



## St Ives Arts Club

**Annual General Meeting 2024/2025** (y/e 30.09.25)

**10.00am Thursday 8th January 2025**

**Upstairs Theatre**

### Minutes

**Members in attendance:** Janet Axten, Suzanne Ellacott, Jay Fowler, Jo Grant, Kerry Grant, John Kness, Mandy Kness, Steve Litherland, Wendy Litherland, Carol MacArthur, Chris O'Reilly, Will Sleath, Diana Taylor,

#### 1. Welcome

Steve Litherland, as Chair of Trustees, welcomed everyone to the meeting

#### 2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies received from Roger Cragg, Mary Fletcher, Phil Gee, Anthony Gribbin, Cynthia Jenkin, Diane O'Reilly, Brian Richards, Brian Selman

#### 3. Report from the Trustees

Referring to the Trustees Report, available on the Arts Club website, Steve Litherland highlighted the need, as required by the Charities Commission, for the Club to have various policies and protocols in place. These policies are identified in the Report and it was noted that the Trustees have now completed a number of these. The completed policies, listed below, are available on the Arts Club website and will be ratified under agenda item 5.

Financial Controls Policy – this is probably the most important and it was noted that the Club will now need to set an annual budget by which to measure progress each year.

Operational Risk Assessment – This is very much an active document which can be added to over time. It was noted that most health and safety responsibilities lie with user groups. In this regard it was confirmed that the Club will pay for training if necessary, e.g. first aid and fire training etc.

Data protection Policy

Membership Handbook including Disciplinary Policy

#### 4. Appointment of Trustees 2025/26 and Chair

The existing Trustees, Steve Litherland (Chair), Janet Axten, Phil Gee and Brian Richards were unanimously re-elected.

It was noted that other members are welcome to apply to become Trustees.

## **5. Proposal Papers from the Trustees**

In addition to the previously referred to Policy Papers, the Trustees are also proposing, a number of changes to the Constitution of the Arts Club, based on recommendations received from the Charity Commissioners, which will make the operation of the Arts Club easier for the Trustees. These changes relate to clauses 10.3, 11, 12.2, 12.3, 13.1, 16, and 28(a)ii and are detailed in the Report from the Trustees.

There was some discussion over reducing the minimum number of Trustees from 3 to 2. This is the minimum required by the Charities Commission, and it was noted that this is only a minimum number which would be a safeguard that would ensure the Arts Club could continue to run.

The meeting unanimously approved the policies and proposed changes.

Steve Litherland confirmed that rather than redrafting the Constitution at significant legal expense, the changes would be dealt with by an addendum.

The Chair of Trustees decided that the meeting should then deal with all 2024/25 matters before proceeding with the appointments for 2025/26.

### **9.2 & 9.4. Reports of the President and Member Services Officer for 2024/25**

Chris O'Reilly, in his capacity as both President and Member Services Officer for 2024/25 presented a slide show combining the report for both roles.

The report highlighted the annual growth in membership reaching 161 members in 2024/25, raising £6,410 in membership fees. It was noted that to-date in 2025-26 there were 141 members and £6,600 fee income, partly due to exhibition weeks now restricted to Cornwall members and an increase in membership fee to £50.

Exhibition income for 2024/25 was £58,148 from 39 weeks of member exhibitions, 6 weeks of group exhibitions, the 2 week Crypt exhibition, and the Hall gallery exhibition.

Eight groups had hired the theatre on a weekly basis in 2024/25, raising £4,348 and the 2025 September Festival had raised £4,975. In total, all activities excluding exhibitions had raised £20,850.

The President then highlighted the events that had taken place in line with his aims for the year of increasing income and raising the profile of the Club, noting that these had raised a further £3,750 for the Arts Club.

The total income for the year 2024/25 was £95,696 against which there had been a total expenditure of £97,483, resulting in an annual operating loss of £1,787.

The high level of expenditure was largely due to planned refurbishment costing £25,571 including works to the dormers, roof, gutters, new boiler and radiators, kitchen window, theatre lights, theatre curtains, new signs and redecoration. The

other main items of expenditure were exhibition sale payments to members £39660, theatre production costs £9,086, insurance £4,587, cleaning and housekeeping £5,623. The balance of expenditure included light, heating, printing, licences, subscriptions, catering, accountancy etc.

The annual operating loss was easily covered by the £35,515 bank balance at the beginning of the year, and already as of 7<sup>th</sup> January 2026 the bank balance is back up to £42,281.

Chris O'Reilly then confirmed that the full set of accounts for 2024/25 had just been approved by the accountants and were now on the Arts Club website.

The Report and Accounts were approved by the meeting by a majority vote.

### **9.3 & 9.5 Reports from the House Manager and Entertainments Officer for 2024/25**

Jo Grant reported that the 2025 September Festival had been successful for the Arts Club with 23 events taking place, and she thanked the volunteers who had helped.

Steve Litherland confirmed that as a charity the Arts Club needs to demonstrate that it is achieving its community aims, and the Little Larks Christmas Show was one way of doing this.

