc

46. Should the needs of both the hobby crafter and small business be catered for within one group?

Yes. If the hobbyists run their hobby professionally i.e. they do not make a full living from it but make a profit from what they do, have high level of quality etc. A two tiered membership enables these people to grow. It also encourages younger people to join and learn.

As long as guidelines are in place to ensure it’s fair for all I don’t see how or why it couldn't work. Unfortunately Uist Craft producers have no such rules and the hobbyist can shout loudest...

Yes they should work in harmony.

47. What are the advantages of setting up a professional crafts grouping?

Please see Collective Action = answer to question earlier.

As a professional group with the proper set up in place, it would mean everyone is working for the same aim. My business is what pays the mortgage, but the hobby crafter does not have the same aim/need. A group of professional craft workers could also achieve the quality and recognition to build a thriving craft experience to promote the islands.
It raises the image and profile of the group.

48. How many craft and visual art groupings exist in Orkney? How are they resourced – volunteers, paid staff, grants, business loans, membership fees?

**Orkney Designer Crafts Association** – detailed earlier

**Orkney Jewellery Group**: The Orkney Jewellery Group was founded in 2000. Its members include a variety of businesses involved in Jewellery manufacture and silver-smithing, from companies employing scores of people and exporting around the world to individual designer-makers crafting unique bespoke objects. Orkney has a history of jewellery making stretching back to the Neolithic and since the 1960's there has been a renaissance in the art, making Orkney one of the most important jewellery producing areas in the UK. The OJG aims to develop and promote the industry in any way possible especially through safeguarding the islands reputation for excellence in quality of design and manufacture.

**Orkney Craftsmen’s Guild**
Members of this group tend to be part-timers or ‘hobbyists’ whose household income is only partially supported by selling craft work. They organise craft fairs and exhibitions of member’s work which are promoted in local newspapers and websites.

**Westray and Papa Westray Craft and Heritage Association**
Around 10 businesses in a variety of Arts and Crafts. The host a Crafts and Heritage Trail. The organisation and trail was originally supported by the Orkney Tourist Board and Orkney Marketing Scheme with funding from Orkney Enterprise, Orkney Island Council and The European Regional Development Fund.

**Untitled Visual Arts Group**
The Objects of this Group are:
- Facilitating a supportive and professional network for visual artists in Orkney;
- Encouraging dialogue and critical debate within the field of visual arts in Orkney and beyond;
- Supporting and promoting experimental, research based, conceptual and collaborative visual arts;
- Promoting dialogue between artists, galleries, arts workers, educators and the public;
- Raising awareness of what visual artists do and how they contribute to the wider community;
- Facilitating projects and events which develop contemporary visual art practice in Orkney;
- Encouraging and developing creative opportunities for visual artists within Orkney; and
- Supporting creative opportunities for local visual artists beyond Orkney.

**The Workshop**
Detailed earlier

49. The Workshop at St Margaret's Hope in South Ronaldsay represents a co-op of makers and is listed as one member of the Orkney Crafts Association and one venue on the trail. Do you think this is a good arrangement? Does it cause any difficulties e.g. 2 groups competing for the same limited funds, conflicting aims?

Yes I think it works but that is based purely on subjective observation of how the representatives from both groups communicated with each other at the Makers Day.
It seems to work well. The Workshop accepts work by a much larger number of individuals than the overall Orkney Designer Crafts Association. It therefore spreads the Marketing and Economic benefits of the trail wider. Not all people making crafts want to do it as a full-time/part-time living. The Workshop would seem to give these people an outlet. It also has work by other OCDA members giving them another outlet in a different geographic location to their own premises e.g. Hume Sweet Hume and for those OCDA members who don't have their own retail premises e.g. Marram Designs.

Not sure about this.

50. **How do members of crafts groups in Orkney overcome issues of Quality control?**

Personal invite to join and/or assessment via a panel.

They set guidelines and stick to them. No exceptions. Also as it's overseen by an external group it's not personal.

51. **How do you ensure quality control without causing offence and causing schisms in the crafts community?**

If you're serious about your business you will challenge quality that you do no want to be associated with. Likewise with the people receiving the criticism...they should want to improve/develop.

