

THE ARTS SOCIETY SOLIHULL

England & Wales · Charity number 1133670

Details

Other names	SOLIHULL DECORATIVE & FINE ARTS SOCIETY, SOLIHULL DFAS
Status	Registered
Legal form	Other
Registered	2010-01-21
Register	View on the Charity Commission register

Contact

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Activities

Objects: THE PROMOTION AND ADVANCEMENT OF THE AESTHETIC EDUCATION OF THE GENERAL PUBLIC, THE CULTIVATION, APPRECIATION AND STUDY OF THE DECORATIVE AND FINE ARTS AND THE GIVING OF AID TO OR FOR THE PRESERVATION OF THE UNITED KINGDOM'S NATIONAL ARTISTIC HERITAGE FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE GENERAL PUBLIC

Activities: We provide an annual lecture programme on varied subjects in the field of fine and decorative arts. We arrange visits to appropriate venues and organise study days and holidays related to our charitable aims and objectives. We support Arts Volunteering and have a Heritage Volunteering group.

Classification

- **How:** Makes Grants To Individuals, Makes Grants To Organisations, Provides Human Resources, Provides Services
- **What:** Education/training, Arts/culture/heritage/science, Environment/conservation/heritage
- **Who:** Children/young People, The General Public/mankind

Geography

- **Area of benefit:** UNDEFINED. IN PRACTICE, LOCAL.
- Birmingham City
- Solihull
- Staffordshire
- Warwickshire

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-06-30	£46,898	£32,138	-	-
2024-06-30	£35,577	£31,697	-	-
2023-06-30	£29,561	£31,906	-	-
2022-06-30	£28,696	£29,063	-	-
2021-06-30	£21,638	£5,336	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
PHILLIP GRIFFITHS	Chair	2018-10-03
Annette Shillaker		2018-10-03
Di Grainger		2015-10-07
Janet Marsh		2017-10-04
Judith Carver		2013-10-14
LORNA HELEN BOSLEY		
Lynda Jane Donaldson		2015-10-07
Maureen Rachael Hill		2015-10-07
Rosemarie Cope		2018-10-03

THE ARTS SOCIETY SOLIHULL

England & Wales - Charity number 1133670

Accounts

THE ARTS SOCIETY SOLIHULL

Registered Charity No. 1133670

August 2025

Dear Member

The FORTIETH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the Society will be held at The Core, Solihull, on Wednesday 3 September 2025 at 10.30 am, prior to the lecture, to transact the following business:

1. **To receive any apologies.**
2. **Notice of Meeting.**
3. **To receive and adopt the Minutes of the 39th Annual General Meeting held on 4 September 2024.**
4. **To receive and adopt the Chairman's Report for the 2024-2025 season.**
5. **To receive and adopt the Honorary Treasurer's Report and the Audited Accounts for the year ended 30 June 2025.**
(Note: If you intend to ask a question at the AGM under this item, you must notify me of what you intend to ask by 26 August 2025 at the latest. You must be at the AGM to ask your question.)
6. **To elect Officers and Committee.**
7. **To appoint the Independent Examiner.**
8. **Date of next Annual General Meeting – 2 September 2026.**

The AGM will be followed at 11.00 am with a lecture by Pepe Martinez entitled "Banksy"

Yours faithfully,

Janet Marsh

Hon. Secretary

artssocsolihull@gmail.com

0121 705 4796

**Minutes of the 39th Annual General Meeting of
The Arts Society Solihull
held on Wednesday 4 September 2024 at Cineworld, Solihull
Registered Charity No. 1133670**

Chairman's Welcome:

The Chairman welcomed members (110) to the 39th Annual General Meeting of our society. He noted that the Society was thriving, membership had increased and finances were very healthy. As a result of having had to cancel the September meeting last year and the fees for hiring Cineworld being lower than those for hiring The Core, there had been an in-year surplus for 2023-2024 and, as a result, we had been able to reduce this year's membership to £50 from £55. He spoke about the society's interesting and varied lecture programme, complemented by the popular programme of tours and events, which had helped to sustain our membership numbers.

Reference was made to the attempt by the trustees of the national Arts Society to change the constitution, the debate that ensued and the overwhelming vote by local societies not to support the constitutional change. There are now new trustees at national level and they aim to renew the relationship between HQ and local societies.

Mr Griffiths said that the Society owed much to committee members and that he had thoroughly enjoyed his three years as Chairman, helped by their dedication, hard work and comradeship.

1. **Apologies for absence:** The list of apologies is held with these minutes and is available for inspection.
2. **Notice of Meeting:** The notice of the meeting had been circulated to all members in August and the Chairman proposed to take it as read. There were no objections to this proposal.
3. **The Minutes of the 38th Annual General Meeting** held on Wednesday 8 November 2023 had been circulated to all members in August. The Chairman proposed that they be formally adopted, seconded by Susan Gomm and carried by a show of hands.
4. **Chairman's Report (Phillip Griffiths)**
The Chairman's Report for the year ended 30 June 2024 had been circulated to all members in August. The Chairman proposed that it be formally adopted, seconded by David Bixby and carried by a show of hands.
5. **The Hon. Treasurer's Report (Diane Grainger)**
The Hon Treasurer's Report and Accounts for the year ended 30 June 2024 had been circulated to all members with the Chairman's Report in August. No notice had been received of any questions pertaining to the Treasurer's Report or the Accounts. The Chairman proposed that the Treasurer's Report and Accounts be formally adopted, seconded by Judy Evans and carried by a show of hands.
6. **Election of Officers and Committee**
The names of the present Committee Members who were prepared to stand again for office had been displayed prior to the July meeting and prior to this meeting. All had been formally proposed and seconded. Their re-election was carried by a show of hands.
Phillip Griffiths was standing down as Chairman at this meeting and he congratulated the new Chairman, Judith Carver, and handed the Chair to her. Judith thanked Phillip on behalf of all members for his leadership over the previous three years and then outlined the plans for the 2024/2025 year.
7. **Appointment of Independent Examiner (Carole Orford)**
The new Chairman was pleased to confirm that Carole Orford had agreed to act as Independent Examiner for the financial year ending on 30 June 2025. Her appointment was proposed by Sue Burden, seconded by Nick Stephens and carried by a show of hands.
8. **Date of next Annual General Meeting**
The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 3 September 2025. There being no further business, the meeting was declared closed and the Chairman thanked members for their attendance.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2024 - 2025 (Incorporating the Committee's annual reports)

We have enjoyed another successful and interesting year, as the individual reports from our committee members testify. Please do take time to read what they have to say about the society. A society of which we are rightly proud and which responds to change and feedback and is constantly evolving.

