



Leamington Studio Artist East Lodge  
Jephson Gardens  
Willes Road  
Leamington Spa  
CV32 4ER

## **MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**8<sup>th</sup> December 2025**

### **Present:**

**LSA Trustees:** Sue Bent, Linda John, Beth Bolton, Maristella Barbera and Mike Patrick

**Members of LSA:** Mary Thomas, Ray Thomas, Pat McHale, Ian Mattingly, Bridget Mattingly, Jean Ensell, Cecilia Mackay, Soolie Burke, Giuseppe Pittarello, Catherine Hodges, Raymond Thomas, Len Mackin, Fiona Metcalfe, Anna Patrick, Alastair Gamble, Kevin Alexander, Dee Luntley, Matthew Sugars, Lynne Gougeon, E. Mander, Eric Klein Velderman, Corinna Spencer, Sue Cable, Alan Danson, Alice Goode, Lyndy Rogan, Hilary Roberts, Shelley Chapman, Owen Vickery, Nicola Richards, Robert Cull, Sue Southorn, Mac French, Nina French, Tamarah Khatib, Peter Birtwhistle, Kevin Alexander, Anne Malin, Judith Perry, Julie Law, Kate Larkin, Caroline Walsh-Waring, Andrzej Zawadzki. (48 in total)

The meeting was deemed quorate by the Trustees, as required under the LSA Constitution.

**Apologies:** Julia Essex, Steve Jackson, Annie Brenchley, Dawn Beachus, Ede Kovacs, Jacqui Smithson, Janette George

The meeting was held at 7.30 pm on Monday, 8th December 2025, at St Patrick's Club, Riverside, Adelaide Rd, Leamington Spa CV32 5AH.

### **1. Welcome**

Mike Patrick welcomed everyone to the AGM and noted that several apologies for absence had been received. He requested that any questions from members be held until the end of the presentations.

### **2. Minutes of last AGM**

No issues arising from the last minutes.

### **3. Treasurer's report**

Beth Bolton invited members to view the LSA's official accounts on the Charity Commission's website. She would focus her report on what she believed members were most interested in, namely that we generated more income than we spent.

From April 2024 to the end of March 2025, our income was £53,488, and our expenditure was £47,642, resulting in a surplus of £5,846.

The Art Room's move from Satchwell Court to the Lower Mall took place at the end of the financial year, so some expenses will be included in this financial year.

Our total sales of artwork was £86,018 which was outstanding.

The Art Room's move coincided with our first exhibition, which was very successful, although we experienced a larger footfall at the old Art Room.

Our sales in the first six months of this financial year (April to September) was £22,431 for the Art Room and £15,148 for the Jephson Gardens Gallery, giving a total of £37,579

Regarding the money we hold in the bank, the Trustees felt they needed six months' operating costs, which is £25,000, held in reserve in case of any disaster requiring us to close the LSA and pay outstanding bills. They also believed a higher contingency fund was necessary, also of £25,000, in case the Art Room was forced to move again. The original contingency fund was set at £10,000, then increased to £20,000, and is now set at £25,000.

Mike commented that the value of the two reserve funds was decided at the last Trustee meeting. "We've had to move in the past. It's likely that we may have to move again in the future."

### **4. Membership Report**

Linda John began her report by referencing the membership survey completed in Oct/Nov 2024. This revealed that members' main priorities were showcasing their work, selling their work, and networking.

She felt this had been more than achieved by sustaining both gallery spaces, selling 14,000 artworks, and raising over £86,000 in sales. A total of 32,000 visitors were recorded at both galleries.

The Art Room moved in April this year, and Linda emphasised the enormous thanks owed to all our members who pulled together to paint, clean windows, sort out electricity, etc. "This is what our volunteering is all about, pulling together for the good of the LSA."

On other points in the survey, opportunities for artists to meet and converse through group exhibitions would continue. Live demonstrations with dedicated focus weeks would also carry on. Promoting the LSA and collaborating with other organisations and charities would continue – much had already been accomplished in this area.

Community engagement was excellent, and our social media following grew significantly. Our content views increased by 500%. Linda stressed that all members had a role to play in

that process as the more we like and share posts, the more it broadens the horizons of that post.

Membership of the LSA has increased to 454. Two years ago, we couldn't say with certainty what our membership was. Now it is clear who the active, subscribed members are. We have also installed auto-renewal, so the knowledge remains accurate each month.

We introduced four bursaries, and this will continue in the coming year.

We supported young carers, and our thanks go to Sue Southorn for leading that initiative. We also collaborated with Trinity and Aylesford Schools to organise an exhibition in the Jephson Gardens Gallery.

It took 28,000 volunteer hours to run both galleries, so once again a big thank you to all our members. We wouldn't have the LSA without you.

We added Trustee Awards to your Volunteer Awards.