The makers pointed out that it is useful when selecting members of an organisation to engage the help of someone who could take an independent view of who could be selected. They also emphasized that acceptance of lower standards would affect all organisation members. However makers also stated that it was important that the criticism given should be constructive not just saying the work is not good enough; advice should be given on how to actually improve the product and benefit from membership in the future.

They suggest further development of the article.

52. **How as a marketing group do the makers in Orkney keep everyone happy, or manage to deal with the demands of some makers who assume they are better than others?**

Even-handedness, experience, the greater majority rules and as such the greater majority need to be focused on the same goals i.e.: Professional, businesses, increasing business. People who have clashes of personalities in Orkney exist but they are still part of the Assoc.

I think they accept the fact that you can't please everyone, and so long as there are strict guidelines and these aren't bent or broken then they can't argue.

The crafts community in Orkney work well together, they realize that collective action is more effective for everyone in their group and seem to be able to debate differences of opinion in a professional way and reach a democratic decision.

53. **How many of the craft members are local Orcadians? Has this been a problem? Has this been an advantage?**

Unknown. But...there doesn't seem to be any prejudice against 'incomers'. The social structure of Orkney differs greatly to that of Lewis and Harris.
There was a varied mix most of the younger members seem to be from Orkney and have returned home after arts and crafts training. It was refreshing there didn’t seem to be any prejudice about where people originated from. People were just enthusiastic about living in Orkney now or being born and brought up there.

Most of the crafts people I met were Orcadians. I enjoyed hearing the local accent and buyers will associate this with the item.

54. How did they develop a distinctive character for their group which is inclusive of all types of arts and crafts?

I wouldn't say there is a distinctive character other than high quality produce. They all love and are passionate about what they do.

The variety of crafts on offer and overall quality give the group its distinctive character.

Having a pride in their heritage and being committed to producing quality items at affordable prices.

55. How well do the small businesses in Orkney interact with each other?

Unknown. Unable to gain anything other than a snap shot of this. If you base it on the success of the craft organisation then well.

On the whole they interact well but there will be difficulties as in all small communities.

56. How do other local businesses view the Craft Association?

Well.

Restaurant’s we ate in had Crafts Association work decorating their walls and plenty of leaflets around. I did go into one local shop in South Ronaldsay and the sales assistant hadn't heard of the Crafts Trail or the couple of venues we were looking for which turned out to be just 10min drive down the road.

I am not sure – they are contributing to the local economy.

57. What are efficient marketing tools; internet presence - how and more importantly where, especially what craft or community network websites to link into in order to improve ranking of website and therefore reaching potential customers; networks?

Contact the new Outer Hebrides based service Live Hebrides for advice.

Live Hebrides is a new initiative to raise awareness of the many benefits of broadband. The Live Hebrides team offer support to businesses and organisations who wish to find out more about Broadband and Information Communications Technology (ICT). They will encourage the adoption and use of e-business and online business processes, through an impartial, confidential “supplier neutral” advice service to businesses and organisations throughout the Outer Hebrides. These 1 to 1 advice sessions are complimented with workshops and seminars to help businesses make the most of information technology. To find out more Tel:0800 035 5483, e-mail: info@livehebrides.com or visit the Live Hebrides website.
Refer to Sian Jamieson, Audience Development Officer, HI Arts presentation on Web Marketing and E Commerce at the Maker’s Day in Stromness. Available to download at this link:


See also the HI-Arts Crafts pages on Marketing and Business Advice at this link

http://crafts.hi-arts.co.uk/crafts-business-advice.html

58. What is there in addition to Craft Scotland to raise one's profile in Scotland and possibly beyond; craft-makers residencies? How can my local arts and craft centre support my products and my craft?

Establishment of local arts/craft group to promote on a collective basis.

'Locally produced' shelf in shop.

Again look at the online advice pages on the HI Arts Crafts website, look out for and apply to relevant exhibition, promotion, funding or residency opportunities.

59. How do people in Orkney view the North Ronaldsay Mill - what are the challenges / benefits etc.?

I only spoke with one person about this mill and they viewed it as too small for any serious business project. They still sent they're fleeces away for processing as the local mill couldn't process that amount of fleece.

