



IMPACT REPORT

ARTSPACE
LIFESPACE

20
18



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REFLECTIONS

Celebrating 10 years at the Island is a big achievement for a project that was meant to last six months. In light of the loss of creative space in the city, we have been thinking to the future, not just of the spaces we are custodians of but of the future of art space within Bristol. We have been revisiting some of our USPs - Brave - unafraid and not averse to risk; Trusted - forming relationships, guardians of spaces, building shared solutions and Activist - independent, of the people. In 2018, I joined the DIY Arts Committee and we formed the DIY Cultural Spaces Workgroup. It has been fantastic working with other organisations who are also focused on saving Bristol's cultural landscape and feels like the beginning of a significant body of work in Bristol to stem the displacement of artists.

Our launch at Ashton Court Mansion was a huge success and the singing and dancing from Wise Children and Junior Jungle kiddie raves blew the ghosts away, if not all the cobwebs! We commissioned our first residency exhibition at The Vestibules in association with Bristol City Council and SPACE ran weekly free drop in classes aimed at reducing social isolation.

It has been a year of change, reflection and celebration and I'm excited to see what the next ten years brings for Artspace Lifespace.

Kathryn Chiswell Jones
Company Manager

TRUSTEE STATEMENT


Last year our report started 'Bristol has a reputation as a cultural city', and this year we have seen how under threat that is. It is a reputation built from the ground up by artists, both homegrown and those that had moved here to be a part of what was happening. Bristol is being redeveloped beyond recognition. While that brings new opportunities it also means a lot of what was built up is being edged out by rising costs and the preference for cash over culture. Given this, our charity goals are more important than ever. We need to ensure we hold on to our part of the city's cultural capital while helping artists new and old practice without the high price tag.

This year we've seen some important comings and goings. We'd like to thank Danny Prosser, who was a long running duty manager at The Island, Vicki Edwards our outgoing finance officer, Claire Brown who fulfilled many important roles across projects for the charity, and Ruth Essex stepped down from the board. We welcomed Kara de los Reyes to our board as an observer and Bex Ryan as our new finance officer, also a special welcome to her son Johnny who was born during the year.

In the year we took on one of our most challenging projects in many years, Ashton Court Mansion. We were very happy to have had our proposals for the building accepted and set to work with our vision of how to manage this valuable city asset.

The tender process for Jacob Wells baths was completed during the year and, while disappointed that none of the local art organisation proposals were accepted, it was positive that it was to be taken over by a charity. As the future development of the site is still being considered we are supporting the leaseholding charity to keep the site secure, maintained and open for use as a community hub group and as an artist studio.

In 2018 our partnership with Trinity Community Arts came to an end when their lease ended. Artspace Lifespace took full responsibility for the lease of 6 West Street and setup a sustainable model which both continued to allow some community and low-cost art space use for the building until 2020. We also introduced weekly art classes aimed at reducing isolation and creating community inclusion supported by funding from Awards for All. Sadly, we do not expect this site to be a long-term addition to our portfolio as the area it is in (Old Market) is developing quickly.



Our management of the Vestibules at City Hall continued and we delivered a year round programme of exhibitions at the site.

The Island continues to shine as a beacon in the centre of Bristol as other lights around it have alas been extinguished. We have been in negotiations since the beginning of the financial year to finally have a long term secure future for the project but at the time of writing this, discussions are ongoing. While the project continues to thrive and support more artists than ever, the continued status of the Island as a meanwhile use project means we have had to set our reserves policy higher in order to prepare for possible future changes.

During the year we continued to be supported by Bristol City Council through various grants. The Key Arts Provider funding – a pot that had supported many organisations over a long time and had been vital support to the city's cultural infrastructure – came to an end. In its place a variety of new targeted grants were offered and we were pleased to receive funding through the Imagination Fund. This was to be used to support further fundraising, appoint an inclusion officer, and to improve our marketing. We received further grant support from the Big Lottery's Awards for All fund, Quartet Community Foundation and from the Architectural Heritage fund. Travel West gave us funding towards a custom built cargo bicycle, and we were honoured to manage Heritage Lottery funding for 'The Geoffrey Train' a theatre project exploring the criminalisation of gay men in the 1950's. We would also like to thank the businesses Easton Bevins and Womble Bond Dickinson for professional support they offered pro-bono in the year.

Finally, we must thank all staff and volunteers over the year for their support, without which none of the above achievements would be possible.

One of our goals this year was to align our pay structures with the National Joint Council paycales. While we must always operate responsibly within our means we have chosen this pay structure as our template so that we can be clear and open with our staff and reward them in a way that reflects their value – as all responsible employers should.

FINANCES

INCOME EARNED: £234,059
DONATIONS: £14,170
CHARITABLE GRANTS: £43,053
TOTAL EXPENDITURE £242,149
NET INCOME £49,164
RESERVES SET AT £62,800

The charity ended the year with increased unrestricted funds. The prior year had included surplus transferred in from the CIC under which we had previously operated, if removing this then our net income was 216% higher than the previous year. While this was a positive result, we have had to increase our reserve policy to factor in the number of temporary projects currently being managed and increased staff size. This still leaves us with some free reserves that we recognise as a charity need to be invested in the furtherance of our goals and which will be over the following year.

