

Wysing Arts Centre Artist Studio Needs Survey: November 2023

1. The Survey
2. Appendix 1: Supporting studies
3. Appendix 2: Participant postcodes

1. The Survey

Background:

Wysing Arts Centre is currently the only affordable studio provider in Cambridge / greater Cambridge. Trustees have been considering the following questions:

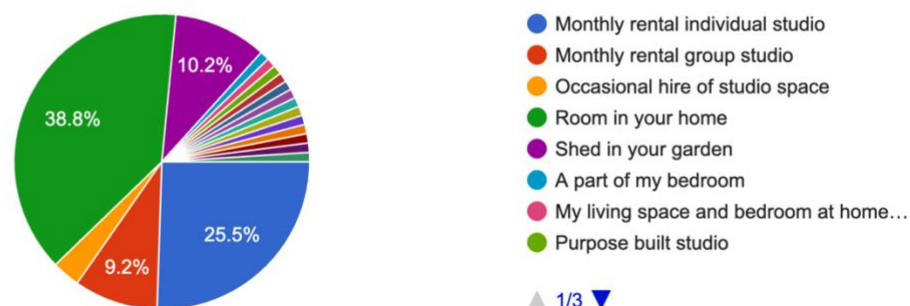
- a) Should Wysing expand studio its studio provision e.g. by taking on additional space to accommodate artists at affordable rents, and if so how;
- b) How do artists in our region currently practice as artists;
- c) What does affordability look like for artists in our region;
- d) What opportunity is there to expand studio provision within local developments.

In November 2022, Wysing Arts Centre circulated a brief questionnaire, via email newsletter, social media and targeted contacts lists (e.g. locally-based artists, studio providers in the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough and Eastern region) to ascertain the landscape of artist studio provision in the region.

99 Responses from artists predominantly based in greater Cambridge and the Eastern region: 42.7% were based in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. A further 27.2% were from the wider Eastern region, with the remaining 30.1% responding from elsewhere in the UK.

What space do you currently use as your studio?

98 responses

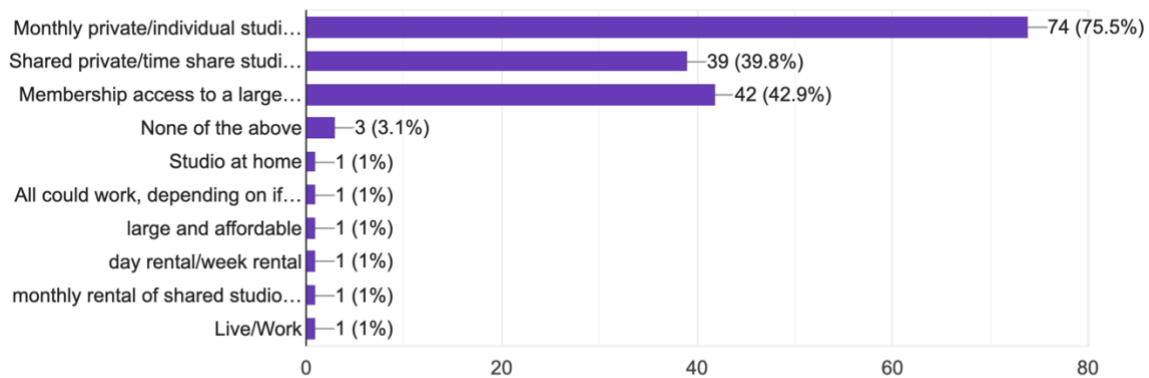


- 38.8%: room in your home; 1% ‘desk in front room’, 6% ‘a part of my bedroom’ or ‘in another part of my home’
- 25.5%: monthly rental, individual studio
- 12.2%: shed / studio in your garden
- 9.2%: monthly rental group studio
- 3.1%: occasional hire studio space
- other: a combination of working in ad-hoc spaces such as university, or spaces at work.

The majority of artists do not have their preferred working location – a private, dedicated professional studio with a ‘make do’ approach. Although 42% practice at home, only 1% express a preference for this (see below).

If you would consider renting a studio on a monthly basis, which situations do you find of interest?
Please tick all that apply.

98 responses



We asked artists to freely respond to the question: ‘What does studio provision mean to you?’

“It’s VITAL to my practice and my career as an artist to have an affordable studio space to work in. It doesn’t have to be high spec if it means it is affordable. I am ... about to be evicted so the [studio site I occupy currently] site can be redeveloped into ... flats. It’s a big concern that artist workspaces and the significant cultural contribution that they make to the region are being undervalued.”

“I’ve never had a studio before due to financial circumstances. I have been practicing for 6 years.”

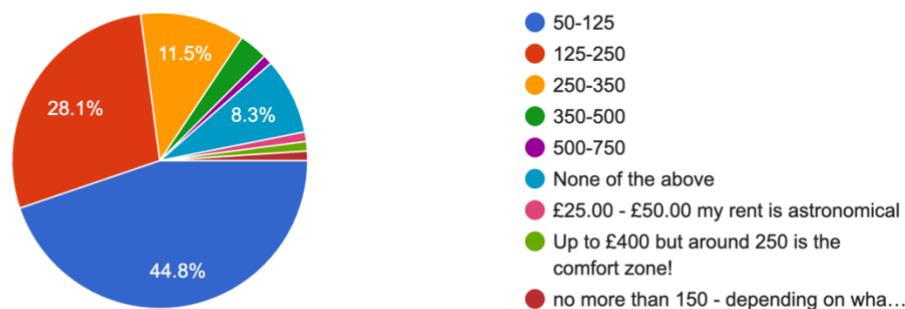
“I have, in the past, paid up to 300 per month for a warehouse space that is [so cold that it is] impossible to work in.”