Finally, I need to mention the development of the website. In terms of community engagement, it's a significant showcase for the LSA and a valuable resource for volunteers and members. A simple look at the website reveals the great work Tamarah has done. Recently, we launched gift vouchers for our workshops. Again, our thanks go to Tamarah, who works tirelessly on all of this.

## **5. Review of the Year**

Mike started with the operational and strategic review of the year, which has been transformational. Our major investments have been financial, relocation of the Art Room and investment in new systems.

We only used £6,958 of our £10,000 reserve for the move, but we cannot guarantee that a future move will be so economical.

Our financial management adopted QuickBooks accounting software instead of spreadsheets. We now have a budget and sufficient reserve funds for all eventualities. We also commissioned an independent review of all our finances. We engaged VAST, a Stoke-on-Trent charity specialising in accountancy and highly recommended. Thanks to VAST, we only pay £20 a month for QuickBooks.

We have also made substantial investments in our digital infrastructure to enhance our online presence. As a result, you can now book workshops, submit exhibition proposals, purchase workshop gift cards, view an online newsletter, and more. A great deal of work happens behind the scenes, mostly carried out by Tamarah.

Regarding members and exhibitions, we operate two vibrant galleries with working studios attached. We have expanded the scope and diversity of our exhibitions for established and emerging artists. We have forged impactful partnerships with local schools, which can be very difficult to involve in collaboration, WOS, Photographic Society, History group and many others. As an example, one of our artists, Katie Jones, designed the cover for the History Group's publication *Enterprising Leamington*.

Our four bursaries, selected by Sue Southorn and Linda John, were for Hayley Burgess, Ricky Piggot, Logan Larkin Wong, and Evelina Placinta. Each recipient was assigned projects to complete. It wasn't simply a matter of providing them with funds and sending them on their way. We also had the good fortune of having Sue Southorn, Mark Godfrey, and Judith Woodfield act as mentors, and they deserve a round of applause. We have decided to increase the bursary fund next year. We will probably continue with four bursaries in 2026 and we plan to raise the amount to £500 each.

The membership survey probably needs to change next year to keep it focused on what really interests members. In terms of how we can better promote visual arts, we have already enhanced our online presence thanks to Tamara, Maristella and Aurora. There are plenty of opportunities and more to come.

We have two brilliant teams managing the Art Room and Jephson Gardens Gallery, and the support of all members is invaluable. "You are the heartbeat for us."

Membership satisfaction with the LSA came in at 8.7 out of 10, which is pretty good, so thank you for that.

## **5. Election of Trustees**

Sue Bent explained that Steve Jackson was co-opted earlier this year and now needed to be formally elected, which was done on a show of hands.

Also, every year, one-third of the Trustees must retire. This year, it is Mike and Sue.

No other nominations for Trustees have been received.

Linda John then stood in for Sue and observed that both Mike and Sue had been nominated by five people for re-election. Both were unanimously re-elected by a show of hands. Mike said that it was a privilege to be part of the LSA and that he had always wanted it to feel like a family, and he believed that it had certainly become one.

## **7. Future Vision and Strategy**

Mike stated that the LSA has become a hybrid organisation. Our approach now combines dedicated volunteers with targeted support from paid professionals. We need assistance and must be prepared to pay for it. Tamara can't do what she does for nothing, even though much of her work is voluntary. Dawn Beachus has taken a lot of pressure off Beth and now helps Sue Bent. Her formal title is Business Administrator. To be clear, neither are employees, but they are paid to help us meet your demands as members.

The success of the LSA is a testament to the talent of our members and the dedication of our volunteers. We are committed to building on this legacy. Our strategic approach is a deliberate investment in our capacity to continue for years to come. By evolving our structure, we will secure a strong, sustainable future where we can create even greater opportunities and strengthen the local art community.

## **8. Volunteer Awards**

This year's awards included the inaugural Trustee Awards for three individuals: Jacky Buckingham, Fiona Metcalfe, and Alastair Gamble, as well as three Volunteer Awards for Giuseppe Pittarello, Shelley Chapman, and Jonathan Corbett.

Mike also expressed his gratitude to the following individuals, in no particular order: Garima and Annie for their fantastic work creating a butterfly Christmas Tree at All Saints Church; Tamarah and her team; Dawn for her excellent behind-the-scenes efforts; the management and curation teams at both galleries; and, finally, my fellow Trustees.

## **9. AOB**

Mike explained that, due to insurance issues, we had to limit the membership of the LSA to adults, meaning anyone over 18. Unfortunately, that meant we had to inform ten students that they could no longer be members, which was very upsetting. The insurers insisted that every member must undergo a DBS check; otherwise, they would not provide us with insurance. We really had no choice.

This also means that youngsters cannot do work experience with the LSA. However, on the positive side, we can still work with schools.

Signed: The Trustees