

## Newsletter no.4: July 2002

Dear Artisans,

Lewes Artisans was two years old last month! We feel we have come a long way in that time, the membership has increased from the six we started with to touching sixty.

The vast majority of you wanted a periodic newsletter, either like this or by email, because there was a feeling around that you had little idea about what was going on. Those of you that have email addresses on our records will be sent this by email unless you tell us don't wish to receive it. If you have an email address which we don't know about, please consider letting us use it as it saves on postage. Your email address will never be passed on to third parties.

### RESULTS OF MEMBER SURVEY

Thankyou to all the artisans who answered our questions in the recent survey we did.

Sadly, we did not manage to speak to everyone, but the majority that we did speak to gave us a really useful insight into the thoughts, feelings and aspirations of artisans in general.

One of the big things that came out of this was you almost all felt that Lewes Artisans was a good idea, it had a future and that you want it to succeed. Not unreasonably some people expressed a concern that more might be done to promote Lewes Artisans.

### IMPROVING OUR PROFILE LOCALLY

With the help of new member Robin Houghton we are looking at ways of increasing our local profile. We will keep you informed, but press coverage is something we are looking into seriously. In the immediate term though look out for a Sussex Express advert featuring Kate Hook (Kilim) on Friday 26th July. There will also be a short paragraph about us in a special "Lewes" section of the paper.

We are also thinking about doing a full page ad. in the Express featuring a selection of artisans. I know that some of you have already expressed an interest in this. The cost to you will be cheaper than taking out your own ad, plus you will benefit from the impact that the full page will have. If you would like to take part in this please let us know so we can plan both the ad. and the accompanying PR.

Everyone can help to promote the artisans, by putting up stickers in windows, displaying leaflets, finding places where leaflets, posters can be displayed etc, ostentatiously drinking from the Artisans' mugs! If possible mention the Lewes Artisans web address in your own advertisements, and spread the word by whatever means. All for one and one for all. Word of mouth is a very effective form of advertising, and remember we do have spare leaflets, mugs and stickers, just ask.

### NEW CATEGORIES

As promised from the outset, the website is now divided into the following seven categories: Art & design, Crafts, Mind & Body, Small Trade & Retail, Business Services, Home Improvement & Renovation, and Interiors & Furnishing. We hope this will make it easier for those using the site to find who or what they are looking for.

### HOW VISIBLE ARE LEWES ARTISANS ON THE WEB?

What is not perhaps generally known is that Lewes Artisans ranks highly on internet search engines, (especially the one now most widely used in the UK, Google) with regard to individuals and skills. What this means is that if someone was searching for (say) a carpenter in Lewes, they typed in "Carpenter" and "Lewes", then Lewes Artisans pages for carpenters would be displayed.

This believe me, is no mean feat! Similarly, typing in a name of an artisan will almost always bring up that persons page, provided of course that they did not join last week.

### WHAT IT MEANS TO YOU

The site does get an increasing number of hits every month. Nearly 40% of you have had enquires from the site and in 17% of cases you told us this has led to work. As people in the Lewes area get more internet savvy this figure is bound to increase.

We will endeavour to make this newsletter a more regular occurrence. Remember we welcome and want your feedback, Lewes Artisans is very much a joint venture.

SD JH RH July 2002