The Woolshed thought the mill was hopeless, lacking in quality, expertise and unable to compete with its products. However, she also said the same about another mill I have experience with and I felt she was not being entirely objective in her outlook. The quality of the products I saw that were made using the mill's wool (i.e. at Skara Brae gift shop) seemed acceptable and I wouldn't have difficulty in using the yarn for my own business given the opportunity. I spoke to one or two others about the mill but there didn't seem to be much wider interest.

Despite the abundant marketing for other crafts producers and groups throughout Orkney I couldn't find any marketing material for the North Ronaldsay mill at any of the venues I visited and I was actually looking out for it. There was one leaflet for the North Ronaldsay Lighthouse where I know the mill is based but it didn't mention the existence of the mill.

There were products at Scara Brae made by "A Yarn from North Ronaldsay" which were nicely knitted traditional hats, scarves and gloves. Although the labels gave a lot of details they didn't mention where the North Ronaldsay wool had been spun. There is some info on the internet about A Yarn from North Ronaldsay http://www.scottishquality.com/catalogue/gallery.asp?CategoryID=15&SupplierID=24 but no mention of where the wool is spun.

At The Workshop I purchased a knitting kit with patterns, needles and a North Ronaldsay Wool skein by Elizabeth Lovick of Northern Lace www.northernlace.co.uk but again there is no indication of the wool having been spun at the mill.
There were also some jumpers made from North Ronaldsay wool on sale at The Workshop. The shop assistant said that with increased interest in organic and environmentally friendly products, these jumpers are becoming more popular with visitors, but for many years customers had been more interested in products made from softer wools and were not particularly concerned that the wool actually came from Orkney – comfort when wearing was the priority.

The only person I talked to in Orkney that had knowledge of the mill was the Crafts Development Officer from Shetland who knew of a Shetland based group [http://www.shetlandorganics.com](http://www.shetlandorganics.com) that had tried to have their wool spun at the North Ronaldsay mill but had encountered difficulties. The mill operators had been unable to provide them with a steady supply and did not have the technical knowledge to spin different yarn gauges and produce fine yarns of a consistent quality. The group are now researching the possibility of setting up a small scale processing unit in Shetland.

After much internet searching I came across this website that states that a Yarn from North Ronaldsay wool comes straight from the mill.

[http://www.stronsayartsandcrafts.co.uk/yarnsrarebreeds.html](http://www.stronsayartsandcrafts.co.uk/yarnsrarebreeds.html)

60. What is the future for wool and woollen items in today's economy and life style?

With oil prices increasing the sale of woollen products will also increase.

Shetland lace shawls are world famous depicting the waves of their native island. Wool and wool garments have been replaced by synthetic fibres. Wool clothing is appropriate for island living and for fashion wear and crofter sheep stocks are diminishing because of the cost of feeding and low prices for wool. This is an invaluable local commodity and the spinnery proposed for North Uist is “making waves” for the restoration of wool crafts.

Strong. Natural product. Env. Friendly.

There currently seems to be an increase in demand for local wool and woollen items, but not everyone is prepared to pay the price for this and a lot of hobby crafters under-price their garments making it impossible to be able to run a business in this line.

The potential is enormous – both in using wool for woven, knitted and non-woven textiles as well as industrial applications such as insulation. There seems to be a trend away from man-made fibres and back to naturals as we have become more environmentally aware. The market for minority breed fibres – especially the coloureds is growing. Pricing is always going to be a problem however – top quality items must be made from top-quality raw materials and needs a selling point which sets it apart from everything else on the market. Careful and realistic planning, especially in an area like the OH are crucial – a project which is not costed right will fail and that will make it difficult for others later on who want to try something else. It’s really important that plans are developed with full knowledge of what is already happening on the mainland and further a-field.