Throughout this year we have seen our membership grow as a result of our popularity and the welcome addition of members from The Arts Society Arden. It has been a pleasure to talk to these new members and to see how quickly they have settled with us. We have been carefully monitoring membership numbers in line with the capacity of both Cineworld and The Core and whilst total membership has often exceeded the capacity of both venues (which have roughly the same number of seats) we know from registration figures that current attendance leaves us with sufficient space.

The staff at Cineworld both in management and behind the scenes have made us most welcome whilst The Core has been closed and I would like to say a personal thanks to them for enabling us as a society to continue with our monthly meetings. The decision to move back to what has been the home of the society since its inception was not entered into lightly. After much discussion and crunching of numbers we agreed that it was the sensible thing to do.

The increase in the number of responses to the request for lecture feedback confirms your interest in maintaining high standards as well as providing us with valuable feedback. At times, however, we do wonder if we have all watched and listened to the same lecture when comments can be as varied as "very interesting and informative lecture on a subject I didn't know anything about" to "pace of lecture a bit slow and some repetition so I nearly fell asleep". Both of which came from the same recent lecture! It just proves what an interesting group we are and that you can't please all of the people all of the time – though we do try.

It has been pleasing to experience the improvement in communication from London and what feels like a genuine drive to embrace and involve local societies and their members; looking out instead of looking in. I will keep you posted on developments.

We know how much you value the trips and visits we organise and how much they add to your membership of the society. Costs in all areas of our organisation are escalating considerably and at all times we have our financial responsibilities at the forefront of our planning. However, we are still able to support the development of art for local children and their schools through grants. Each of these things reflect the superb way in which the committee strives to enhance the success of the society; it has been such a privilege to work with them this year.

We are always on the lookout for new faces to add experience to the team. Do speak to us if you have a little time to spare and the inclination to add your expertise.

The return to the Core Theatre in September coincides with the 40th anniversary of the society and we are looking to highlight this in a number of different ways throughout the year, so do keep an eye on your emails.

Thank you for your support and good will over the last year. I am really looking forward to continuing that relationship next year. Our aims are simple: to inform about the arts, to explore a breadth of subject matter, to stimulate discussion and encourage further interest, to share experiences with like-minded people, to broaden knowledge and to entertain.

Programme Secretary (Lorna Bosley)

This year has seen a diverse range of topics, and our lecturers have enjoyed visiting us here in Solihull. We had very positive feedback from most of our lectures and the lecture given by Sarah Lenton – 300 Years of Christmas at Covent Garden was very much enjoyed. Benedict Morrison lectured us on Cinema from the Rubble: The Post War Politics of Ealing Studios. Many members had memories of the films he discussed, and some members were going to try to download these golden oldies for their enjoyment.

Once more we had Bertie Pearce who has visited us several times before. This time he gave us his lecture Wonder Workers and the Art of Illusion: the History of Magic through Art and Pictures. Bertie never fails to please, and it was a pleasure to have him back in Solihull.

During the coming year we have a programme which I hope will spark your interest. In September, Pepe Martinez will be giving his lecture on Banksy, and you will see from the website that, over following months, we have lectures on: Women Artists in Britain 1520 – 1920; Charles 1, King and Collector; the History of Portmeirion; Food and Art through the ages from Renaissance Sugar Sculpture to 3D printing; The Art of Art Deco; The Art of the Japanese Garden; 18thC England through the eyes of Canaletto; Death by Wallpaper; The History of Opera; Bronze Frescos of Santorini; and Anthony Gormley.

I have had several enquiries (sometimes on behalf of other societies) as to how much it costs to have a lecturer come to Solihull. This varies as it depends on whether or not they are situated in London or whether they live further afield, in which case we pay for overnight accommodation, mainly at the Travel Lodge in Solihull as this would appear to be the most reasonably priced. On average it costs approximately £600 for lecturers attending from London. We ask lecturers who travel by car to cost their travel expenses on the equivalent advance rail fare, and several lecturers who live substantially far away will set their expenses at a fixed price favourable to our society. I hope this gives you an insight into the cost of lecturers attending Solihull.

I look forward to seeing you at our lectures and I am always keen to hear your appraisal and reflections of our lectures.

Membership Secretary (Phil Griffiths)

In recent years, the Society's membership has remained at 300 at renewal in July, climbing to about 320 over the year with usually 200 attending a lecture. This year there has been a steady increase in both membership and attendance at lectures. Every month at least 10 members have joined the Society, so that by April 2025 we were approaching maximum capacity, although this was never reached. Growth has partly been natural, with new members attracted by both the lecture programme as well as the variety of trips and visits. However, the closure of The Arts Society Arden has been a major factor in the increase and we have welcomed many of Arden's members. With membership renewal at the end of June 2025 membership should be around the 400 mark.

Heritage Volunteers (Maureen Hill)

All good things come to an end and we have now completed our work at Packwood House for The National Trust.

Our first meeting at Packwood was in January 2014 and, in the 11 years that followed, we have enjoyed providing the following:

- a) Creating a copy of the original Visitor's Book worked by Baron Ash's Mother.

- b) Replicating the pattern of a tapestry hanging in the Dining Room to create the cushions below the Oriel Window in the Great Hall.
- c) Interpreting the new graphic images used by the Trust on two bench cushions spelling out the name Packwood etc (located upstairs in the Observation Room).
- d) Producing six chair covers for the chairs located in the long gallery between the Entrance and the Great Hall. These were an identical copy of the original covers which still exist underneath but show how vibrant the colours and pattern were originally. They are lined with a silk-like material to ensure no damage would incur during removal for cleaning.

All items have labels indicating that they were produced by The Heritage Volunteers of The Arts Society Solihull.

We have worked with a number of National Trust Managers over this period and thank them for their assistance and cooperation. They have also encouraged our Society to hold some events on their premises, which we have enjoyed.

Our volunteer numbers have dwindled during the time, but I would like to take this opportunity to thank them all for their hard work on this project.

