



**ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS
YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

THE ARTS SOCIETY WREKIN

President

Rob Hubbleday

Trustees and members of the committee who served at any time between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025

Amanda Zaadstra*	Chairman and Arts Volunteering
Helen Hughes*	Secretary
Jim Tranter*	Treasurer
Tim Frost	Assistant Treasurer
Val Lupton*	Programme Secretary
Anne Marczak*	Membership Secretary
Nicky Lipscombe	Day Visits and Events
Barbara Noble	Day Visits and Longer Visits
Liz Allan	Days of Special Interest
Jenny Bickley	Communications
Tim Roberts	Photographer and Heritage Volunteering
Sue Hanley	Minutes Secretary and Archivist
Terry Lipscombe*	Member

Asterisk after a name denotes Trustees*

Cover photograph taken by Tim Roberts.

Speaker Bertie Pearce at the 50th anniversary celebration with our President Rob Hubbleday



CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT TO THE MEMBERS

This first year of my chairmanship has been both exciting and challenging. It has been a privilege to lead such a lively and vibrant Society throughout its 50th anniversary year. A Golden Anniversary is certainly something to celebrate, and I hope we have done that in style and that many of you have been able to attend one of our celebratory events at either Weston Park or The Footprint Gallery at Jackfield. None of this would have been possible without a fantastic committee and the help of so many volunteers, some of whom have devoted a considerable amount of time to make everything such a success.

We were able to issue a complimentary '50 Treasures Around the Wrekin' book to every member household introducing us all to some new local places of interest. I still find it remarkable that such a small team of volunteers could produce something so professional, a real credit to the Society.

Our new day visits coordinator Barbara Noble has quickly settled in and provided us with opportunities to participate in some wonderful visits. These visits together with Nicky's excellent events, Liz's two outstanding Days of Special Interest and the very successful longer trip to Durham, have enabled us to enjoy the company and friendship of like-minded people whilst learning more about our artistic heritage.

Your generous donations have enabled us to do more work within our Young Arts programme, bringing even more opportunities for schools and young people to participate in the arts at a time when arts education is grossly underfunded. This culminated in our 'Beyond the Lecture' 50th Anniversary Exhibition where students could show their art alongside the work of members and professional artists. Thanks, in part, to a very generous anonymous donation from a member, we have also now awarded our 3rd biennial Arts Award and find ourselves in a good starting place to look towards a further award in 2026/7.

There have been two very different heritage volunteering projects running this year giving our volunteers an opportunity to use a range of skills.

We have been able to make donations to several wide-ranging causes as listed on the last page of this report including The Caughley Society, the English Haydn Festival in Bridgnorth, the Albrighton Trust (Moat) and the Codsall Arts Festival.

Being able to keep our annual subscription competitively priced has helped ensure membership numbers are once again at capacity. We are proud that our

Society maintains a vibrant and friendly atmosphere and that our broad spectrum of high quality, interesting lectures have been very well received by members both long-standing and new.

This coming year will bring some changes to the committee with the retirement of two long-standing members, Jim Tranter and Liz Allan, having served 10 years and 5 years respectively. Outside of his treasurer duties, Jim was a stalwart in helping the Society throughout Covid by bringing our lecture programme online. We thank them both for all their hard work on behalf of the Society. We welcome Tim Frost and Helen Hibbs who will be taking over their roles.

There has been so much going on in this our 50th year and I have been fortunate to have a wonderful team (committee, helpers and President) that has risen to the occasion, working so hard and giving a phenomenal amount of time to make everything such a success. I am grateful to you all.

Amanda Zaadstra
Chairman



Exhibition organisers with Deputy Lieutenant Gareth Williams

Lecture Programme

Looking back over the past year's programme, I was struck by the range and diversity of subjects covered, reflecting how far the Arts Society itself has moved on from its once narrow definition of 'Decorative and Fine Art'. Hopefully everyone has found something of interest, even when they thought the subject was not for them. Indeed, members often remark that those lectures prove most enjoyable.

Which of us gave much thought to frames before Julia Korner's lecture, but now cannot fail to notice and appreciate them when visiting galleries? Similarly, Susan Kaye-Williams's account of the history of colour and dyeing in textiles covered a subject unfamiliar to most of us. Two excellent lecturers presented talks with a musical theme; Sophie Matthews with her accomplished demonstrations of musical instruments in art and Raymond Holden's wonderfully entertaining talk on the life of Sir Henry Wood.

