



THE ARTS SOCIETY BLACKMORE VALE

Trustees' Report for 2022-2023

President: Sheila Williams

Charitable Objectives

1. The promotion and advancement of the aesthetic education of the public, the cultivation, appreciation and study of the decorative and fine arts and the giving of aid to the conservation of our National Heritage for the benefit of the public.
2. The relief of those persons in financial need or hardship, in particular students in arts projects, as the committee sees fit from time to time.

Trustees

The committee elected annually under the Rules of the Constitution dated 8 May 2004 are also trustees of the Charity.

Honorary Officers and Trustee Members of the Executive Committee:

Ann Tasker	Chair
Pippa Schofield	Vice Chair and Arts Volunteering
Andrew Torrance	Treasurer
Anthea Payne	Membership Secretary
Margaret Martin	Programme Secretary
Hennie Walton	Days of Special Interest

Non-Trustee Members of the Executive Committee:

Maggie Mowbray	Website
Lincoln Waller	Website

Vacancies on the Executive Committee:

Position Vacant	Secretary
Position Vacant	Events & Publicity

This year has been characterised by a return to something like normal. Highlights have included:

- A return to a full lecture programme. This season's lectures have covered a wide range of arts-based topics and have been very well received, with most lecturers being given ratings of 'Outstanding' or 'Excellent'. We hope that you have enjoyed them too. Once more, grateful thanks are due to Margaret Martin, our Programme Secretary.
- As last year, a Day of Special Interest in mid-May. *Sir Stamford Raffles, Art Collector, Discoverer of Singapore* took place at Cucklington Hall on Monday 15 May and, judging from the feedback, was much enjoyed by everyone. Our gratitude both to Hennie Walton for her research, organisational and people skills and to Peter Evans for his innovative technical and projection skills.

- Our New Members' Lunch in November was well-attended and very successful – as was our introduction of Christmas drinks after our December lecture. Pippa Schofield provided her brilliant sandwiches and snacks for both events. Thank you Pippa.
- After Alix Brooke stood down from countless years providing coffee and refreshments, we were unable to find a successor. So, ever resourceful, we instigated a Coffee Rota – around a dozen members willing to run the refreshments for 1 or 2 lectures each season. Alix volunteered to co-ordinate the team which has, proved extremely successful. Fervent thanks to Alix and her team.
- In similar vein, Anthea had help at tick-in from members other than the Committee. Special thanks to Sally Bolton and Fiona McEwan.
- Thanks and apologies must go to Flip Herring. Over the years, Flip has occupied just about every role on the Committee, as well as being an Arts Society accredited lecturer. Some 16 months ago, she offered to help out as temporary Secretary for a couple of months until we could find a permanent successor. She is still there. I can't tell you how grateful we have been for Flip's help.
- We opened the season with 165 members – almost 100 fewer than before the pandemic. During the year new members have joined and, as I write, we are 172. Efforts to attract new members continue, helped enormously by our fresh new publicity leaflet. Very special thanks to our President, Sheila Williams. We hope to do much more in this area as and when we fill our vacant committee role for Events and Publicity.

Next year, we are aiming to run 2 Days of Special Interest – in autumn and spring, plus an Evening Celebration in late spring or early summer. Work has begun with the invaluable contribution of Georgina Scott, a new member whose energy and ideas have been outstanding. Thank you, Georgina.

As ever, full information on our plans and the lecture programme for 2023-24 can be found on our website:

<https://theartsocietyblackmorevale.org.uk>

We continue to monitor and develop our website, thanks to the careful work of Lincoln Waller, who has also led the Projection Team through startling amounts of technological change

Lincoln has, since mid-year, been joined by Maggie Mowbray to work together on maintaining and developing our website. Our thanks to them both for managing so smoothly this ever-changing piece of kit.

After a very effective term as Projection Team leader Lincoln has now handed over to Peter Evans. Projection, like the website, never stands still and the demands on the Projection Team are ever-increasing. Recently, there have been several changes to the team and we would like to thank Clive Carsley and Mike Calvert for all their help and expertise in the past, and to welcome Mike Hall, Julia Holman and Peter Williams for all the innovative work they aim to do in the future.

Special thanks go to Mike Calvert, both for developing the projection procedures and for setting up our laptop.

Turning to financial matters, we are pleased to report that, despite all challenges, careful management has allowed our finances for 2022-2023 to generate a small surplus. You will see from the Treasurer's Report how this has been achieved, but we would like to emphasise the role that digital communication has played. We ask for your continuing co-operation in using email and the website, both of which are both cheaper and faster than paper and postal communication. Most of our costs do not vary with membership numbers, so more members equates to more control over subscription levels. Our lecturers have (just about) managed to keep their fees level over the past 3 years, though they are unlikely

to be able to continue to do so. To keep our finances stable, we propose to raise the membership subscription for the 2023-24 season by 4% to £51. Please also note the Treasurer, Andrew Torrance's comments on the GiftAid scheme in his report.

Pippa Schofield has taken on both Arts Volunteering and being vice-Chair. She has spent time this year reviewing our Arts Volunteering work in the light of the change in emphasis from 'Young Arts' to a more community-based approach. As a result, we are now supporting The Balsam Centre in Wincanton in their provision of art therapy for young carers. Our budget is provided by a £250 Community Grant from The Arts Society plus the proceeds from Book Draw.

Our central appeal, both for new and existing members is and remains the quality of our lectures – and I am happy to say that Margaret has prepared a richly varied programme for next season, details of which accompany this letter.

Running all these events and activities successfully depends on an enthusiastic team. The world around us is changing faster than ever and, if we are to ensure our survival, we need to respond to such changes. We need people to help, advise, to offer enthusiasm, expertise and time – however much or little can be spared. Please help if you can. If you would like to help, please email me at ann.tasker@gmail.com

I am very lucky to have been supported by a valiant and hard-working committee. Anthea Payne has run Membership matters with her usual calm efficiency, while Andrew Torrance, our Treasurer, has vigilantly ensured that the Society's money is well-used and accounted for. My sincerest thanks to them all.

My particular thanks go to our President, Sheila Williams, for her advice and support.

On behalf of the Committee, please accept our best wishes and we look forward to seeing you at our lectures, our Days of Special Interest and our Evening Celebration.

Ann Tasker (Trustee authorised to sign on behalf of all Trustees)
Chair
The Arts Society Blackmore Vale