Tours and Events (Rosemarie Cope)

We are delighted that the Tours and Events Programme continues to be so popular. Demand for places on our trips has increased this year, reflecting the increase in the number of members of our society, especially since the closure of the Arden Society. We recommend early application for the trips to avoid disappointment. Could I also please remind members to enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope with their application.

The Tours and Events programme is put together by a small group, to which we have welcomed Gill Davies. She has joined Anne Butcher, Judith Carver, Diane Grainger and me. Our programme last year continued in September with a guided walk around the historic market town of Ludlow. There followed, on a freezing cold day in November, a tour of an unusual venue, the now decommissioned Shrewsbury Prison, where we learnt about its history and the reality of life behind bars. We also visited Shrewsbury Museum and Art Gallery. We ended 2024 with our annual Christmas lunch, this year at Nuthurst Grange, which provided an excellent meal in a beautifully decorated setting.

Our first event in 2025 was a second visit to The Birmingham Royal Ballet at the Hippodrome, following its popularity last year. We enjoyed an entertaining, magical performance of Cinderella. In March, the Church Crawl in and around the Malvern area took us to four historic churches, under the expert guidance of Tim Bridges.

Our holiday in May this year was to the Isle of Wight. This was enjoyed by all, and we had a varied selection of visits during our time there. Osborne House was the highlight of the holiday, but we also visited some lesser-known venues, including Brading Roman Villa, with its outstanding mosaics, the quaint Godshill Village, Mottistone Gardens and Arretton Barns Arts and Crafts Centre. We also had a trip on the Isle of Wight Steam Railway.

Lastly, we returned to the Cotswolds in June for our very pleasant visit to the picturesque, historic town of Burford, followed by a guided tour of Kelmscott Manor, the summer home of William Morris and family.

Later this year, in September, we have a visit to Upton House and The National Herb Centre, followed by a Special Interest Day in October with Sophie Matthews, entitled an Afternoon of Art and Music. This will take place at Nuthurst Grange, not Wren Hall as advertised.

Finally, you will find details of the Tours and Events programme for 2026 on our website. This includes our first holiday abroad for several years, to Art Deco and Art Nouveau sites in Lille and Antwerp.

Young Arts/Arts Volunteering (Annette Shillaker)

In the academic year 2024-5, we awarded a grant to the Solihull Cultural Education Partnership. They worked with 3 partner organisations to deliver an exciting programme of interventions across theatre, visual arts, music and dance which involved over 3000 children in 28 local schools. Our grant was to fund the creation of a short film of the project which is now available to view on YouTube (see Solihull CEP website for a link to the “ Moments of Wow” project).

Communications (Lynda Donaldson)

Mailchimp has become fully embedded as the means of communicating with the membership as a group, with our Gmail email address being used for individual responses. The Mailchimp subscription was upgraded this year which means that emails can be scheduled to be sent out at a specific date and time.

The Chairman’s newsletters are now sent out as a PDF with only a few members receiving a paper copy. They are also available on the website under Documents.

The Arts Society introduced a West Midlands Facebook page last year and I still manage the Arts Society Solihull contributions. Using Facebook continues to give us an opportunity to share what we have been doing to a wider audience.

The monthly PowerPoint, which is shared with members before the lecture, is also available as a PDF on the website.

The number of members who are evaluating the lectures via the website has increased this year to an average of around 80 reviews each month. We welcome the reviews as these help the Committee when reviewing them for the Arts Society.

As part of my commitment to the Arts Society in its wider context I am the secretary of the West Midlands Support Group. Its role is to support the West Midlands Art Societies and to provide a link with London.

Airedale Solutions manage the website for us and those members who visit the site will have seen that it has been improved over the last six months. It is still difficult to put photographs of events on the website but members who regularly attend lectures will have seen the most recent photographs as part of the PowerPoint.

Judith Carver, Chairman

TREASURER'S REPORT 2024 – 2025

Introduction

I am pleased to present the final account for the year-end 30 June 2025. The accounts continue to reflect a sound financial position for the Society.

Our independent financial examiner is satisfied that the accounts have been correctly prepared and has not raised any matters of concern regarding the accounting records nor practices.

Income and Expenditure

There is a surplus at the year-end of £13,760.00, which is an increase of £10,780.00 on last year's figure. This is the result of an unprecedented increase in members, the generous donation of £6981.00 from our sister Arts Society Arden when they closed earlier in 2025 and the continued support from members for gift aid and our raffles.

We also earned a more favourable annual interest of £717.78 from our new savings account with Skipton Building Society. This sum has been reinvested with the original deposit of £20,000. The interest rate has been reducing over recent months and will be kept under review by the Committee.

There is a small surplus between the Income and Expenditure from Tours and Events due to the popularity of the Events programme.

The Committee recognises that we have a strong surplus fund and is committed to ensuring that this is used for the benefit of members and our Society aims.

The donation from The Arts Society Arden has been ring-fenced to be spent on arts in the community at the request of the retiring Chair of Arden.

The remaining increase in funds was taken into account in setting the 25/26 membership fee and in the planning for extra expenditure which will be used in 2025/26, to provide a range of special events to commemorate our 40th anniversary year. We have additionally increased our 2025/6 commitment for Arts Volunteering grants to £3,000.

The budget for 25/26 takes account of the benefits from a renegotiated lower hire fee with the Core Theatre, the increases in lecturers' fees and expenses and an increased annual service charge from the National Arts Society.

Balance Sheet

With regard to the balance Sheet, all items are covered in the above report.

Diane Grainger, Hon Treasurer

THE ARTS SOCIETY SOLIHULL

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30TH JUNE 2025

Basis of accounting and accounting policies

The financial statements are prepared on an accruals basis and in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Accounting Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities (SORP 2005), issued in March 2005.

Income and Expenditure

The annual payment of the Society's Service Charge to the National Arts Society and the West Midlands Area Arts Society is for the year January to December. The fee is non-refundable and as such the Committee includes the whole charge in the Society's annual accounts for each year ending 30th June.

Balance Sheet

All renewal and new membership fees received for the 25/26 membership year, prior to 1 July 2025 are reflected in the creditors figure in our current liabilities in the Balance Sheet.

