

BARBICAN ART SOCIETY

Charity Commission number: 1164194

ANNUAL REPORT 2023-2024

Introduction

The Barbican Art Society is a non-profit making, community adult education project located in the Barbican Estate, London, which aims to make art accessible through provision of art classes led by professional artists and art tutors. The decision-making body is provided by a committee of trustees, currently numbering 8, all of whom are, or have been, students of the Society's classes. This report covers the financial year 2023-24, comprising 3 terms: summer and winter terms 2023 and spring term 2024.

Classes during the year

The Society continues to increase the number of classes and the range of art covered. This year we started courses by two new tutors: Wendy Jacobs, who led a course on gouache painting; although she did just one term, she may return. And Katherine Tulloh began regular classes in drawing in September. In addition we set up a second weekly life drawing class by Mark Lovelace, which supplemented the always popular Saturday morning life class. These are additions to the long-running courses led by Felicitas, Mark and Jeremy Burns which cover mixed media, and specialised pastel and oil painting. We hope Douglas Bevans will be able to restart book-binding and calligraphy courses in the future.

Most courses are of 10 weeks duration each term. In the term just ended, there were 5 day-time and 5 evening or weekend classes a week, two more than in the equivalent period last year, representing a potential 80 student places each week. This includes one class, the Botanic Art group, which is not led by a tutor. Almost all classes were full, and across the year 237 places were sold for these courses.

This year we have also run 3 shorter courses: in the summer term 2023 two 4-week courses were held in bookbinding and calligraphy, and during the summer holidays a 5-week course in life drawing took place. In total 20 students signed up for the three short courses.

In addition, we have continued to expand the one-day workshops started two years ago, which enable a longer engagement with a topic. These are held mostly during the holidays but also occasionally on Sundays during term time. During this year 12 workshops were held, for which 90 places were sold.

Some of our classes, especially if new, don't take off immediately, but become more established over time. Publicity for classes is relatively easy within the Barbican estate but

is more problematic outside it, relying on word of mouth, information from tutors, and the BAS website. Nevertheless, we continue to attract new students from outside the estate, which is valuable in enabling the increase in the number of classes and the diversity of the student body.

The website

The website, which was established and is maintained by Diana Jowsey, was a major step forward in making information available to students and potential students. It includes information about our classes, other useful information, upcoming events, and has a changing online exhibition of students' work.

New payment system

The website has enabled updating of administrative processes, notably the new payment system Francois-Xavier Villemin put in place from the beginning of 2024. It enables students to book and pay for a course directly, via the website, and has reduced the amount of basic administrative and financial work. Any student who does not use the internet can be separately catered for.

Development of procedures

Led by Ruth Steele, the trustees have been considering the issues around the hiring of tutors. As a result, we are revising our practice, developing a more structured approach to engagement of tutors. This work is continuing.

Class Membership Secretary

The trustees would like to thank Sylvia Rogers, Class Membership Secretary, for her valuable work over the course of the year in providing the first contact for enquiries, making available information on classes and for undertaking work on publicity.

Events during the year

Donation of books

We were fortunate to receive a considerable quantity of art books donated to us by a Barbican resident who was clearing her art-loving parents' home. We were able to call on the professional skills of Feona Hamilton to catalogue the books, including those we already held, so that we now have a substantial art library for use as illustrations in classes. Students and tutors may borrow books free of charge (please register the loan when borrowing and returning in the exercise book provided).

Open Evening

As in previous years (only interrupted by covid) we held a well-attended Open Evening in the art room in June to display the work of students, and welcome visitors with a wine reception. The event helps raise the profile of the Society and celebrates the work of students, who can see their artwork on the wall.

Barbican summer fete

For the second year in a row, the BAS had a stall at the Barbican summer fete, a relatively new annual event held in Thomas More gardens, Barbican, in early September. Having a presence at the fete, showing examples of students' artwork, helps to spread the knowledge of the Society's activities within the Barbican estate, and each year so far has resulted in new sign-ups for classes.

Music and art event

The BAS organised a music event in November when our treasurer, Francois-Xavier Villemin, gave a piano recital in St Giles Church, accompanied by projections of abstract paintings inspired by the music. The paintings, which were also exhibited in the church, were done by students of Jeremy's oils classes. The event was very well attended with 128 tickets sold. There was a profit of £240 which trustees had previously decided to donate to a relevant art cause.

Trustees 2023-24

David Beech	Chair
Feona Hamilton (from February)	
Diana Jowsey	
John Lumley	
Julie Mapstone	Secretary

Ruth Steele

Hilary Sunman

Francois-Xavier Villemin

Treasurer

Treasurer's report 2023/2024

The 2023/2024 accounts presented to the Annual General Meeting also show, for purposes of comparison, the figures for 2022/2023. These accounts show that the Barbican Art Society made a deficit for the year of £1,165. This deficit is after adjusting for fee payments made in 2022/2023 for this year, as an addition to income, and after deducting payments received this year for the Summer term in 2024/2025.

The controlled deficit is a consequence of increasing tutor and model fees during the inflation crisis, while keeping our student fees flat. This achieves the desired effect of reducing our reserves, which could go below £10,000 in a couple of years.

