

Purbeck Arts Week 2025: Chair's summary report

2025 was another successful year for PAW, particularly for visual arts and PYA, also for our programme of concerts despite a loss (our first) of £3,720 on ticket sales. This summary report for the 2025 Festival is loosely based on our new Strategy document.

New experiences offered and not currently found in Purbeck:

1. **A partnership with the National Trust led to a new curated exhibition venue in the Castle View Visitors Centre (CV), and an opportunity for a number of artists to work in and around the castle during the two weeks following PAW.** Initial costs for the CV exhibition stands were high and shared with the NT, we learned a lot in the process and have agreed with the National Trust to do it again next year. It was popular with the exhibiting artists and visitors though sales were modest. Overall it proved an excellent front for promoting the rest of PAW to the potentially thousands of NT visitors that pass through Corfe Castle, and for wider publicity via NT social media.
2. **We staged PAW's, and Purbeck's, first-ever production of Purcell's The Fairy Queen, a semi-opera inspired by A Midsummer Night's Dream.** Professional musicians and singers working with Purbeck schools involved children in both singing and art workshops; culminating in a performance on stage with props created by local school children, including some of those who performed on the day – it sold out and was an unforgettable experience for all involved (despite the rain). It took place in Carey's Secret Garden Wareham.
3. We offered **two adult workshops, one for singing and the other for non-fiction writing, and one children's workshop on Myths and Monsters storytelling.** This increases access to our activities for different parts of the community. The singing workshop (with Stile Antico) was extremely popular and is something we plan to do more of. The non-fiction writing workshop (given by Nick Jubber) was an experiment – it attracted enough participants but not enough to cover the costs of the venue (subsidised by the talk). Nick Jubber did not charge us a fee for running it.

Core Festival activities showcased a broad spectrum of visual and performing arts – through Open Studios, Rollington Barn, PYA, concerts and a talk.

- **34 open studios** (same as last year), with visitor footfall reported as higher this year. Feedback from artists on the level of interest and sales was very positive. We had 6 new open studio venues, and 51 new members signed up this year, 3 of which were sculptors.
- **Rollington Barn** continues to work well as our **Festival hub** and venue for the **collective exhibition**, and drew a record numbers of visitors – well over 3,000. The **Pop Up tent**, an artist-in-action venue in the courtyard, was

popular with our artists and visitors. The **Lovecake** café did exceptionally well and adds hugely to the Rollington visitor experience and draw – **their donation to PAW this year (£1,250+£80 electricity)** was generous. **Art from the PYA workshops filled The Byre**, and an **installation ‘Scrolling’ by local artist Emma Browning**, occupied the installation slot at the far end of The Byre. Wind (and rain) continues to be a challenge in The Byre, and played havoc with the schools’ artwork and the installation. We intend sorting this out for next year with some sort of wind breaks.

We are aware of our reliance on Rollington as a venue, and that should circumstances change it won’t be easy to find a similar space. Over the last two decades Rollington has become a popular annual happening with the Purbeck community and from further afield, and we are ever grateful to Doug Ryder for allowing us to use it. He charges PAW £2,500 for 3 weeks plus our energy bill.

Rollington Barn saw record sales of art this year of £57,808 (generating £13,823 commission for PAW @25%) – a clear reflection of the quality of art on sale, and the popularity of Rollington as a selling venue with our artists and visitors. In addition to the Open Studio artists we had 66 Rollington only exhibitors (compared to 52 last year). In order to accommodate all the Rollington only artists’ applications (and so avoid the waiting list we had in 2024) we reduce the number of pieces that could be hung to 4 per exhibitor. The artists/exhibition fees cover the Rollington costs, leaving a small surplus.

As well as being a Festival hub, we remain very aware of Rollington’s role in encouraging visitors to go out and explore the Open Studios, and our marketing and comms efforts are very much directed towards making this happen.

- **The Purbeck Young Artists’ programme** covered 21 schools this year (up from 14 last year). We overspent on PYA workshops, largely because we did not have the efficient funds tracking system which we now have in place. The children’s vibrant ‘Monsters and Myths’ art work displayed in The Byre, captured the enthusiasm of both young participants and the wider community. Two of these workshops were linked to our events programme, and made props/scenery for our production of The Fairy Queen. Purbeck Ice Cream, again, generously provided free ice creams. Attendance at the opening event was down from last year when we included several children’s music and singing ensembles – that brought in the parents. We plan to bring this back next year.
- **Our Concerts and Events programme was ambitious** – with 8 concerts including The Fairy Queen community performance (up from 5 last year), and the coffee concert at Encombe (which sold out as usual, allowing us to subsidise other concerts) plus a talk and the annual open mic poetry event.