The cash on deposit of £20,717.00 is a Community Saver account with Skipton Building Society, opened in 2023 for the purposes of a reserve fund to protect the Society's sustainability and provide capacity to manage unforeseen financial difficulties. The interest is variable and paid annually in October, the first payment being £717.78 in October 2024. The Committee sets and reviews the policy for its reserves having regard to the Society's financial position and commitments.

THE ARTS SOCIETY SOLIHULL
Income and Expenditure Account
For the year to 30th June 2025

	<u>2024/25</u>	<u>2024/25</u>	<u>2023/24</u>
<u>Income</u>			
Subscriptions 2024-25		19660	16998
Visitors' fees		424	243
Study Days & Events		15234	14742
Interest		0	12
Miscellaneous income(Raffle & Arden donation £6981)		8057	351
Gift Aid		3273	2981
The Arts Society Grants for Young Arts		250	250
		46898	35577
<u>Expenditure</u>			
Lecture fees and expenses	4680		3971
National and Area Arts Society service charges for year ending Dec 2024	5072		5506
Hire of Lecture Theatre	6480		6835
Printing, stationery and postage	594		583
Administrative Expenses	256		161
Study days/Event/virtual walks Expenditure	14712		14276
IT Expenditure	242		365
Misc expenditure (raffle)	102		
Total expenditure		32138	31697
	14760		3880
<u>Awards and discretionary expenditure</u>			
Arts Volunteering (List)	1000		900
Moments of Wow - £1000			
	1000		900
<u>Surplus/ (deficit) for the year</u>	13760		2980

THE ARTS SOCIETY SOLIHULL
Balance Sheet
For the year to 30th June 2025

	2024/25	2023/24
Current assets		
Cash at bank (No. 1 Acc)	36,414	23,250
Cash at bank (No. 2 Acc)	17,055	11,750
Cash on deposit Skipton	20,718	20,000
Cash in hand	80	50
Other debtors		
Loan - Patricia Fay Fund	500	500
Pre payment Art & Music event Oct 25	150	
Prepayment Xmas lunch Dec 25	250	
Prepayment Cineworld July 25	720	
Prepayments		1198
	75,887	56,748
Current liabilities		
Creditors & Accruals	17,179	11,800
Bank reconciliation No. 1 Acc.		
Bank reconciliation no. 2 acc		
	17,179	11,800
Net assets	58,708	44,948
ACCUMULATED FUND		
Balance as at 30th June 2024	44,948	41,968
Surplus/Deficit for the year	13,760	2,980
	58,708	44,948

Approved on behalf of the Committee

Chairman

J. L. Cane

Judith Carver

Treasurer

Diane Grainger

Diane Grainger

REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF THE ARTS SOCIETY SOLIHULL

I have examined the foregoing Balance Sheet as at 30th June 2025 together with the Income and Expenditure Account for the year ended on that date and in my opinion they are correctly prepared in accordance with the Society's records produced to me.

Independent Examiner

Carole Orford

Carole Orford

THE ARTS SOCIETY SOLIHULL

England & Wales - Charity number 1133670

Accounts

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2023 - 2024 (Incorporating the Committee's annual reports)

This has been a most successful year for the Society. The reports from the different members of the committee testify to its vibrancy. Our membership has remained steady at over 300 since Covid as many new members have joined after sampling our lectures via the free guest pass scheme. It is a delight to welcome new members before each lecture and my thanks to you all for letting friends and neighbours know about what the Society offers. The lecture programme has been varied and consistently high in standard. As a committee we regard your reviews of the lectures as most important and there have been so many positive comments. The virtual tour of the Borghese gallery was visually stunning and Benedict Morrison's comparison of the Ealing comedies with the culture of the era was thought provoking. Of course, not all lectures receive so many compliments and Angela Findlay certainly caused polarity in members' views on her lecture. The creation of a lecture programme is a long and demanding task and Lorna, our programme secretary, has many years of successful experience in choosing a varied and enjoyable programme.

For me, the year has been dominated by two organisational issues. The abrupt closure of the Core Theatre in September caused a scramble for a new venue and we were fortunate that a previous lecturer had suggested we look at cinemas as an alternative. Cineworld have been most supportive in improving what they had to offer, particularly in their investment in personal microphones, and we have agreed to stay with them throughout 2025. As Lorna says in her report, many members like the comfort of Cineworld and are impressed by the visuals. The fact that it is cheaper than the Core is also attractive and has allowed us to reduce the membership fee for 2024/2025. We have been told that the Core will not be fully functional until the summer of 2025, possibly September, and this also was a factor in retaining Cineworld as our venue. However we are aware of the precarious state of global Cineworld's finances so we are watching the situation carefully. The other issue has been the debate within the Arts Society nationally about corporate governance. There was considerable opposition from local societies as they would lose control of the finances and the government of the Central body. In a vote, the proposals were defeated and the trustees, bar one, have resigned en masse. Those who spearheaded the campaign against the proposals are standing for election at the end of August and promise to restore faith between the centre and locality.

As a fundamental objective to introduce more people to more art, the lecture programme is but one part of what we offer. The vibrancy I mentioned at the beginning is reflected in the tours and events programme. Rosemarie's report indicates the variety of what is offered, and has involved seven different events, from several days away in Cardiff and Exeter to an afternoon talk (with tea, naturally) at Wren Hall. The trip to Birmingham Royal Ballet was innovative and very popular and will be repeated next year and the popular Christmas meal will move to Nuthurst Grange. We are keen to take art into schools and in January at St Mary's and St Margaret's Primary school we were able to fund two days of expressive arts which involved drama and music activities and, for the first time, we funded a sixth form student on a pre- university course in architecture. Such involvement in the community is also exemplified by the heritage group's work at Packwood. As Maureen's report suggests, it is now reaching its natural end but it was right and fitting that the group received a highly commended award in the national Marsh Awards for heritage work. All of these things – lecture programme, tours and events, young arts, heritage work – form the weft and the weave of our society and is made possible by an amazing committee. It has been a joy and an honour to be their Chair for the past three years and I look forward to remaining as a member of the committee under Judith Carver's leadership as we approach the fortieth anniversary of the Society's foundation.

Programme Secretary (Lorna Bosley)

We returned to The Core Theatre, however, within a short space of time we were informed that they had a problem with RAAC concrete and that we would no longer be able to hold our meetings there until further notice. We were very fortunate to source Cineworld for 2024 and 2025. Some members much prefer the comfort of Cineworld and others prefer The Core. However our lecturers

have been delighted with Cineworld and the huge screen has been a bonus, especially for the lecture on the Bayeaux Tapestry where it was possible to see every stitch.