The various knitwear companies that we visited in Orkney show that in a remote island location you can make contemporary craft work with good design values which both responds to fashion trends and can create them. They also show how the indigenous crafts skills of local expert hand-knitters can be engaged to make these well-designed products. The Workshop products were hand-knitted. Hume Sweet Hume and The Quernstone knitwear is machine knitted then hand-stitched. The products are also highly suited to online sales, an increasingly used method of shopping and a growing market.
In addition to clothing there is an opportunity to develop upholstery cloth, carpets and other interior accessories. Collaborations between furniture designers/makers and textile designers could be developed. The Harris Tweed industry is currently making inroads in this which could be followed with regard to other wool products.

There is currently a resurgence of interest in knitting as a hobby with knitters groups springing up all over the UK and online. Do it yourself knitting kits and designs originating in the Outer Hebrides could be created.

Good quality innovative design is the key. At the moment in the Outer Hebrides there are few products which originate from start to finish here i.e. raw materials sourced here, processed here, products designed and made here. It is a gap in the market. Another important consideration if this gap starts to be filled is an efficient and ongoing marketing campaign. This seems to have played a major part in the apparent failure to date of The North Ronaldsay mill. Even in Orkney itself it's difficult to find out about it or know if it is still in operation.

Artists' residencies could be further developed in the Outer Hebrides e.g. recent Deirdre Nelson residency in Shetland

http://www.craftscotland.org/The-Gunnister-Man

Encourage young design graduates to return home after college. In Orkney and Shetland these are the crafts makers that are making the most original and exciting work. Shetland crafts development has also benefited from a textile course delivered by Shetland College. This example could be followed in the Outer Hebrides.

Asked about organic wool products during the Orkney Trip, Shetland Crafts Development Officer – Hazel Hughson thought that new craft products need to be adapted that reflect the ethos of the organic movement. Makers can't just make the traditional designs – mittens, socks, etc – that are already being produced in ordinary wool out of the more expensive organic wool and then display them side by side, as they will look the same and most customers will opt for the cheaper product.

61. Art on the Map - questions regarding the format of trails, i.e. length, size, associated events; funding - how to keep the funding going over the years: interest - how to keep everybody happy, both participants and visitors; visitor numbers - how to deal with the fact that we are an island trail, how to make it busier for everyone?

Hopefully the research undertaken in Orkney gave answers to some of these questions.

Perhaps more financial and volunteer support from artists/craftspeople. Demonstrations, talks, workshops presented, less venues – 6/7 at the same venue so that team supports each other in dealing with customers. One person in a personal setting is not very practical. Select venues which are open to the public but artists give talks/demonstrations at the venue (rotation).

Members need to be more active and have to pay more towards it. Through Art on the Map and Uist Artists' Association planning an AOM website with a general directory of artists and makers from the Uists, this idea was there before the trip but has definitely grown in strength given the presence of 'made in Orkney'. Promote made in Uist especially in the Taigh Chearsabhagh shop.
Appendix 2

Crafts Research Trip to Orkney - original proposal
The purpose of the trip:

Craft-makers from Orkney and the Highlands and Islands of Scotland are meeting together in Stromness on the 25th September. It's an opportunity for Outer Hebrides makers to join them and to add value, do further research on craft marketing and development in Orkney, to gather information, exchange knowledge and learn through shared experiences. A full programme follows.

A group of 4 full-time or part-time craft-makers working in the Outer Hebrides (2 representing Lewis and Harris, 2 representing the Uists and Barra) will be selected from applications received by CnES Arts Development Officer: Elsie Mitchell by 5pm on Friday 28th August 2009. A short application form is included in this pack. Each successful applicant will be required to contribute £50 towards the trip prior to travel. Priority will be given to crafts makers that can represent a range of similar businesses operating in the Outer Hebrides, e.g. people actively involved in art/craft associations, craft producers groups or similar networks.

The purpose of the group trip is to research different ways of developing craft and marketing product from an island perspective. Together with CnES Arts Development Officer - Elsie Mitchell, the group will research the Orkney Craft Trail, visit makers in their studios and retail outlets, attend the Makers' Day for participants from Orkney, Shetland, the Inner and Outer Hebrides and the Highlands, and attend an informal feedback meeting in Orkney to reflect on the information gathered during the group trip. The CnES Arts Development Officer will collate a report on the research trip for circulation to the OH crafts community and project funders and to inform future Crafts Planning in the Outer Hebrides.