While our overall costs were comparable to the previous year, our income has improved due to more focused management of space and our increased portfolio. Development of our staff team will ensure this combination of good cost management and maximising income from assets continues.

Our trading subsidiary, which operates art and music events at our premises, increased turnover by 19%. Increased costs meant only a 5% increase in gross profit and a 28% drop in overall profit. The main costs increases here have been in licensing, staff and security. Venues in general are feeling an increased squeeze due to these same costs rises, but we are confident that going forward the subsidiary should be able to reverse this drop in profit with the focus on marketing that funding we have received in the year has afforded us. All profits were donated to the charity during the year.

Ryan Corkery
Trustee & Treasurer



The Inclusion Project

In 2017 Artspace Lifespace and the Invisible Circus received funding from Bristol City Council to develop a strategy to make our spaces more inclusive and programming more diverse. We wanted a larger demographic to not only use our spaces but feel empowered within them through collaboration and discussion.

The Art of Inclusion was born out of a need to start conversations city wide around social attitudes towards equality and inclusion, as well as how we break down systemic barriers.

We recruited Ngaio Aniya to work with us as our inclusion officer and in 2018 we launched the Art of Inclusion Project. With the help of Ngaio and the volunteer inclusion team., we've been looking at each of our spaces with a fresh pair of eyes and perspective to think about how we can become more inclusive.

We've also been reviewing our code of conduct and space policies which will be launched across all our venues in 2019.

<https://inclusionprojectbristol.wordpress.com/>

THE ROLE OF THE
ARTIST
IS TO MAKE THE
REVOLUTION IRRESISTIBLE

RESIDENCIES

Artspace Lifespace offer artists residency opportunities to develop specific or open-ended projects and to test works in progress. Our 2018/2019 residency programme enabled us to offer **181** days to over 50 artists and performers across all our venues and a paid residency at The Vestibules in collaboration with Bristol City Council City Arts Team.




**Artist Studios
Gallery
Dance Space
Circus Space
Lockdown Studios
Lockdown Venue**

2018 saw ASLS celebrate 10 years of The Island and its conversion from a disused police station to a popular multi-use arts facility and creation centre based in the heart of Bristol.

We celebrated our tenth birthday with a weekend takeover of MShed and free activities in our circus training, dance and gallery spaces and architectural tours of the of grade II listed former Old Bridewell Police Station and early 20th century police cells.





"Having a studio at the Island has improved the quality of my work and my life; it is a space that inspires creativity and motivation.

Being surrounded by a variety of other wonderfully talented and driven artists in a place that is a huge part of Bristols creative community not only inspires me but gives me a sense of pride in the community and my work as well as a feeling of security and familiarity amongst like-minded people.

My productivity has improved greatly and yet I feel less stressed than when I was working from home or in other studio spaces where I felt isolated.

The Island is a beacon of hope for artists providing genuinely affordable spaces to work and develop in a nurturing and creative environment that immerses you in Bristols creative and cultural possibilities".

--

Michael Sides
Island Tenant



THE GALLERY

4680 individual experiences including:

- Fine Art
- Film
- Sculpture
- Installations
- Photography
- Talks
- Independent Market Shop