Historical topics have covered treasures of Ancient Britain in the British Museum to Art Deco, Modernism and the Age of Jazz. Dr James Grant gave a fascinating lecture on the use of gold in medicine from Ancient Egypt to the present day and Tessa Boase gave a thought-provoking talk on the hidden costs of the extravagant millinery beloved of Victorian women. Rosalind Whyte's beautifully illustrated lecture gave us a real insight into the sculpture of Antony Gormley and Timothy Walker's talk on the Twelve Plants of Christmas – informative, but so lively and entertaining – couldn't fail to put us all in the Christmas spirit.

Val Lupton

Arts Volunteering

This has been a very busy year for Arts Volunteering and particularly our Young Arts programme. With the arts being poorly funded in the state education sector, we have tried to give opportunities for participation in arts projects to even more schools in the Wrekin area. Our collaboration and support of Educating Kids Outdoors (EKO) at Weston Park has enabled us to gain a foothold into schools which would have previously proved difficult. As we move forward, this enables us to focus more attention towards schools who are under achieving or in areas of higher deprivation. Much of the brilliant work that the students produced was subsequently exhibited in our 50th Anniversary exhibition.



*Abraham Darby Yr 10 at
Jackfield Glass Fusion Workshop*

Projects supported included:

- Halls Young Artist Competition – judging and individual prizes
- EKO – sponsoring outdoor based creative art projects for 6 schools
- Tile tube-lining and visit to Jackfield Tile Museum for pupils of Wrockwardine Wood Infant School.
- Glass fusing project at Kinki Glass in Jackfield for Yr 10 pupils at Haberdashers Abraham Darby Academy
- A clay masterclass from our Arts Award winner Michael Potter for A level students at Telford College
- A visit from glass artist and Arts Award runner up Jemma Finch to teach glass fusing and produce glass tiles for Yr 9 art students at Ercall Wood Academy
- Judging and prizes for the Btec students at their end of year art show at Telford College
- Sponsorship for three categories of school to participate in art.bytes, a national online art gallery and art competition with prizes for the best work in local and national groups

Amanda Zaadstra

Day Visits and Events

Members and visitors have enjoyed a variety of events and outings during the year.

Visits

In April a group visited Lichfield and its Cathedral to have a comprehensive and informative tour of both the interior and exterior of the magnificent building together with the history of its origins. The travelling exhibition “Threads through Creation” by Jacqui Parkinson was exhibited there; a wonderful and inspiring piece of work. The good weather also gave us the opportunity to explore the many interesting buildings around the Cathedral and its Close.

In May we visited the Silk Museum at Macclesfield by coach and learned of the importance of the silk industry to the town and about the difficult working conditions. We were able to see some of the historic looms in action at Paradise Mill.

In July Dr Jonathan Berg guided our group of 25 on a new walk around Birmingham City centre to see Public Art, the topic of his latest book. There was still much to discover even though many of us had explored several different walking routes in the city previously.

Early September saw two visits to Dudmaston Hall (NT) near Bridgnorth. We had guided tours of one of the most important private collections of Modern Art in Britain, which includes works by Ben Nicholson, Barbara Hepworth and Henry Moore as well as a guided tour of the house.

In October, members and visitors attended a private showing of the biographical film LEE, starring Kate Winslet, at the Orbit Cinema in Wellington. The Society had previously enjoyed a lecture by Antony Penrose about his mother Elizabeth Lee Miller, always known as Lee.

In later October a group visited Millichope Park, a private country house built in the Greek Revivalist style, set in 25 acres of landscaped gardens. It was a beautiful autumn day and we had a guided tour of the grounds in their full autumn glory and then a tour of the house with Antonia Bury. The Bury family have been responsible for its renovation and restoration. A donation was made to their Countryside Learning charity – ‘Two or More Outdoor’.

From October to March Wolverhampton Art Gallery recreated their Evelyn de Morgan exhibition, ‘Painted Dreams’ from 1907. Our group was treated to a guided tour of the exhibition by one of the curators and then in the afternoon had a guided tour of St Peter’s Church. The October tour was so popular that it was repeated in November.

The Arts Society Shrewsbury invited Wrekin members to join them for a visit to the ‘Soldiers of Shropshire’ Museum at Shrewsbury castle in January. It holds an extensive display of military uniforms, battles and medals in its collection. Members had a hands-on session of firearms from the ‘Brown Bess’ of 1720 to the present day.

In March, a large group of members visited Worcester by coach to see the wonderful Cathedral. There, we were treated to a fabulous tour of the Cathedral and its history. So much to see, highlights being the tomb of King John and the grave of the “Worcester Pilgrim” dating to 1529. Following the tour, many enjoyed the lunchtime organ recital. During the afternoon we visited the “Worcester Porcelain Works” and listened to an excellent talk on the history and methods used in the factory. We even had the opportunity to handle some of the exhibits.