Gavin Plumley gave us a lecture of Bruegel and The Seasons of the World in which he compared village life in a village in Gloucestershire with those of Bruegel's paintings. It gave an insight into how life has changed and how many of the traditions are still alive today.

We enjoyed a most interesting tour of the Borghese Gallery with Stuart Harvey. This was not only a lecture but a video walk through the Gallery. It was a great start when we virtually walked up to the museum doors.

We had an early taste of the general election with a lecture by Rupert Dickens, 'Hogarth at the Hustings', Rupert highlighted many of the similarities with our times and those in Hogarth's time. It was interesting to see the cartoons and compare them with present representation of politicians.

Art Behind Bars by Angela Findlay was most thought provoking, not to everyone's taste, but a fascinating insight into what both art and the arts can play in the rehabilitation of prisoners.

The lecture given by Benedict Morrison was an overwhelmingly outstanding lecture according as your reviews attest. It was not only a trip down memory lane but will encourage us to view some of the post war movies that he shared with us.

The lecture in November will take us over 300 years of Christmas at Covent Gardens which should start our Christmas Festivities.

Hopefully, you will agree, that the programme for 2025 is both varied and interesting covering a wide range of subjects such as Bauhaus, Textile Revolution Post War, Lindisfarne Gospels, Freemasonry and The Knights Templar, The Art of Illusion, Healing Power of Plants, Fashion, Banksy, Monopoly Board Properties and the Collection of King Charles 1.

Membership Secretary (Judith Carver)

Another interesting and successful year for membership.

Losing September's lecture due to the sudden closure of The Core Theatre was a shock to our system and could have seriously affected membership numbers. However, such is your resilience that despite massive organisational changes, attendance to lectures at Cineworld has proved popular and numbers have been maintained.

Throughout the year you have continued to bring your friends along to give them the opportunity to experience the high quality of speakers and the variety of topics our programme secretary organised for us.

100% of those who joined us 'in-year' have renewed their membership and become part of our society; a resounding show of support.

We are pleased to have been able to reduce our renewal fee to £50.00 this year to reflect the change of location for lectures. Numbers as of June were at 317 and with renewals still coming in (and more new members joining us) I am optimistic that with your continued support and encouragement we will make sound progress this year.

To those members who have moved away or do not feel that they can make the visit to a lecture anymore we thank you for your support.

We are looking forward to the coming year and are busy making preparations for our 40th anniversary which begins in September 2025.

Thank you for your support and enthusiasm

Heritage Volunteers (Maureen Hill)

Your Heritage Volunteers have now completed the covers for the six chairs located in the Long Gallery, leading to the Great Hall at Packwood House.

Due to unforeseen circumstances the upholstery work has been delayed. However, we are pleased to report that we expect completion of this work soon. This will complete our project with National Trust and when our Members next visit Packwood House the work carried out by our Heritage Volunteers will all be in situ for them to admire.

Tours and Events (Rosemarie Cope)

Since the last AGM, we have had a busy programme of tours and events, starting with our very successful four-day holiday in Cardiff in September. Highlights included a tour of the Castle, the Royal Mint, St Fagan's National Museum of History and a Whisky Distillery. This was followed in November by a trip to the beautifully decorated Chatsworth House and its Christmas market. We rounded off 2023 with our always popular Christmas lunch at Copt Heath Golf Course, but because of rather disappointing catering arrangements, we have decided to switch venues to Nuthurst Grange for this year's Christmas lunch.

The first event this year, in February, was a performance of the Royal Ballet's spectacular production of The Sleeping Beauty at Birmingham Hippodrome. By popular demand, we have booked Cinderella at The Hippodrome for next year. In March we spent a pleasant morning at the market town of Alcester, followed by a bespoke tour of Ragley Hall. This was followed in April by afternoon tea at Wren Hall, where we were entertained by an amusing talk from Ian Carnell, retired head teacher.

Our holiday in May to Exeter and South Devon was very interesting, with a mix of trips to memorable venues, including Exeter Cathedral, Ugbrooke House, Buckfast Abbey and Coleton Fishacre, as well as visits to pretty towns and a river cruise. Lastly, we had a delightful day in Gloucestershire, visiting Berkeley Castle and Dr Jenner's House in June. Later this year, in September, we look forward to a guided walk around Ludlow and a visit to Shrewsbury Prison in November. We are already planning our holiday next year, which will be in May at the Isle of Wight.

The Tours and Events Group includes Judith Carver, Diane Grainger and Anne Butcher and we are grateful to the members who go on the visits for your enthusiasm and positive feedback, not to mention your excellent timekeeping.

Young Arts/Arts Volunteering (Annette Shillaker)

Grants have been awarded to the following projects in the last academic year:

- August 2023 - funds to support a local 'A' level student's attendance at a residential course "Architecture for 15-17 year olds";
- December 2023 - we donated 20 Art Sets to the Smiths Wood Food Bank for children aged 6-9 years;
- January 2024 - 2 days of interactive story-telling workshops for pupils aged 4 -7 years led by performing artists " Expressive Explorers ". The children took part in drama and music activities , role play and re-telling of familiar stories in their own words .

Communications (Lynda Donaldson)

Mailchimp has become fully embedded as the means of communicating with the membership as a group, with our Gmail email address being used for individual responses. The Mailchimp subscription was upgraded this year which means that emails can be scheduled to be sent out at a specific date and time.

The Chairman's newsletters are now sent out as a PDF with only a few members receiving a paper copy.

The Arts Society introduced a West Midlands Facebook page last year and I still manage the Arts Society Solihull contributions. Using Facebook continues to give us an opportunity to share what we have been doing to a wider audience.

The monthly PowerPoint, which is shared with members before the lecture, is also available as a PDF on the website.

The number of members who are evaluating the lectures via the website has increased this year to an average of around 70 reviews each month. We welcome the reviews as these help the Committee when reviewing them for the Arts Society.

Airedale Solutions manage the website for us and those members who visit the site will have seen that it has been improved over the last six months. It is still difficult to put photographs of events on the website but members who regularly attend lectures will have seen the most recent photographs as part of the Power Point.