"A great venue for Artists"
Aanchal Gupta

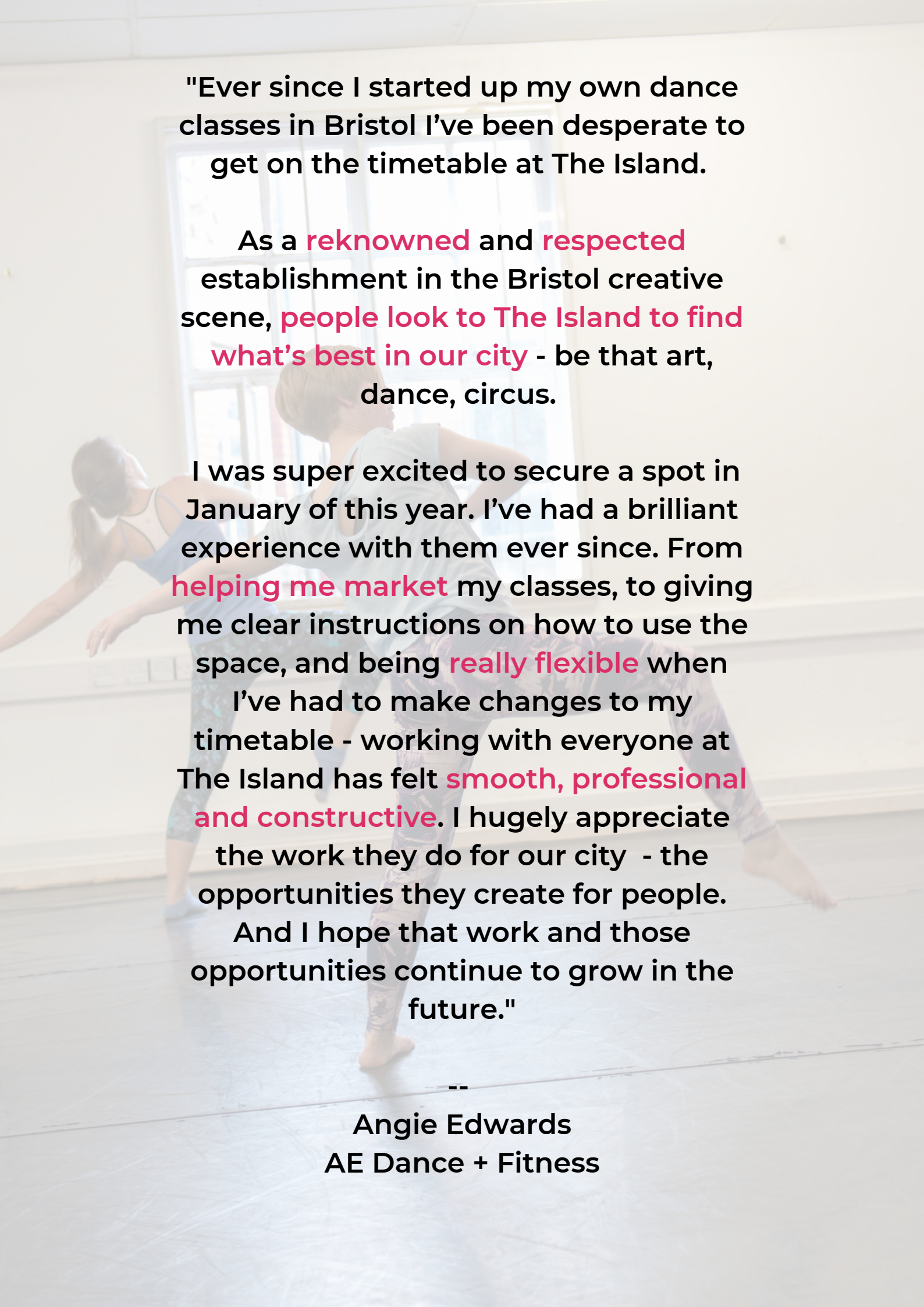


DANCE SPACE



1964 individual experiences including:

- Ballet
- Beyonce Dance Fitness
- Capoeira
- Contemporary Dance
- Irish Dance
- Musical Theatre

A background image of two women in a dance studio. One woman is in the foreground, wearing a grey t-shirt and patterned leggings, with her back to the camera. The other woman is in the background, wearing a blue sports bra and leggings, in a dynamic pose. The studio has large windows and a light-colored floor.

"Ever since I started up my own dance classes in Bristol I've been desperate to get on the timetable at The Island.

As a **reknowned** and **respected** establishment in the Bristol creative scene, **people look to The Island to find what's best in our city** - be that art, dance, circus.

I was super excited to secure a spot in January of this year. I've had a brilliant experience with them ever since. From **helping me market** my classes, to giving me clear instructions on how to use the space, and being **really flexible** when I've had to make changes to my timetable - working with everyone at The Island has felt **smooth, professional and constructive**. I hugely appreciate the work they do for our city - the opportunities they create for people. And I hope that work and those opportunities continue to grow in the future."

--

Angie Edwards
AE Dance + Fitness



CIRCUS SPACE

4928 individual experiences including:

- Acro Yoga
- Aerial Rope (Corde Lisse)
- Silks
- Circus Fitness
- Trapeze (Static, Beginners & Improvers)

"This is such an important space for
us and I love it dearly"
Training Space Member




LOCKDOWN / CELLS

8758 individual experiences including:

- Club Nights
- Theatre
- Graffiti Workshops
- Filming
- Rehearsals

"home to some of the most **adventurous**
dance music in Bristol"

Headfirst

A person is seen from the chest up, wearing a dark jacket, with their right hand raised in a gesture. The background is dark with colorful stage lights (blue, green, yellow) visible. The text is overlaid in white.


“Working with The Island has
been an absolute dream - it's
now one of our favourite small
venues in the country”

--

Dan Summer
Pretty Pretty Good
Photo (c) James Reilly

PPE

”