A substantial group of 10 makers from Shetland will be attending together with their Craft Development Officer, Hazel Hughson. 10 makers representing craft associations in the Highlands and Inner Hebrides will also be present. Both Orkney and Shetland have established a reputation for high quality crafts and successful marketing strategies for those crafts. The trip offers a unique opportunity to meet with makers from throughout the Highlands and Islands in one research trip. This could provide a timely learning experience for crafts groups from the Outer Hebrides and Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, who are at an earlier stage in the process of developing, marketing and increasing sales of OH crafts. With a ‘Year of Island Cultures’ being proposed for 2011 – a collaborative project between, Shetland Islands Council, Orkney Islands Council and Comhairle nan Eilean Siar - the trip also offers an opportunity to form inter-island links and reflect on how crafts could contribute to and benefit from YoIC 2011.

Individual Outer Hebrides craft-makers are, of course, free to book and attend the Orkney Makers Day and Orkney Crafts Trail entirely at their own expense, out-with the CnES sponsored group project.
For the Sponsored Craft Research trip to Orkney, CnES Arts Development will:

- select and sponsor a group of 4 OH makers. Preference will be given to makers working full-time, part-time, that can represent a range of similar businesses operating in the Outer Hebrides, e.g. people actively involved in art/craft associations, craft producers groups or similar networks, makers marketing work within and out-with the Outer Hebrides, and through websites;
- co-ordinate the research trip;
- book and prepay all Orkney B&B accommodation, flights to Orkney, and Orkney group car -hire;
- provide a £15 per day/ per participant allowance for lunch and evening meals for 5 days (to be claimed by participants on return to the OH);
- organise attendance at the Makers Day;
- provide maps and contact details for the Craft Trail;
- organise a feedback meeting after the event, in Orkney and maintain e-mail/phone contact on return to the OH;
- create and collate an evaluation of the Orkney research experience and make this available to participating makers, the OH Crafts community and the project funders;
- cover a percentage of the cost of flights to Orkney, B&B accommodation in Orkney, 1 self-drive car in Orkney;

Note: CnES will not cover: the cost of taking makers’ own vehicles to Orkney or travel out-with the group car-hire; full travel insurance for individuals; food and refreshments in Orkney and Inverness out-with the £15 per day/ per participant allowance for lunch/ evening meals for 5 days, B&B breakfasts and the Makers Day Lunch; any additional transport costs on Orkney which are not related to the crafts research trip.

Sponsored Outer Hebrides Craft-makers will, in return for sponsorship, agree to:

- work as individuals and within the group for all five days, to carry out research within the purpose of the trip;
- use the opportunity of being together with other makers from throughout the OH to share information and discuss the potential to work together.
- visit Orkney makers in their studios or retail outlets and collect information on the Craft Trail;
- attend the full Makers’ Day, lunch is provided;
- make an individual record of their visit and group research in written notes or photographs;
- fill out an evaluation form and attend a meeting in Orkney to assess the trip;
- contribute £50 each towards travel to Orkney, accommodation and transport in Orkney and payable to Comhairle nan Eilean Siar prior to travel;
- in Orkney and Inverness pay for their own food and refreshments above the £15 lunch/ evening meal allowance, B&B breakfasts, and the Makers’ Day lunch.
- cover their own full travel insurance.
- cover any additional transport costs/expenses in Orkney/ Inverness/ Stornoway which are not related to the crafts research trip.

For more information contact:

Elsie Mitchell, Arts Development Officer, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar
T: 01851 672 708 or by email to:
emitchell@cne-siar.gov.uk
**Proposed 5 day Programme:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wednesday 23rd September</th>
<th>Travel to Orkney: Flight Details</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dep: Benbecula 10.00 Arr: Stornoway 10.30 Highland Airways (if participating from Barra: Barra – Eriskay Ferry dept 07.00 arrives 07.40 drive to Benbecula to catch flight)</td>
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<td>Dep: Stornoway 15.15 Arr: Inverness 16.00 Flybe</td>
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<td>Dep: Inverness 17.50 Arr: Kirkwall 18.35 Flybe</td>
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<td>Accommodation B&amp;B in Stromness. One self-drive car will be arranged for travel in Orkney.</td>
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| Thursday 24th Sept | Research Orkney Craft Trail together. For info on Orkney Designer Crafts and an online Orkney Craft Trail brochure follow this link [http://www.orkneydesignercrafts.com](http://www.orkneydesignercrafts.com) |
|                   | Meet together with makers from Highlands and other Islands in the evening, venue tbc |