Introductory talk at Royal Worcester Museum

Events

Fundraising got off to a good start in April with a fascinating talk on ‘Early Shropshire Maps’ by Dr Pat de Haan at St Andrew’s Church in Shifnal. Pat brought along many historic maps from her personal collection for our inspection. The magnificent sum of £1574 was raised to support outdoor ‘Creative learning’ with EKO (Educating Kids Outdoors) at Weston Park. Donations were also made to the church and to the youth club for parking.

The 50th celebration at Weston Park in June was a triumph. We were delighted to be joined by past Presidents, Joanne Porter and David Brown, for this special occasion. Entertainment was provided by Bertie Pearce, one of our favourite lecturers: “All Aboard - Tales on a Cruise Ship” was hilarious and we enjoyed some magic too. The weather was glorious and the venue perfect.

At the end of July, we enjoyed a ‘BYO’ summer picnic on an exceptionally warm day in the grounds of Eyton Hall. Several members took along classic cars. Bear Yeomans, a local Craftsman, brought along scale models of the Thomas Telford Aqueduct at Longden-on-Tern and Wappenshall Wharf nearby. Both feature in ‘Wrekin’s 50 Treasures’ and are not easily accessible, so the models were enlightening. The afternoon raised £1,000 of which £950 was donated to Friends of Friendless Churches to support their work in keeping specialist conservation skills alive as suggested by our generous hosts Kathy Moynes and Mark Pollard. The donation benefitted from matched funding.

In December 88 members enjoyed the ever popular ‘Festive Talk and Tea’ at the Red House. Margaret Watson, an Arts Society lecturer and virtuoso performer, entertained us with her two harps. The informal presentation was both entertaining and enlightening. Donations were made to Margaret’s favoured charity ‘Music in Hospitals and Care’ and to The Albrighton Trust to support their valuable creative work with young people with disability.

Nicky Lipscombe, Barbara Noble and Marcia Street

Days of Special Interest

The special interest days at the Red House continue to be very well supported.

In October Steve King presented ‘Like a Rolling Stone’ on music of the Sixties. It was a fascinating day of memories as he worked his way through the pop groups over the years.

In February Sarah Burles presented ‘Cornwall Calling’ which covered artists in Newlyn, Lamorna and St Ives. The illustrations were beautiful and inspired many of us to make plans to visit the area again soon.

The lunch provided by the Red House team completed a very enjoyable day.

Liz Allan

Longer Visit to Durham & Bishops Auckland

In August 2024, 28 members went on a most successful and enjoyable visit to explore Durham and Bishop Auckland, diving into history and art. Although we were free to make our own arrangements, most stayed in the riverside Royal County Hotel, where the opening dinner was held.

A Blue Badge walking tour of Durham, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, culminated at the majestic Cathedral, a Norman masterpiece largely constructed in the 11th and 12th centuries to house the body of St Cuthbert and The Venerable Bede. Later we were able to take a self-guided tour of the Castle - for centuries home to the Prince Bishops and now home to the oldest College of the highly regarded university. We returned there for an historic evening dinner in the grandeur of the Prince Bishops' dining hall, which was excellent and proved an unforgettable experience.

The next day we travelled by coach to witness Bishop Auckland's revitalization. A passionate and entertaining talk given by Bob McManners introduced us to the project that was funded by philanthropist Jonathan Ruffer. We witnessed the town's transformation through art, particularly the moving Mining Art Gallery and the stunning Spanish Golden Age collection. Auckland Castle, with its Zubaran masterpieces, showcased a tale of art rescued and restored. While time flew, the impact of history and generosity lingered, leaving us eager to return.

The group was friendly and outgoing and everything was arranged at a sensible pace to ensure that we did not feel rushed and had plenty of time to relax with friends old and new. Our next longer visit will be Glasgow in late September 2025.

David Milledge



The Long Visit group at the end of an interesting day in Bishop Auckland

Fundraising and donations

The events this year including the longer visit to Durham and the two Days of Special Interest have raised nearly £6,800 from which donations totalling £4,457 have been given (more detail on the back cover of the report). We are most grateful to the venues which have allowed us to visit and speakers who have given their time to enable us to maximise our donations to support charitable causes.

Wrekin Arts Award

This was the Society's third Arts Award and we received fourteen applications of which six candidates were short-listed.