Phillip Griffiths, Chairman

TREASURER'S REPORT 2023 – 2024

Introduction

I am pleased to present the final account for the year-end 30 June 2024. The accounts continue to reflect a sound financial position for the Society.

Our independent financial examiner is satisfied that the accounts have been correctly prepared and has not raised any matters of concern regarding the accounting records nor practices

Income and Expenditure

Our concerns at the start of the year about a possible shortfall between income and expenditure have not materialised. The position at the year-end is a surplus of £2980.00 which is due mainly to the closure of the Core theatre from September 2023 when we had to cancel the September lecture and relocate our theatre venue to Cineworld from October, with an associated lower hire charge.

In addition there was no annual increase in the National Arts Society Service charge as a result of pressure from local Societies following previous years' high increases

Our income figure was slightly higher than we had anticipated due to a good level of membership retention, a significant number of new members and continued support from members towards gift aid and our raffles.

The interest shown in this year's income figure is the final payment from Shawbrook Bank on the closure of our £20,000 savings account. In July 2023 we transferred the management of this fund from Shawbrook Bank to a Community Saver account with Skipton Building Society in order to

receive a more favorable interest rate. The interest will be paid annually in October; the first payment is due October 2024.

Balance Sheet.

The pattern of assets and liabilities on the balance sheet continues to be similar to previous years. The slightly higher net assets figure is explained by the fact that this year we do not have an accrued hire charge for the Core Theatre for the months of April May and June 24.

Diane Grainger, Hon Treasurer

THE ARTS SOCIETY SOLIHULL
Income and Expenditure Account
For the year to 30th June 2024

	2023/24	2023/24	<u>2022/23</u>
<u>Income</u>			
Subscriptions 2022-23		16,998	15,525
Visitors' fees		243	210
Study Days & Events		14,742	10,365
Interest		12	142
Miscellaneous income		351	451
Gift Aid		2,981	2,619
The Arts Society Grants for Young Arts		250	250
		<hr/>	<hr/>
		35,577	29,561
<u>Expenditure</u>			
Lecture fees and expenses	3,971		5,188
National and Area Arts Society service charges for year ending Dec 2024	5,506		5,649
Hire of Lecture Theatre	6,835		10,618
Printing, stationery and postage	583		296
Administrative Expenses	161		57
Study days/Event/virtual walks Expenditure	14,276		9,837
IT Expenditure	365		261
Total expenditure		<hr/>	<hr/>
		31,697	31,906
			<hr/>
Surplus/ (deficit) before awards and discretionary expenditure	<hr/>		<hr/>
	3,880		(2,344)
<u>Awards and discretionary expenditure</u>			
Arts Volunteering (List)	900		1,588
A Level Student Contribution to Sumer School Course - £100			
Smiths Wood Food Bank Arts Packs - £200			
St Mary & St Margaret's Primary - Workshop - £900			
	<hr/>		<hr/>
	900		1,588
			<hr/>
<u>Surplus/ (deficit) for the year</u>	<hr/>		<hr/>
	2,980		(3,932)

THE ARTS SOCIETY SOLIHULL
Balance Sheet
For the year to 30th June 2024

	<u>2023/24</u>	<u>2022/23</u>
Current Assets		
Cash at bank (No. 1 Acc)	23,259	24,256
Cash at bank (No. 2 Acc)	11,750	12,152
Cash on deposit	20,000	20,000
Cash in hand	50	50
Other debtors		
Loan - Patricia Fay Fund	500	500
Prepayments Shrewsbury Nov 24	200	
Prepayment Xmas lunch Dec 24	250	
Prepayment Wren hall Oct 2025	28	
Prepayment Cineworld July 24	720	387
	<u>56,748</u>	<u>57,345</u>
Current Liabilities		
Creditors & Accruals	11,800	15,378
Bank reconciliation No. 1 Acc.		
Bank reconciliation no. 2 acc.		
	<u>11,800</u>	<u>15,378</u>
Net assets	<u>44,948</u>	<u>41,967</u>
ACCUMULATED FUND		
Balance as at 30th June 2023	42,968	45,900
Surplus/Deficit for the year	2,980	(3,932)
	<u>0</u>	<u></u>
Balance as at 30th June 2024	<u>44,948</u>	<u>41,968</u>

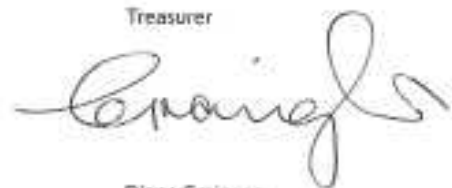
Approved on behalf of the Committee, July 2024

Chairman



Philip Griffiths

Treasurer



Diane Grainger

REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF THE ARTS SOCIETY SOLIHULL

I have examined the foregoing Balance Sheet as at 30th June 2024 together with the Income and Expenditure Account for the year ended on that date and in my opinion they are correctly prepared in accordance with the Society's records produced to me.

Independent Examiner



Carole Orford

THE ARTS SOCIETY SOLIHULL

England & Wales - Charity number 1133670

Accounts

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2021 -2022 (Incorporating the Committee's annual reports)

Returning to the Core theatre for live lectures has probably been the most welcome aspect of the Society's year. During lockdown the Core had totally revamped their audio-visual equipment and many of our lecturers have commented on the quality of the pictures and sound. Our return to the theatre was faltering as Tony Faber's lecture on Antonio Stradivari had to become a zoom-only experience because of a Covid spike, but since then it has been marvellous to meet members again in person and attend live lectures, with attendance figures steadily rising towards pre-pandemic levels.

Covid has made the committee re-evaluate what we offered as a Society and some of the innovation will become the norm. Thus, the zoom lectures in December and January will remain. Traditionally there was not a lecture in December; instead the Christmas lunch replaced this. Now both will happen and there will also be a virtual tour in January, which in 2023 will be of Amsterdam's Rijksmuseum.

Whilst lectures remain central to the Arts Society, the tours and events programme is an integral part of what is available. This is as varied as the lecture programme with relatively local trips to the Cotswolds, and Stratford-upon-Avon as well as events such as Fieldings the auctioneers at Wrenn Hall and the four-day visit to Durham. It is the combination of lectures, and tours combined with the feeling of friendship and camaraderie that makes the Society so vibrant.