<p>| Friday 25th Sept | <strong>Attending Makers’ Day - 10am - 4pm at Pier Arts Centre, Victoria Street, Stromness.</strong> There is no charge for the day and lunch is included. |
|                 | <strong>Morning session:</strong> |
|                 | 10.00am – 10.30am  Coffee and introductions |
|                 | 10.30am – 10.40am  Welcome to The Pier Arts Centre |
|                 | <strong>10:40am – 11.00am</strong> |
|                 | · Outline of Craft Development in the Highlands and Islands and plan for the day (Pamela Conacher, Craft Development Coordinator, HI-Arts) |
|                 | · Craft development in Orkney (Clare Gee, Manager, Museums and Heritage / Arts Development, Orkney Islands Council) |
|                 | · Craft Development in Shetland (Hazel Hughson, Arts Development Officer - Craft, Shetland Arts) |
|                 | <strong>11.00am – 1.00pm</strong> |
|                 | · Presentation about Orkney Craft Association and Craft Trail (11.00 – 11.20am) |
|                 | · Presentation on Support for Artists’ and Makers’ Groups by John Saich, Arts Development Coordinator, HI-Arts (11.20 – 11.40am) |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>11.40 – 12.00pm</td>
<td>Makers’ Tales – talks by two Makers from the Highlands</td>
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<td>12.00 – 12.40pm</td>
<td>Marketing and Websites - a presentation by Sian Jamieson – Audience Development Coordinator, HI-Arts</td>
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<td>12.40 – 1.00pm</td>
<td>Questions and Answers session</td>
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<td>1.00pm – 2.00pm</td>
<td>Lunch plus the opportunity to network with other makers</td>
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<td>2.00pm – 4.00pm</td>
<td>Afternoon:</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.00pm – 2.20pm</td>
<td>Makers’ Tales – talks by two Makers from Shetland</td>
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<td>2.20 – 2.50pm</td>
<td>Craft Standards – a presentation by Philippa Hobson of Creative and Cultural Skills</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.50 – 3.20pm</td>
<td>Makers’ Tales – talks by two Makers from Orkney</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.20 – 4.00pm</td>
<td>Summing up of the day plus Questions and Answers session</td>
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Sat. 26th Sept

An extra day for further visits to the Orkney Craft Trail, research, additional meetings arising from the Makers’ Day and a final feedback/evaluation meeting with the CnES Arts Development Officer.

Sun. 27th Sept

A day off to explore Orkney

Flight Kirkwall to Inverness Dep: 16.35, Arr 17.20
Overnight Accommodation in Inverness

Mon. 28th Sept.

Flights

Dep. Inverness 08:20 Arr Stornoway 09.00 Flybe
Dep. Inverness 07:35 Arr Benbecula 09.30 (via Stornoway) Highland Airways
(if participating from Barra: Eriskay – Barra Ferry dept 13.00 arrives 13.40)
Individual Sponsorship Application Form for:
A Craft Research trip to Orkney, including a Makers’ Day at the Pier Arts Centre, Stromness, 23rd-28th September 09

Please note that the **deadline** for completed applications to be delivered to CnES Arts Development Officer: Elsie Mitchell is 5pm on Friday 28th August 2009. Send your form by email to: emitchell@cne-siar.gov.uk A decision on your application will be sent to you on Monday 31st August.

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<tr>
<th>Full Name (not your business name):</th>
<th>Do you work full-time or part-time? <strong>Please delete as appropriate</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Business Name</td>
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<td>Address</td>
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<td>Website/s</td>
<td>Do you belong to any craft groups or art &amp; craft associations? If so please detail:</td>
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How would you benefit from a craft research trip to Orkney with a Makers’ Day in Stromness?

How would the art & crafts group/association/network that you represent benefit from the research trip?