In January 2025 interviews, chaired by Frank Wilson, took place at the welcoming Albrighton Moat and the quality of those six short-listed candidates was pleasingly high. Gayle

Fitzpatrick, a retired school nurse, was a deserved winner of the £2,500 award, demonstrating beautiful collages. She sketches local scenes in Shropshire and layers her collage with paper cut from magazines. Gayle is now receiving commissions and has contact with many local schools through her nursing, and plans to organise school workshops to teach collage work. Her enthusiasm is infectious.



*Gayle Fitzpatrick Arts Award Winner
2024 in her Studio.*

The six finalists showed us some wonderful skills - their talents included: a highly accomplished young organist, a costume maker specialising in exquisite leather-work, a printmaker producing outstanding images of local pubs, a fine artist drawing intricate images in pen and an acoustic guitar player composing and performing music inspired by abandoned churches.

Each of the unsuccessful finalists received a cheque for £100 to help with their travel expenses. Mention must be made of the incredibly generous £2,500 sum given anonymously to finance this extremely worthwhile Arts Award.

As per the conditions of the Award our retiring 2022 winner, Michael Potter, wrote a very positive statement about how the Award had helped him to establish his sculpture studio and promote his work. This is now available to view on our website.

David Franklin

Communications

Email remains the primary method of keeping members informed about lectures and events and engagement levels are strong; 75 to 85% of all emails sent are opened. For the small number of members who aren't online, we continue to send updates by post, though email remains the most efficient and cost-effective option.

The Society's events remain extremely popular, with spaces available on a first-come, first-served basis. The most sought-after events fill up quickly but by maintaining an active waiting list most members do secure places. Where there is high demand for popular day trips, repeat visits are sometimes possible.

An invitation to complete confidential feedback is given to members following each lecture. This is fed back to both the lecturer and The Arts Society to help maintain high standards.

(NB If you think you might not be receiving our emails, please check they haven't gone to your junk folder prior to contacting us).

Jenny Bickley

Heritage Volunteers Report

The Society's Heritage volunteers have been involved with two projects at the Ironbridge Gorge Museum in Coalbrookdale.

The Sentinel Project

The work involved cleaning and painting a Sentinel steam locomotive from the 1870's under the viaduct at Coalbrookdale. Volunteers from the Museum and The Arts Society Wrekin met on Fridays, they made good progress and work on the locomotive was successfully completed last Summer.

The Labouchère Project

Since February 2024 a second group of volunteers have been working on the Darby family documents used by Lady Labouchère to write her books on the Darby families. A team of eight volunteers working in pairs have made very successful progress reviewing the documents and revising and extending the information held on the IGMT database. Photographs of some documents and artefacts have been added to the new archives. In addition to the teams working in the Long Warehouse, several other volunteers have undertaken work at home. They are working from photographs of more complex documents to transcribe the contents.

Tim Roberts

The Arts Society Wrekin – Annual Report 2024-25

Financial Review and Reserves Policy

This will be my final report as Treasurer of the Society. At the AGM I will hand over to the capable and enthusiastic care of Tim Frost. Please look after Tim, and help him by paying up cheerfully – and by putting your money in the correct bank account, please!

The Society is in a healthy financial position. Although the accounts show an overall deficit this was anticipated and was largely due to the expenses incurred in our 50th Anniversary year. The eventual deficit for the year was only £1659, thanks to the support of members to our excellent programme of events during the year, and the financial support given to our 50th Anniversary projects.

An increase in subscriptions meant that the lecture programme moved into surplus and we have also been able to donate almost £8000 to charitable causes – a list of these donations is on the back cover of this report. Full details of the year's finances are on pages 12 to 16.

It has been the policy of the Society to carry a financial reserve to cover the expenses of a full year's lecture programme. Your committee has been discussing this during the year and the new committee will be considering this in detail at its first meeting after the AGM. As ever, the committee is always open to suggestions of financial support for arts-related projects.

Finally, my thanks to Philip Sims, our Independent Examiner, and my best wishes to the Society for a continuation of its success over past years.

Jim Tranter

THE ARTS SOCIETY WREKIN

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

Lecture Programme

	2025	2024
	£	£
Incoming Resources		
Members' subscriptions (note 1)	16519	15018
Visitors' donations	860	370
Raffles	525	717
Interest received	1016	545
Total Incoming resources	18920	16650
Resources Expended	£	£
Meetings (note 3)	11118	10609
Affiliation fees (note 1)	4691	5131
Administration costs	1484	965
Total Resources expended	17293	16705
Surplus on lecture programme (2024 deficit)	1627	-55
Gift Aid received (note 1)	2904	3492

(Continued on page 13)