Barbican Art Society Financial Statement for the year ended 5th April 2024

	05/04/2024	05/04/2023
Income		
Students' fees received	31 244	21 855
Tickets sold	1 280	0
Interest	156	31
Expenditure		
Tutors' and models' fees paid	24 955	15 833
Accommodation	2 348	2 769
Events and promotion	1 370	411
Credit card processing fees	520	0
Art materials	390	169
Cash surplus	3 097	2 703
Add deferred income b/f	3 902	2 090
Less deferred income c/f	-8 164	-3 902
Deficit/Surplus	-1 165	891
Accumulated fund b/f	13 566	12 675
Bank	13 365	12 456
Cash	201	219
Accumulated fund c/f	12 401	13 566
Bank	20 367	17 267
Less deferred income c/f	-8 164	-3 902
Cash	198	201

The preponderant source of income of the BAS is from fees paid by students. They amounted to £26,982 this year, up by 35% from last year when it was £20,043. This is due to running more classes this year. A new additional source of income this year was the sale of tickets for the Piano at an Exhibition event, for £1,280. Finally, our reserves have also generated a small income of £156, with a fixed rate account also opened with the Charity bank which will generate £401 in December 2024 (the accrued interest has not been accounted for, but this would represent another £150 for 2023/24).

In terms of expenditure, tutors' and models' fees have gone up from £15,833 to £24,955, an increase of 58% resulting from jointly increasing tutor fees and running more classes. Student's fees cover 108% of the tutors' and models' fees.

Second item of expenditure is accommodation. It represents £2,348, a similar figure as last year. Cleaning costs are stable. Business rates are down thanks to the discretionary extra 5% relief that we were granted. There have also been some non-recurring expenses for the maintenance of the Art Room, kitchen boiler repaired and light fittings updated with LED tubes. Tea expenses are not significant but up 50% compared to last year – another joint effect of inflation and running more classes. More details are available in the table on the right.

Two additional items of expenditure are increasing significantly:

- Art materials (+131%), due to inflation and a generous donation of sugar paper running out.
- Event and promotion, due to the Piano at an exhibition event. Taken separately, this event generated a surplus of £239. The Open evening cost increased by 23% from £411 to £505.

Expenditure	Amount (£)
Cleaning	1 179
Business rates	525
Insurance	221
Repairs	304
Tea	65
Keys	43
Internet domain	12
Grand Total	2 348

The charity remains in a healthy financial situation. Accumulated funds, representing reserves available to the Society at 5th April 2024, remain at a high level of £12,401 (excluding prepaid students' fees). This is mostly represented by funds held in various bank accounts, plus £198 held in cash (stable from £201 last year). For collecting student fees, a new system is in place since December 2023, after the acquisition of a Sumup payment terminal for the Piano at an Exhibition event. Since then, students mostly pay for classes by card, either in person a few weeks before term end, or online via the Sumup online store which is linked to our main website. £14,619 were collected this way (including for Summer 2024), for a fee of £308.

Term	Student fees	Tutor fees	Other costs	Deficit
Summer24	8808	8310	1000	-502
Spring24	9061	8240	1000	-179
Autumn23	8997	8415	1000	-418
Summer23	9012	8300	1000	-288

Given the decision of trustees to reduce the reserves of the BAS, there is no immediate need for adjusting student fees. Actually, this financial year, the deficit was slightly less than expected, due to better than expected sales in Summer 2023 and Spring 2024. In Summer

2024, classes will generate the average expected loss of £500-£600. A donation of the surplus of £239 from the Piano at an Exhibition event was discussed previously but has not concretized yet, hence cannot be accounted for this financial year.

Should trustees decide to adjust student fees, they should look in priority at fees of classes with model, which generate almost no surplus once tutor and model are paid, even if the class runs with 8 students. An increase of 10% of the student fee, to £165, would be appropriate, if not to reduce our deficit, at least to harmonize our fee structure and reduce the financial risk of running these classes with less than 8 students.

	Normal class	Class with model
8x student fee	880	1200
Tutor fee	750	750
Model fee	0	400
Overhead	130	50

To the Members and Trustees of the Barbican Art Society

Registered charity no. 1164194

Audit Report for the year ending 5 April 2024

As requested by the Trustees¹, I have reviewed the financial statements for the Society for the year ending 5 April 2024, that show a deficit of £1,165 for the year and closing funds available to the Society of £12,401 at that date, and have concluded that these show a fair representation of the Society's financial position.

I have examined the accounting records, bank statements, some supporting documents for expenditure items incurred during the year and I have received explanations for major items of expenditure and other significant changes from last year's accounts.

For the avoidance of doubt, and as in previous years, I have been unable to verify that all those who have attended classes, and should have paid, have indeed paid but I note that the detailed records are kept by the Treasurer that reconciles fees with class attendances.

Other issues noted:

Like last year, the cash balance at the end of the year is around £200, a value that Trustees may consider suitable to be held for unexpected 'one-off' type expenses.

As income has exceeded £25,000 in the year the Society will be obliged to file a Trustee Report & Accounts, accompanied by a report from an independent examiner (the role that I have effectively carried out), together with an Annual Return. The TR&A will need to be filed within 10 months of the financial year end.

As in previous years' reports, it is recommended that all new tutors or models that the Society engage should provide written confirmation of their own responsibility for making their own personal tax arrangements as self-employed persons.

I would like to thank the Treasurer for making the accounting records available clearly and promptly.

Dave Taylor ACMA

507 Gilbert House, Barbican, London EC2Y 8BD

04 May 2024

¹ The statutory requirement for an audit or independent examination of a charity's accounts applies to those with gross income in excess of £25,000 in the financial year.