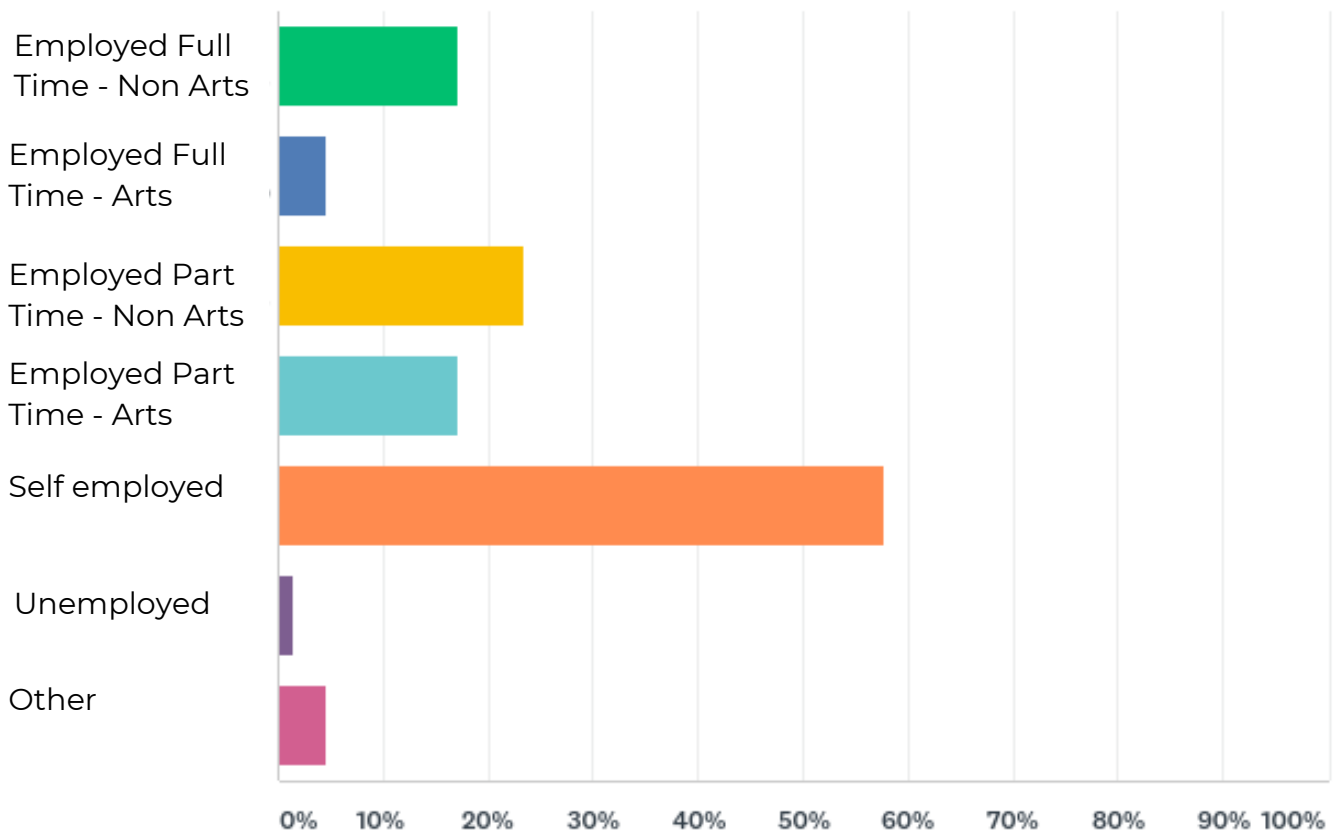
A person is shown from the chest up, wearing a blue jacket. They are illuminated by red and blue stage lights. The text is overlaid in white.

Thank you all at the Island for
everything. Everyone who came
to the show really enjoyed it
and really enjoyed the venue. A
lot of people who came had
never been there before so that's
really lovely too”