One of the committee's concerns was the impact of Covid on membership, as membership fees provide the vast majority of income. As the Treasurer's report explains, the Core costs over £1000 per lecture and, as well as lecturer's fees, the Society pays an affiliation fee of £14.21 per member to the national Arts Society. This is just over 25% of the membership fee. The resilience of our membership over Covid has made it possible to offer an increased programme, although we have kept a careful watch on our expenditure. I have written to the National Society expressing concern about future increases in the affiliation fee.

It is usually a courtesy to thank the committee but I do so not as a courtesy or as a pleasantry but as a heartfelt vote of thanks. All the committee are volunteers, giving freely of their time, and their enthusiasm spills over into a desire to offer a product that is appealing, interesting and informative. Without their commitment there would be no Society and I hope this is recognised when they put themselves up for re-election at the AGM.

Programme Secretary (Lorna Bosley)

Once again this has been an unprecedented year and it has been very difficult to decide whether and when we could return to The Core Theatre. I am delighted that now all of our lecturers have upskilled and were confident and competent to undertake online lectures. I appreciate that the hybrid lectures were not as clear nor as well presented but being one of those members who was unable to return to the theatre, it was better than missing the lectures entirely.

I hope that you enjoyed the online lectures and walks that we took with speakers from Blue Badge, some of whom have now qualified as Nadfas Lecturers. We time-travelled in York, learned about Menswear in Saville Row, walked in the footsteps of Oscar Wilde and undertook a Classic Tour of Birmingham. We had an excellent online lecture about The Vatican and Sistine Chapel, and we will be visiting the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam in January.

We had the pleasure of hearing Tony Faber give his lecture on Antonio Stradivari, and we rode together on the Carpet Ride to Khiva. Who could forget the lecture given by John Benjamin, such an interesting and consummate speaker. We also visited Moorish Spain with an outstanding lecture given by Ian Cockburn – we seem to have had the opportunity to travel whilst we stayed at home.

We have a varied programme for you for 2022/2023 – although I expect the programme does not always entice all of you to attend, there are always subjects from which you learn another dimension to 'The Arts'. 'The Arts' now covers such a wide range of subjects and it is challenging to select subjects which would appeal to all of our members. We sometimes have remarks made regarding whether the subject was 'The Arts' or not, but you will know that all the lecturers and their lectures are approved by Nadfas House.

I hope that we will continue to meet in The Core Theatre, and I would like to thank you for your patience and support whilst we as a committee have endeavoured to ensure that you have enjoyed the lectures as best we may.

Look out for the Christmas Lecture which will be online. Last year we had fun listening to Ian Gledhill giving his lecture on 'The Magic of Pantomime' and this December we will be Barry Venning's lecture entitled 'Christmas with Giles, Grandma and Family'.

Membership Secretary (Judith Carver)

Without our members, what would we be?

Your loyalty, support and heartfelt comments throughout 2021/22 have meant a lot to the committee and have kept us going when circumstances have been challenging.

Nationally numbers have fluctuated with some societies having to close and others managing to remain buoyant. We are lucky to have enjoyed a relatively stable year with 326 members 'on the books' in June 2022. At renewal we invariably say goodbye to some of our long-standing members who find they cannot make the visit to the theatre anymore and we thank you for your years of support and encouragement which have given us stability.

Numbers this year are slightly reduced on last year but I am pleased to report that we have received a healthy number of new members who are helping to balance things out. Many thanks to those of you who have encouraged your friends to come along to a lecture which has led to them subsequently joining us. We hope their experience is positive and that they too will spread the word. Keep up the good work!

At a time when costs are spiralling, we feel that £50.00 for a year's worth of excellent lectures, visits, holidays, a quarterly magazine and a chance to meet up with friends in a pleasant and comfortable space is a good investment. Thank you.

Heritage Volunteers (Maureen Hill)

Your Heritage Volunteers continue to work on the Packwood House projects.

The current work consists of chair covers for six chairs located in the Long Gallery, leading to the Great Hall. Two of the chairs are similar in colour to those already produced for the semi-circular seat in the Great Hall. The remaining four are of a different design and colour and are progressing well.

The National Trust Conservator has decided that these covers should be lined with a silk type of material which will slide over the original chair covering and not damage anything.

Our Upholsterer is working on the first two chair covers and we hope they will be in place in the near future.

Unfortunately, two of our volunteers, Vera McLuskie and Moorea Ashton Jones have had to leave the team due to ill health and I would like to take this opportunity to thank them for all their work both on the Packwood Project and also with Knowle Parish Church. We will miss them.

Tours and Events (Rosemarie Cope)

The Tours and Events Programme is organised with the invaluable support of my fellow committee members, Judith Carver and Diane Grainger, as well as Lynda Donaldson in the past and more recently, Anne Butcher.

After the last AGM, the programme continued with a visit to the Chatsworth House Christmas Market and a tour of the festive, beautifully decorated house. In December, we held our annual Christmas lunch at Copt Heath Golf Course, then later in the month Ian Gledhill entertained us with his Zoom lecture on Christmas Pantomime.

We started this year with two Zoom Virtual Tours. In January we were treated to a fascinating tour of The Vatican and Sistine Chapel with Stuart Harvey who is a tour guide in Rome and is now also an Arts Society lecturer. In February Aaron Hunter took us back in time with his presentation of the Treasures of Ancient Britain, from Stonehenge to the Saxons.

In March we held our first Special Interest Day, organised by Judith at Wren Hall, entitled From Wedgewood to Bridgewater, with Fieldings Auctioneers. After a lively talk from the experts, followed by lunch, some of the items brought by members were valued. The day was so successful that we have arranged another event with Fieldings, this time an evening event, an auction preview in late October.

We had a lovely day out in the Cotswolds in May, spending the morning at the Gordon Russell Museum in Broadway, then going on to visit a gem of a garden in Moreton-in-Marsh, Bourton House Garden.

The Guided Walk of Stratford-upon-Avon and River Cruise were reinstated in July, having been cancelled during the pandemic. Although most of us had visited Stratford on many occasions, our informative and amusing guide gave us new insights into the background and development of the town as well as the life and times of Shakespeare.

Finally, by the time you read this report, the four-day Durham Delights trip in September will have taken place. This trip, organised by Judith was also a casualty of the pandemic, so we were very pleased to reinstate it. Highlights include visits to the Auckland Project, Piece Hall, Halifax and Durham Cathedral.