We showcased an outstanding line-up of internationally respected musicians including Apollo’s Cabinet, Ayres Extemporae, Stile Antico, Ensemble Augelletti with

Alexander Chance, Saraband & The Opera Company, Ensemble Gamut!, Cubaroque, Craig Ogden, The Echoing Air & Music for Awhile.

This year's experiment of creating a mini-festival on the middle weekend with a concentration of concerts, didn't really work. We had hoped this might attract people from further afield who could plan to come for the whole weekend, but we'd like to give this another try next year and adjust the timings. PAW trustees were fully supportive of this year's programme which was knowingly ambitious and, for some of our audiences, offered something slightly different.

Ticket sales were down overall this year (3 concerts made a loss), which wasn't entirely surprising given the additional number of concerts offered. Friends particularly bought less. But on the plus side numbers attending were up but spread across more concerts. *Next year we plan to reduce the concerts slightly.*

- **The 'Myths and Monsters: Tales from Dorset and around the world' talk** (given by local writer Nick Jubber and story teller Tim Laycock) was fully booked in the Mowlem Studio (69 tickets sold, surplus generated). This attracted some younger people who follow Tim Laycock.
- The Purbeck Poets organise themselves (Martin Hobdell) and no ticketing is involved.

In addition and outside the festival dates we supported several accessible arts experiences that respond to Purbeck communities different needs/backgrounds.

- In partnership with Purbeck Youth Music (PYM) we supported:
 - a concert given by 70 of Purbeck's young musicians (singers and instrumentalists) at the Methodist Church on 13th June (outside PAW due to exams). The church was full (250 capacity) and the audience was largely family and friends, and a solid core of local supporters. The ticket price was minimal and donations were collected in a bucket at the end.
 - Two school concert performances with around 200 singers participating in each one (led by Susanne Netts). They took place in Swanage in March, and Wareham in April. Audiences were around 350 each.
- PAW winter chamber music series for PAW Friends - 3 concerts offered in Langton Matravers Village Hall (22 Feb), Creech Grange (30 March), Smedmore House (26 April). With thanks to Miranda Fulleylove for organising and to her team of musicians. The recitals sold out and covered their costs.

Thanks to:

We warmly thank our Festival sponsors, the Lulworth Estate, for their valued support over the last two years. **We are also deeply grateful to our Friends (107 of them)** whose generosity and commitment made this year's festival possible.

And we are hugely grateful for all the support and commitment given to us by our local businesses and by individuals,

I would also like to thank our **faithful and hardworking band of TRUSTEES and our associate Director of Music, Hannah Ely** - who put considerable amounts of time and effort into supporting PAW, and without whom PAW would not be the success it is.

Thanks also to **our Fundraising team** who have successfully raised the funds we needed to support the work we do – Jo, Nick, Hannah, Anne and Laurel. Fundraising is never easy and this is comparatively new area of focus for us. *Fundraising to cover our administrative costs continues to be a challenge, so in tandem we will look at cost cutting measures where we can, including encouraging volunteering where possible.*

Our **Publicity Team** did an excellent job this year on printed material, social media, printed media/advertising and signage, which contributed significantly to the success of this year's visitor numbers and art sales.

Thanks go to **Seb McEwan** for his superb and calm management of Rollington. To the **Events Committee** for providing guidance on the programme and helping to coordinate concerts. To **our artists** for their commitment to PAW and their art, and who remain at the core of PAW. To **Sophie Jenkins** for all the enthusiasm, time and passion she puts into the PYA programme. To **our volunteers** who make it all happen through stewarding at our concerts and Rollington, and distributing our signage and brochures, and making sure the Rollington sales desk runs smoothly, and anything else. To **Jo Colvile** for keeping us all on track. To **Emma-Louise** for all the work she quietly gets on with improving our website for the public and artists. To **Emily/Lovecake and team** who keep everyone fed and watered in Rollington's challenging environment. **Without all of YOU, PAW would not be what it is.**

As ever – PAW 2025 was a fabulous team effort. We hope you feel ready for another great year!