--

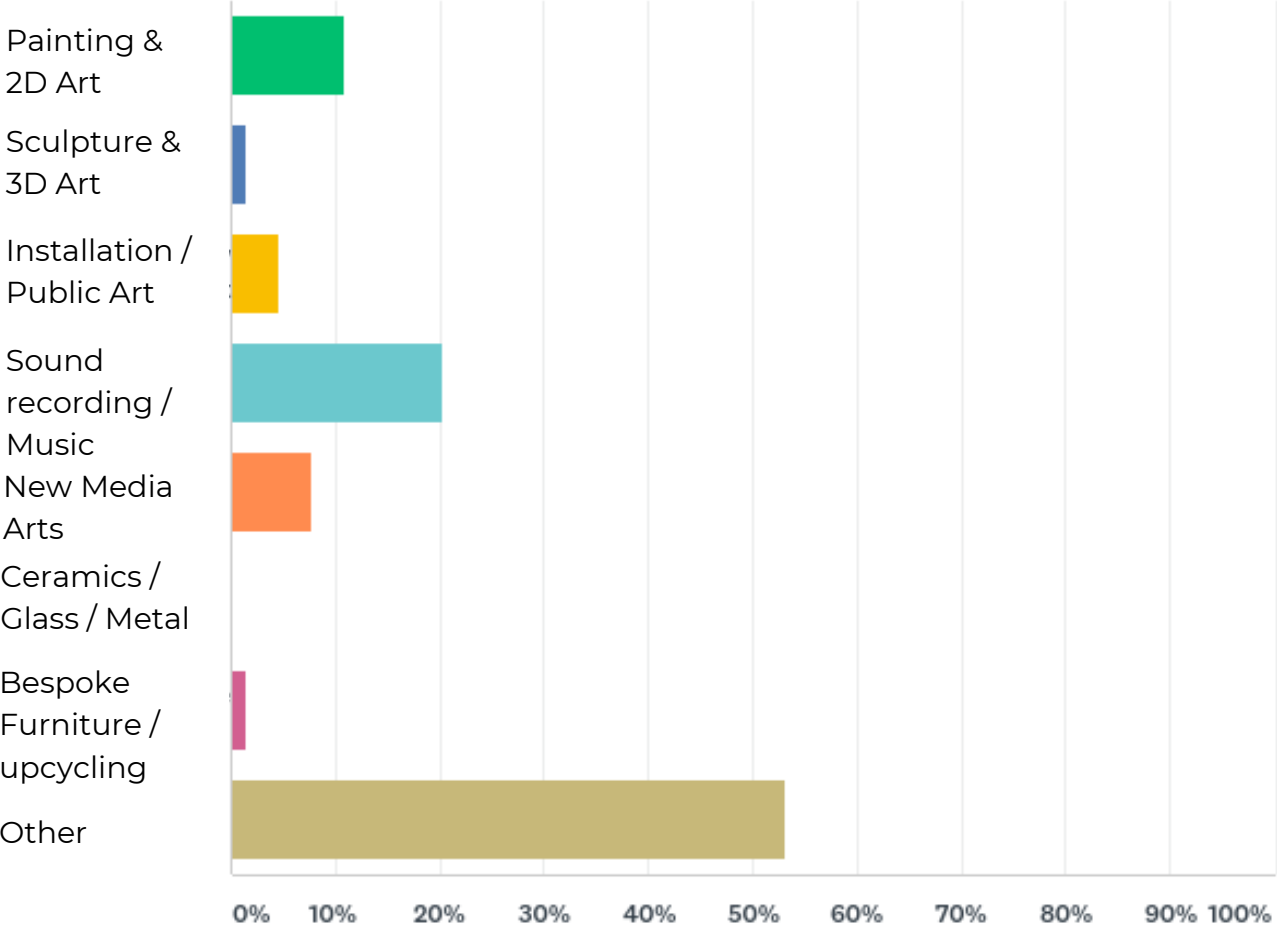
Tom Marshman
A Haunted Existence

2. What is your current career status?



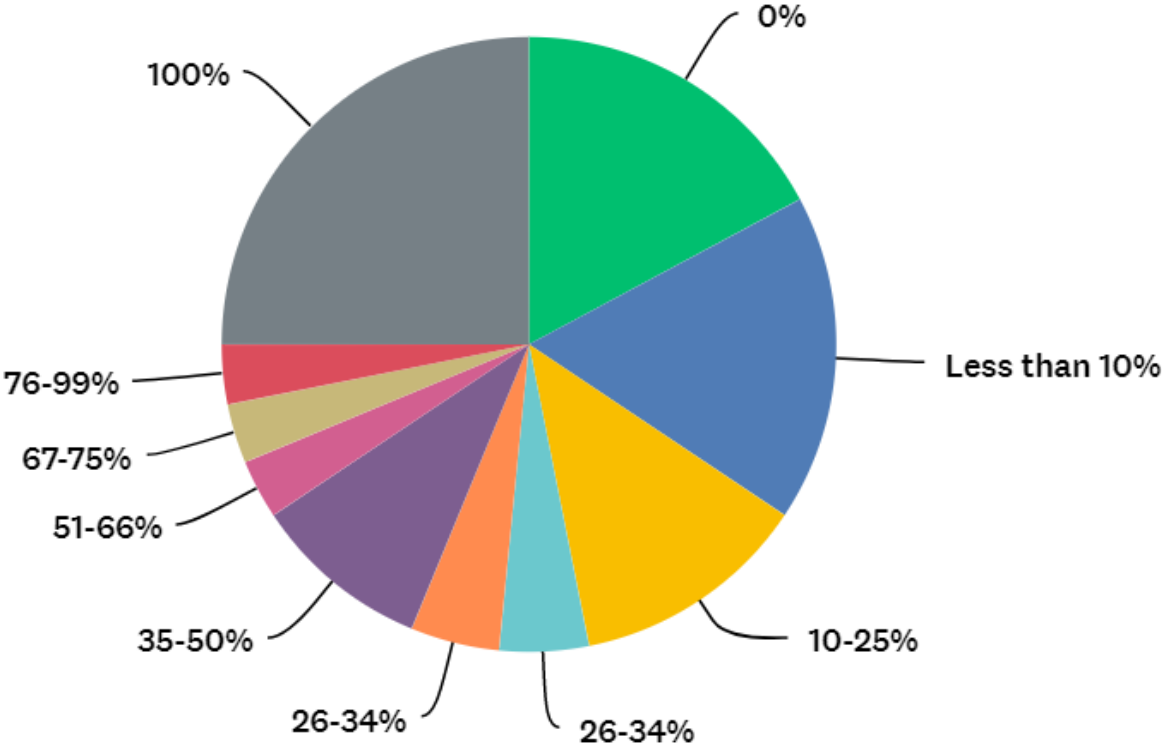
THE ISLAND TENANTS SURVEY

3. What is your main area of artistic activity?



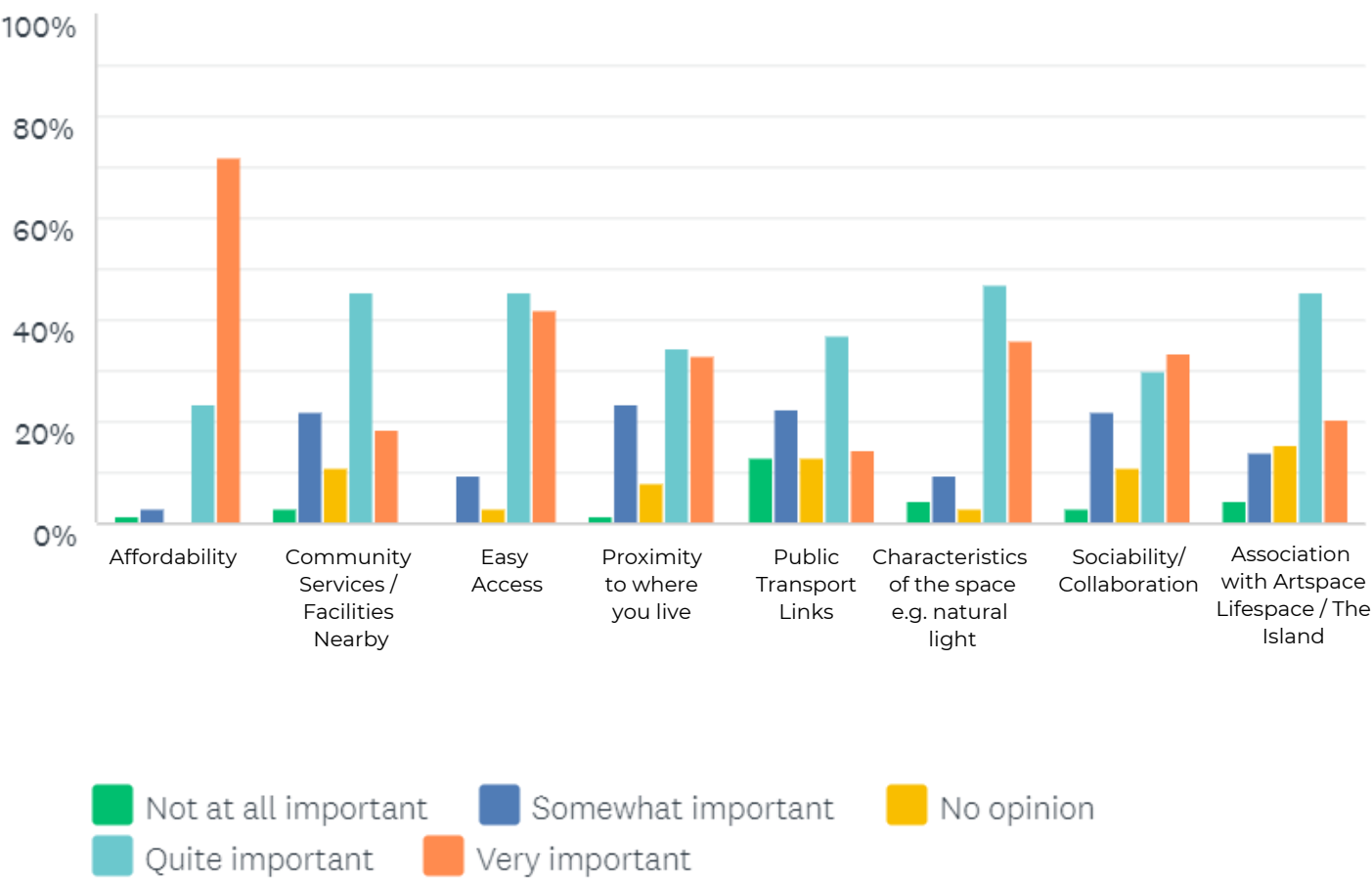
THE ISLAND TENANTS SURVEY

4. What % of your income is due to your artistic practice?



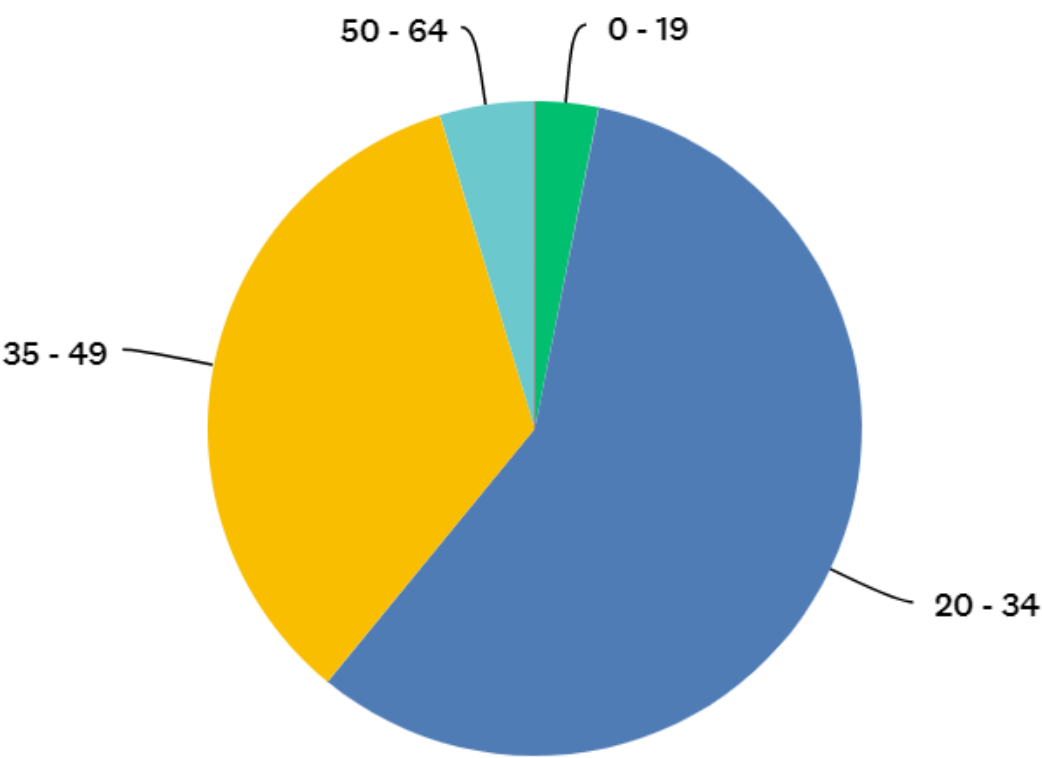
THE ISLAND TENANTS SURVEY

5. How important are the following to your current choice of space?



THE ISLAND TENANTS SURVEY

6. What age range are you in?



THE ISLAND TENANTS SURVEY

7. How happy are you with the affordability of your studio on a scale of 1-10?

8.5 out of 10

8. How happy are you with the level of service provided by the Island Team?

8.5 out of 10

9. What additional facilities would you like at the Island?

Communal Area; Ballet Barres on walls; Water dispensers; Lockers; Updating Toilets & Showers; Improved door entry system; Quarterly Meet and Greet for Artists; Large sinks in studios; Improved heating / air conditioning; Parking; More social gatherings; More dance spaces; More training equipment; Drop in lines; More storage options; Free performance space for public events

THE ISLAND TENANTS SURVEY

