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# BRISTOL DOORS OPEN DAY 2009

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An interesting year: on the one hand glorious weather encouraging people out, on the other hand unfortunate coincidence with the rival attractions of the Organic Food Fair (and the Kite Festival). To my relief we more or less seemed to hold our own – some venues down on previous years, some steady, some up. A rough adding up gives a total of some 40,000 visits were made to the 57 venues open. From totally unscientific asking around, I surmise that a lot of people enjoyed **both** Doors Open Day and the Organic Fair – resulting probably in more people out and about in Bristol overall that day, but visiting fewer venues. Many of the venues particularly commented this year on how their visitors seemed to really enjoy themselves – and also how nice it was having less crowd pressure. Interestingly the organiser at the CNAA in Whitefriars, with its unique collection of C20 artists' work, said that he found it was noticeable that virtually all the people who visited this year had a real interest in the artwork, whereas in previous years he thought some people were just ticking off venues.

In this time of increasing awareness of the threats from global warming, I like to think that though the Organic Fair may be promoting a sustainable way of life more explicitly, Doors Open Day has been subtly promoting these values for many years.

We encourage people to walk to the more central venues and in order to facilitate bus rather than car usership, we list the bus number to all other venues. We provide a regular free bus for half a dozen of the more distant venues and we encourage people to use the ferry, or to bicycle.

This year people could learn about green issues at Create, about waste management at Wessex Water and about wind turbines at St.Vincent's Works (OK they're in a beautiful building too!). And of course many of our venues also illustrate what splendid new uses can be made of 'recycled' buildings, whether it be Create in an ex bonded tobacco warehouse, Spike Island - an art gallery where once they packed Typhoo tea, or dock workers' houses now providing a base for the Sea Cadets.

And above all we promote what pleasures our **local** environment has to offer – encouraging the general sustainability of Bristol and the reduction of our personal carbon footprints.

We are very grateful to the continuing support we have had in this year of economic downturn:

- from our sponsors Alder King, Arups, Burges Salmon, HBG Construction & Under the Sky who cover the cost of printing the 35,000 leaflets;
- to GWE Business West who covered everything else;
- to the Evening Post with both its pullout spread in the week itself and also its general coverage in the weeks leading up to the event - they did a magnificent two page article about Wessex Water on the Thursday before and the net result was that that the number of visitors there increased by 50% on last year;
- for the pro bono PR work of Trimedia who helped ensure all the media coverage generally;
- to Montage who, designed and managed the website – an increasingly important option for those seeking information in our IT literate age;
- to the team at the TIC Information desk in Explore who magnificently fielded DOD queries;
- to my long suffering committee;
- and of course to all the many people who opened their venues and provided such a splendid welcome to all those lucky visitors.

Thank you all.

Doors Open Day next year is Saturday September 11<sup>th</sup> 2010.