“Studios are widely dispersed in the area, and often for short term lets. You are limited by public transport, which is limited locally, if you don’t always have a car, or don’t drive. Most artists will likely need some storage, and a place to work.”

"I would really like a studio. I would like to rent a space in relation to a group that held exhibitions and access to gallery [and professional] networks."

If you would consider renting an individual private studio space, how much rent would you be able to pay per month?

96 responses



- 54% were able to afford up to £125 monthly rent, with only 5% being able to afford between £350-700.
- 9.3% were not able to afford any of the price brackets listed above or specified that they are only be able to afford below £50 per month.

2. **Appendix 1: supporting studies**

Greater Cambridge Creative Workspace Supply and Demand, Simon Poulter Consultants, 2020 (accessed 29 Jan 2026):

<https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/media/9751/greater-cambridge-creative-workspace-supply-and-demand-report.pdf>

Artists' Workspace Consultation Report, Dr Rhian Scott, King's College London, 2022 (accessed 29 Jan 2026): https://creativelandtrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/KCL_ArtistsWorkspaceConsultationReport_June2022.pdf -

which includes specific recommendations including defining affordability criteria

Understnading the Value of Artists' Studios, UCL Bartlett School of Architecture, 2022 (accessed 29 Jan 2026): <https://acme.org.uk/assets/originals/Understanding-the-Value-of-Artists-Studios-UCL-partnership-report.pdf> -

which underpins the value of artists' studios to creative communities and highlights issues with affordability and precarity, and includes the following recommendations (selection):

- Research establishing value should move beyond ... economic value to focus on ... spatial, social, cultural, psychological and educational values.
- Artist studios should be seen as a separate category, not lumped together with ... creative workspace ... [so that] their provision is not negatively impacted by policies that benefit wider workspace provision only.

- A better understanding of the business models of artists’ studio providers, may ... [help to create] sustainable property solutions which move away from a reliance on temporary solutions and short leases.

Artist and Artworker Survey Report, Visual Arts South West, 2024 (accessed 29 Jan 2026): <https://vasw.org.uk/resources/vasw-2023-artist-and-artworker-survey-report>

3. Appendix 2: Participant postcodes

Note: while the postcodes outlined below indicate a range of responses outside the Cambridgeshire region, similar conditions are facing artists across the UK – as referenced in multiple reports detailed in Appendix 2.

Table 1. Survey Respondents by Region (Summary)

Region	Number of respondents	Percentage of total
Cambridgeshire & Peterborough	44	42.7%
Wider Eastern region (excluding Cambridgeshire & Peterborough)	28	27.2%
Rest of the UK	31	30.1%
Total	103	100%

Table 2. Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Respondents (n = 44)

Postcodes
CB1, CB1, CB1, CB1 2DZ, CB1 3HZ, CB1 3HT, CB1 3SZ, CB1 8PZ, CB2 1TP, CB4, CB4 1DA, CB4 1DA, CB4 1EF, CB4 2AS, CB4 2BX, CB4 2PR, CB4 3EP, CB4 3JD, CB6 1AG, CB7 5TW, CB7 5UW, CB11 4QW, CB23, CB23 2NJ, CB23 2RL, CB23 3AP, CB23 4HX, CB23 7GB, CB24 6AG, CB25 0EF, CB25 9AJ, CB6 2SS, CB87EY, CB102XH, CB114FF, PE7 8JR, PE26 2LH, PE29, PE29 1XQ, PE29 7HJ

Table 3. Wider Eastern Region (excluding Cambridgeshire & Peterborough) (n = 28)

County	Postcodes
Norfolk	NR1 3BA; NR2 3BL; NR2 3EE; NR4 6NB; NR6 7AG; NR34AN
Suffolk	IP1 2HH; IP6 8RA; IP326DJ
Essex	CM24 8AL; CO5; CO10; CO10 2AG; CO10 9NJ; CO13 9HT; SS1 2LQ; SS7 3RY
Hertfordshire	AL1; AL7 4BZ*; SG6 1FY; SG9 0DG; SG17 5NY; SG18 9RS; SG86PS
Bedfordshire	MK43 8RJ

* Respondent noted business location as Cambridgeshire, but postcode is Hertfordshire.

Table 4. Rest of the UK Respondents (n = 31)

Area	Postcodes
London	E5 8DJ; E11 3NH; E17; N16 6UN; NW10DR; SE1; SE4 2JE; SE14 5SE; SE240AS; SW2
South East (outside Eastern region)	BN1 2JH; GU26 6TW
Midlands & North	GL4 5JQ; LS6 1EN; M15 4QY; MK150AY; S40 4EB
South Coast	SO16 4FQ
Wales	CF11; NP19 7AE