10. What artistic facilities do you think are lacking / missing from Bristol?

Affordable and accessible photography and film studios, equipment hire, and dark rooms.

Affordable artistic facilities which allow artists the time and space to create, not restricting them with higher and higher costs.

Affordable live spaces for artists

Affordable messy and large studio spaces

Affordable music studios with community feel other than the island

Affordable theatre rehearsal spaces

Affordable working and exhibition spaces for artists

Affordable working space

Arnolfini!

Art Book Library

Cheap / rough around the edges gallery / event spaces

Cheap easy access 50-100 capacity performance spaces

Cheap rehearsal space, with aerial rigging

Contemporary art gallery

Creation space

Dance all round

Dance hub

Dance spaces

Dance studios, smaller performance spaces for dance

Decent rigging for Circus spaces

Definitely Dance spaces

DIY club spaces with installed sound systems and later licenses

Fashion support , lots for traditional and contemporary artists but not much for fashion technology

Independent shops

Lack of funding

Large international gallery spaces

Large rehearsal rooms for theatre as well as dance

Late night music venues

Maker space, where you can pay a fee to use equipment, take part in workshops, collaborate.

Shops to sell and show work

Support for small, independent live music venues in Bristol under serious threat from things like noise complaints and luxury apartment developments.

Textile dye studios

Tool library



8 SPACE

Artist Studios
Gallery
Fine Art
Sculpture
Installations
Photography
Workshops
Training
Community Art
Classes

Trinity handed back the keys to Bristol City Council on the 30th of March 2018, when the peppercorn leasehold came to an end leaving Artspace Lifespace to manage 6 West Street until March 2020.

The upper floors are rented to artists and the ground floor is still available to hire for gallery exhibitions, workshops, classes and rehearsals.

In 2018 we officially launched our free Lifespace Together classes aimed at the over 50's and Lawrence Hill community, supported by a Big Lottery Awards for All grant.



SPACE

4680 individual experiences

Affordable artist studio provision supporting **10** artists

47 events including exhibitions, training, meetings, theatre rehearsals and workshops plus weekly **Lifespace Together** community art classes

Lifespace Together art classes aimed at reducing isolation was supported by Big Lottery Awards for All funding and LiveWest.