Feedback data from our audience, visitors and artistw

We achieved more complete feedback data than ever before, collected from visitors, audiences, open studios and artists. The results will help us plan our resources more effectively and better understand and meet the needs of our artists.

This was the first year we've managed to get feedback cards to OS, Rollington and Events visitors/audiences. The return was limited, especially from Events. So it's important to bear in mind that although the data, and the events data in particular, isn't statistically valid, we found the results helpful – not least in pointing towards our strengths and areas for improvement.

All feedback indicated a good number of new visitors coming to PAW, with around 25% coming for the first time, 36% in the case of Events. This indicates that the Festival is attracting new visitors who experience the Festival and bring potential income to the Purbeck area and its businesses, alongside artist exposure to new people and potential purchasers.

On the visual arts side around 42% come from Purbeck, 32% from wider Dorset and 23% from beyond Dorset. For Events there appears to be a stronger local presence from within Purbeck (50%) and a wider base of visitors to the Festival beyond Dorset, with 55% coming from beyond Dorset including outside the UK. This is encouraging and suggests that a much bigger pool of visitors is interested in the events and highlights the importance of targeted marketing to reach that wider audience.

Positive visitor experience for the open studios, Rollington and events is at 80-90%. This shows a high level of visitor satisfaction with the overall feel of the festival and the work of the artists and team in presenting world class music and the artistic experience of Purbeck and its artists and PAW team. With 55% of audiences and 67% of visitors feeling exposed to new art forms.

Visitor Age Demographic. There is no doubt that the primary demographic is in the 55 years and older range (71%). With 35 years of age and below only accounting for 12% of the visitor numbers. While it is possible the data hides some accompanying visitors in the under-18s it is clear that more needs to be done to engage younger visitors to the Festival Open Studios and towards the arts in general. Of course PAW does try to balance this through its engagement in Purbeck Young Artist workshops and exhibition, and supporting Purbeck Youth Music, plus giving concerts to successful young professional performers (in their 20s and 30s) – all key directions for bringing younger generations into the world of art and creativity.

Based on the above – for next year, 2026:

- *We will aim to consolidate and build on the gains made in extending our geographical reach and first time visitors, and focus on increasing our reach into the more niche classical music audiences.*
- *We will also consolidate our offer, and maintain and where possible, improve, the visitor experience, diversity of our offer, and outreach to young people.*
- *And we will be look for ways in which we can respond more effectively to meeting the needs of our artists and the local community.*

Charlotte Heath

January 2026

Chair of Trustees



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Purbeck Art Weeks Festival

1140350

Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period
from

01/10/2024

To

30/09/2025

Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Sponsorship & Donations	36,155	14,314	-	50,469	37,866
Events	54,313	-	-	54,313	46,954
Other	1,985	-	-	1,985	1,187
Bank Interest	389	-	-	389	429
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	92,842	14,314	-	107,156	86,436
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	92,842	14,314	-	107,156	86,436
A3 Payments					
Sponsorship		9,480	-	9,480	8,075
Events	57,359	-	-	57,359	43,666
Administration and Publicity	44,653	-	-	44,653	28,952
Bank Charges	60	-	-	60	61
Bursary Awards	-	1,150	-	1,150	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	102,072	10,630	-	112,702	80,754
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	102,072	10,630	-	112,702	80,754
Net of receipts/(payments)	- 9,230	3,684	-	- 5,546	5,682
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	72,870	5,997	-	78,867	73,185
Cash funds this year end	63,640	9,681	-	73,321	78,867

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	Community Projects	-	6,648	
	John Flower Bursary	-	3,033	
	General	63,640	-	
	Total cash funds	63,640	9,681	
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))			
		Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B2 Other monetary assets		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
B3 Investment assets				
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use				
B5 Liabilities				

Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees	Signature	Print Name	Date of approval
	Sheila Marsh	SHEILA MARSH	05/05/20



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees

Purbeck Art Weeks Festival

On accounts for the year
ended

30 September 2025

Charity no
(if any)

1140350

Set out on pages

1

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 30/09/2025.

Responsibilities and
basis of report

As the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent
examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination (other than that disclosed below *) which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:

Date:

18/12/25

Name:

Gordon Lewis

Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body
(if any):

Associate of the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants

Address:

14 Rodgett Crescent, Wareham, Dorset, BH20 7AR