THE ARTS SOCIETY WREKIN

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT - continued

Other activities

	2025	2024
	£	£
Incoming Resources		
Events - total income (note 4)	26501	23233
Events - total expenditure	<u>19730</u>	<u>16698</u>
Surplus on events	6771	6535
Sales of publications (net)		
Other donations	50	
Arts Society grant	500	250
Art Exhibition	2782	
Arts Award - donation		2500
50 Treasures - donations, etc.	<u>1245</u>	<u>846</u>
	<u>11348</u>	<u>10131</u>
Resources expended		
Charitable and other donations:		
- Directly related to events	2918	2045
- Young Arts	3459	1900
- Other	1500	900
50th Anniversary	494	
50 Treasures	3478	
Art Exhibition	2415	225
Arts Award	<u>3274</u>	
Total resources expended	<u>17538</u>	<u>5070</u>
Deficit (2024 Surplus) on other activities	<u>-6190</u>	<u>5061</u>
Overall deficit (2024 surplus) for the year	<u>-1659</u>	<u>8498</u>

(Continued on page 14)

THE ARTS SOCIETY WREKIN

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 MARCH 2025

	2025	2024
	£	£
Current Assets		
Cash at bank	12859	17788
Cash on deposit	24832	24125
Cash in hand	50	50
	<u>37741</u>	<u>41963</u>
Current Liabilities		
Income received in advance (Events)	4689	7252
	<u>4689</u>	<u>7252</u>
Net Assets	<u>33052</u>	<u>34711</u>
Accumulated Funds (all funds are unrestricted)		
Funds at beginning of year	34711	26213
Surplus for the year	-1659	8498
Funds at end of year	<u>33052</u>	<u>34711</u>

JIM TRANTER

Treasurer

April 2025

THE ARTS SOCIETY WREKIN

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

1. Accounting Policies

The accounts have been prepared on the cash basis, except where stated below and in note 4.

Subscriptions received are in respect of the subscription year ending 31 August 2025.

Affiliation fees for the calendar year 2025 were paid in January 2025 and are based on membership numbers at 31 March 2024.

Gift Aid is claimed on qualifying subscriptions and donations as received.

2. Gross income and expenditure

The gross income for the year was £52902 (2024 £46971) and the gross expenditure was £54561 (2024 £38473).

	2025 £	2024 £
3. Cost of Meetings		
Lecturers' fees	3889	4259
Lecturers' expenses	695	470
Hire of lecture theatre	6534	5880
	<u>11118</u>	<u>10609</u>

4. Income from events

Income from events is generally received prior to the event taking place. An adjustment of £4689 (2023 £7052) has been made in respect of income received during the accounting period, but referring to events taking place after 31 March 2025.

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF THE ARTS SOCIETY WREKIN

I report to the charity's trustees on my examination of the accounts of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2025 which are set out on pages 12 to 16.

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 charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 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 giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records.

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.

PHILIP SIMS, ACIB

April 2025

ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Constitution and status

The Society is governed by a constitution adopted on 21st May 2012 as amended on 21st September 2020.

Under that constitution the Officers for the time being (but not the Honorary Officers) together with two other Members of the Committee appointed by the Committee shall be the Trustees of the Society.

The Society is registered with the Charity Commission under registration number 1148456 and is affiliated to The Arts Society.

Governance and management

Appointments to the Committee are made by resolution of the Members of the Society. The Committee appoints the Society's Officers, manages its affairs and administers its funds.

Objectives

The Society shall have as its objects: the promotion, advancement, study and practice of the arts in many forms as described in its constitution.

The main activities carried out during the year in furtherance of these objects are referred to in the Chairman's Report.

Website

Further details can be obtained from the Society's own website at **www.theartssocietywrekin.org.uk**

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THE ARTS SOCIETY WREKIN

During the year ended 31 March 2025 the Society gave financial support to the following organisations:

CHARITABLE EXPENDITURE DIRECTLY RELATED TO EVENTS

St Andrew's Church Shifnal	400
St Andrew's Youth Club	50
Wrockwardine Wood Infants School	100
Friends of Friendless Churches	950
Eyton Village Hall	20
St Catherine's Church, Eyton	30
National Trust, Dudmaston	130
Two or More Outdoor	135
St Peter's Collegiate Church PCC	150
The Albrighton Trust	643
Music in Hospitals and Care	160
Silk Heritage Trust	150
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	2918

YOUNG ARTS PAYMENTS

Educating Kids Outdoors	1300
Michael Potter Masterclass	500
Glass Workshops	854
Tube Lining Workshop	300
Halls - Art Prizes	200
Telford College - Art Prizes	305
	<hr/>
	3459

OTHER ORGANISATIONS

Cound PCC	500
Caughley Society	500
English Haydn Trust	500
	<hr/>
	1500