“I really get a **great deal of joy** from doing this class. Improved self confidence and good mental health. A **sense of connection** and gratitude. I also feel lifted and happy after attending each weekly session”.

--

David

“I enjoy coming to the art group as we do lots of art projects and I have loved **getting to know** the different members of staff and all the **people** who came to the group”.

-- Gloria

“The group has **helped me to keep going** through difficult times and it’s been very important for me to have a space to be both creative and with other people”.

--

Belinda

“This class has **helped** me enormously especially **with my depression**. In general it has helped me to come out of my shell, develop my self awareness and **allow me to express myself** in a creative way”.

--

Nalini



ARTS MANSION

We contacted the council in 2017 after hearing Ashton Court Mansion was to close its doors. Six months later and two weeks after signing our lease, we opened the doors to the public in May 2018 with a grand launch event. Ashton Court Mansion has a new lease of life as the Arts Mansion, hosting free art exhibitions, art workshops, junior jungle discos, performance rehearsals, charity team away days and was the home for Wise Children during their rehearsals for their inaugural production.

For many visitors, it was the first time they had ever been inside the mansion and it has been a privilege to enable visitors to see inside and to raise awareness of the plight of the building. Many visitors are not aware that the majority of the building is in dereliction. Until a future use is determined, Artspace Lifespace will continue to fill the mansion with art and cultural events with inclusivity at its core.



ARTS MANSION

9080 individual experiences

Theatre and dance rehearsals, vintage fairs, kiddie raves, art and writing workshops, music nights, sculpture, plus free entry to visual arts exhibitions, family games days opening the house to the public and the 'Art of Recovery' workshops from Bravo 22

‘On a basic level the organisation was easy to deal with, **efficient and reliable** but beyond that you and your **team went more than the extra mile** to make us welcome and comfortable. We loved our time at the mansion and are hoping we’ll be back soon. I know it’s not that constructive, but I really can’t think of anything you could have done better’

--

Poppy Keeling
Executive Producer – Wise Children

“The team were very lovely and on hand all day if we needed them and locked up and secured the mansion when we left. we would definitely book again next year. **A great team!**

--

Annie Hawsley
Vintage Fair.”.

“Aside from giving artists **a rare opportunity to exhibit and create work in a beautiful location**, the building is visited by students from the nearby campus, families, tourists and anyone who wants a cultural day out. It makes viewing and creating art more accessible to people living in Bristol.”.

--

Rebecca Lesley
Exhibiting Artist



Of the events that have been held at the Vestibules, 67% of these have been focused on social change rather than purely on visual arts, so it is clear that The Vestibules is seen as an important venue to continue dialogue through art and exhibition in the city. Exhibitions as temporary and relatively independent entities represent ideal forums for dialogue and for change.

In 2019 The Vestibules became more visible on Park Street due to vinyl graphics on the entrance doorway and a custom logo designed by

Domini McMunn of Crackle & Pop..

We saw a 30% increase in attendance at exhibitions throughout 2019 although the number of artists using the space was down on 2018.

Despite the limitations and challenges in using a Grade listed space adjoined to City Hall, we believe it is important to keep the Vestibules open as a public exhibition space. and Artspace Lifespace has agreed to continue running the Vestibules until 2021.




THE VESTIBULES

5603 individual experiences

24 events

166 days

A background image showing two people, a man and a woman, looking at a book together. The man is on the left, wearing glasses and a dark jacket. The woman is on the right, with blonde hair, wearing a red and white striped shirt. They are both looking down at a book held by the woman. The background is slightly blurred, showing what appears to be an indoor setting with large windows.

"It is significant to retain this building for cultural use to provide a **sense of identity and continuity** and should be kept alive and tangibly cultural. Heritage buildings are our bridge to connect the past history with the present to across to the future. "

--

Abdullah Bash

"It was a real pleasure exhibiting at The Vestibules. Kathryn was **supportive and inventive** in the early stages and Lucie and Dan were hands on deck and accommodating before and during the event. I will book that **beautiful space** with those **wonderful people** as soon as I have a new project to show."

--

Tina Gue

"Love the **positive photos**, may get my own taken without worrying about looking older"; "Great **thought provoking** exhibition"; "Fab exhibition"

--

Feedback via Surveymonkey from This is Us by Tina Gue



"I feel that the venues worked really well
for this exhibition and the feedback
from visitors has been hugely positive."

Whose Culture

--

Kamina Walton
Rising

THANK YOUS

SUPPORT IN KIND

WOMBLE BOND DICKINSON

ANDY DAY

LIVWEST

EASTON BEVAN SURVEYORS

GRANTS

BIG LOTTERY AFA

BRISTOL CITY COUNCIL -

IMAGINATION FUNDING

JOHN JAMES

QUARTET COMMUNITY

FOUNDATION

NORTH SOMERSET COUNCIL -

DISCRETIONARY RATES

RELIEF FOR ARTS MANSION

ASLS

ARTSPACE
LIFESPAC