Next year, we are planning to reinstate some of the other trips we had to cancel, such as Bletchley Park and The Laskett Gardens as well as some new venues.

Young Arts/Arts Volunteering (Annette Shillaker)

During 2020-21 we agreed to support Arts projects in two local schools, Merstone Special School and Sharmans Cross Junior School.

Merstone Special School applied for funding to support the introduction of Arts Awards for the pupils, starting in January 2021 with training as a certified Arts Award Advisor for their Art subject leader. The art curriculum is now being developed in line with Arts Award certification for pupils initially in KS 3 (ages 11-19).

Due to pupils and staff being affected by isolation rules, Sharmans Cross Junior School had to postpone their planned whole school Art project until the Autumn Term 2021. The resulting mandala is now on display in the school.

On our Arts Society website, we set up a Members Gallery page inviting members to share their work with a wider audience. There is a wonderful range of pieces on display, so thank you to all the members who have already contributed to this initiative.

We donated a PA system to Solihull Life Opportunities (SoLO). The equipment was no longer used by the society and we are delighted to report that it is now being put to good use for events organised for the young people at their Walnut Close centre.

Communications (Lynda Donaldson)

Mailchimp has become fully embedded as the means of communicating with the membership as a group, with our Gmail email address being used for individual responses.

The Chairman's newsletters are now sent out as a PDF with only a few members receiving a paper copy.

We introduced hybrid lectures for the members in September 2021. This gave the members an opportunity to either attend the lecture "live" in the Core Theatre or to continue to watch via Zoom from home. The experience of watching via Zoom proved to be not as effective as the lecture was transmitted from the theatre via a camera and my laptop!

A decision was made earlier this year that we would no longer offer a hybrid lecture. However, both the Christmas lecture and virtual walks of 2023 will be offered via Zoom

The Arts Society introduced a West Midlands Facebook page last year and I am now managing the Arts Society Solihull contributions. Using Facebook gives us an opportunity to share what we have been doing to a wider audience.

The number of members who are evaluating the lectures via the website remains healthy but we would welcome more contributions as these help the Committee when reviewing them for the Arts Society.

Airedale Solutions manage the website for us and the monthly analysis indicates how much "traffic" there has been show. It continues to show that the number of new visitors is consistently higher than that of members.

Phillip Griffiths, Chairman

TREASURER'S REPORT 2021 – 2022

Introduction

I am pleased to report that the annual accounts for 2021-22 reflect a sound financial position at the year-end.

Our independent financial examiner is satisfied that the accounts have been correctly prepared and has not raised any matters of concern regarding the accounting records nor practices.

Income and Expenditure

Our overall income and expenditure figures for this year are higher than the previous year and are more representative of our usual trends since we have been able to return to our more normal level of activities.

Membership fees and Gift Aid provide the main source of our income and those figures for the year have maintained a workable level. Our concerns at the start of the year about the impact of a continued fall in membership on our income have not materialized due to an encouraging number of new members.

With our Events programme each year we aim to cover the costs of each event and therefore do not budget for this as a source of income.

The year's expenditure is affected by our return to live lectures at the Core Theatre in September 2021 and the hire charges associated with that (an average of £1000 per session) and the fact that we have been able to run a range of Events for our members.

Balance Sheet

This year's balance sheet reflects a very similar picture to previous years with our net assets remaining at over £45,000. I believe that this is an encouraging position for the Society's future, considering the difficulties we have faced in the previous 2 years.

Diane Grainger, Hon Treasurer

THE ARTS SOCIETY SOLIHULL
Income and Expenditure Account
For the year to 30th June 2022

	<u>Net income</u>	<u>2020/21</u>
<u>Income</u>		
Subscriptions 2021-22	14,944	14,976
Visitors' fees	492	0
Study Days & Events	10,284	3,332
Interest	118	275
Miscellaneous income	228	150
Gift Aid	2,631	2,656
The Arts Society Refund of expenses/Grants	0	250
	28,696	21,639
<u>Expenditure</u>		
Lecture fees and expenses	4,808	3,960
National and Area Arts Society annual charges for year ending Dec 2022	4,787	4,708
Hire of The Core Theatre	8,184	0
Printing, stationery and postage	484	1,102
Administrative Expenses	415	305
Study days/Event/virtual walks Expenditure	10,385	4,908
Purchase of 50 Treasures of West Midlands (20/21)		1,320
Total expenditure	29,063	16,303
Surplus/ (deficit) before awards and discretionary expenditure	(366)	5,336
<u>Awards and discretionary expenditure</u>		
Arts Volunteering (Sharmans & Koestler)	1,250	1,000
	1,250	1,000
<u>Surplus/ (deficit) for the year</u>	(1,616)	4,336

THE ARTS SOCIETY SOLIHULL
Balance Sheet
For the year to 30th June 2022

	2022	2021
Current assets		
Cash at bank (No. 1 Acc)	28,436	26,150
Cash at bank (No. 2 Acc)	12,300	11,513
Cash on deposit	20,000	20,000
Other debtors		
Core Theatre payments in advance	0	1,556
Loan - Patricia Fay Fund	500	500
Stratford Walk prepayments	260	
Durham Sept 22 Expenses	397	
Prepayments 20/21		1070
Cash in hand	50	50
	<u>61,943</u>	<u>60,839</u>
 Current liabilities		
Creditors & Accruals	16,043	13,323
Bank reconciliation No. 1 Acc.		
Bank reconciliation no. 2 acc		
	<u>16,043</u>	<u>13,323</u>
 Net assets	 45,900	 47,516
 ACCUMULATED FUND		
Balance as at 30th June 2021	47,516	43,181
Surplus/Deficit for the year	(1,616)	4,336
	0	<u>4,336</u>
 Balance as at 30th June 2022	 <u>45,900</u>	 <u>47,516</u>

Approved on behalf of the Committee, July 2022

Chairman

 Philip Griffiths


Treasurer

 Diane Grainger

REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF THE ARTS SOCIETY SOLIHULL

I have examined the foregoing Balance Sheet as at 30th June 2022 together with the Income and Expenditure Account for the year ended on that date and in my opinion they are correctly prepared in accordance with the Society's records produced to me.

Independent Examiner


 Carole Orford