Comments from the meeting highlighted the need to get members to come out and attend the events as well as showing their art. It was agreed this would be discussed under item 12.

### **10.1 Social Committee Representatives Report for 2024/25**

It was reported that although the Art and Wine events were successful, it was disappointing that a few who had requested places did not attend. It was agreed that it was good that the Club now had a booking system that enabled attendees to pay in advance for events. It was noted that the use of a camera and projector had enhanced the Art and Wine events and that more were planned for 2026.

### **10.2 World Classics Report for 2024/25**

It was reported that the concert of Columbian music in November 2024 had been excellent and had 50 attendees. The concert of Fado music in March 2025 was also well attended with 60+ attendees.

It was noted that 2026 will be the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the World Classics series and that over this time there have been concerts of music from 18 countries and in excess of 2,500 concert attendees.

### **6. & 7. Appointment of President and Management Committee 2025/26**

The Chair of Trustees referred to the roles and officers of the Management Committee in the Trustees Report and highlighted the names of members who had put themselves forward for each of the roles. As no-one had put themselves

forward for the role of Building Services Officer, Steve Litherland confirmed he would cover this as the building was a Trustee responsibility.

The Chair of Trustees proposed the nominations that the Trustees had received for the roles and this was unanimously approved.

John Kness, newly elected Secretary, took the opportunity to confirm that the members of the Management Committee are there to represent the views of the membership in general and as such they welcome the views and comments of members. He also recommended that members look at the Management Committee minutes on the Arts Club website to see what the committee is doing and how it is dealing with the matters that are raised.

Chris O'Reilly then took over chairmanship of the meeting as the newly elected President for 2025/26.

## **9.1 Minutes of 2023/24 AGM held on 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2024**

### **9.1.1 Approval**

The minutes of the last meeting were unanimously approved.

### **9.1.2 Matters Arising**

(item 2.1) Chris O'Reilly noted that a President's dinner had not yet been arranged.

(item 3.2) When referring to the small pool of members who assisted in hanging members' exhibitions, Chris O'Reilly was questioned as to whether other members could join this group. Mandy Kness volunteered to join the hanging pool and this was approved. It was also suggested that a maximum of 3 members of the pool hang each members' exhibition on a rotational basis, comprising a curator and 2 assistants.

There was considerable discussion over the amount of 'craft' in the last members exhibition. It was agreed that the Arts Club needs to maintain an appropriate balance between art and craft and ensure that 'craft' entries are covered by the pricing structure.

(item 11) Chris O'Reilly provided an update on the repairs and refurbishments that had been undertaken, including the installation of a new boiler that also provided hot water, and the exterior redecoration that had been completed to all elevations except the seaward side, adding that the committee was looking at scaffolding and refurbishing the seaward side in 2026.

(item 12) Chris O'Reilly confirmed that a ticketing system had been put in place for small club events.

(item 13) It was confirmed that, although not well attended, the monthly coffee mornings will continue.

## **11. Update on Repairs, Improvements and Maintenance Works**

It was confirmed that the 2026 programme of works would include;

- Internal redecoration (*commencing 19<sup>th</sup> January 2026 – volunteers welcome*)
- Replacement of the porch over The Warren entrance
- CCTV downstairs
- New floor covering/soundproofing in the theatre
- Hand dryers in toilets
- Cover boiler pipes in toilets
- Improve theatre radiators performance, currently under seats
- New large opening window in theatre
- Fire door closers
- Stair bannisters

The management Committee will look at these works over the coming year, obtaining costs first.

It was noted that there will also be an electrical inspection as a lot of the electrical wiring and fittings are old, and there is a need to remove anything that is redundant as the Club is currently at the limit of its power consumption. All works recommended as a result of the electrical inspection will be costed and prioritised by the Management Committee.

A suggestion was received to provide additional spotlights in the main gallery and this was approved.

## **12. Any Other Business**

Janet Axten sought clarification over the Trustees attending Management Committee meetings. Previously they used to be able to attend but not vote. Steve Litherland clarified for the meeting that Trustees can attend any meeting and do have voting rights.

The meeting also sought clarification as to whether Club members could join the Management Committee in addition to the previously agreed officers. It was confirmed that they could, and currently Diana Taylor and Brian Selman are also members. For the benefit of the Minutes the 2025/26 Management Committee was confirmed as;

President – Chris O'Reilly

Secretary – John Kness

Member Services Officer – Chris O'Reilly

Building Services Officer – vacant

Entertainment Officer – Steve Litherland  
Marketing and Social Media Officer – Jo Grant  
Social Secretary (shared by members of the Social Committee) – Wendy Litherland and Suzanne Ellacot  
Archivist and Historian – Janet Axten  
World Classics Officer – Will Sleath  
Trustees (not already officers) – Phil Gee and Brian Richards  
Members – Brian Selman and Diana Taylor

It was agreed, following a suggestion, that a booklet be produced regarding the history of the St Ives Arts Club that visitors and members could buy. It was also agreed that Steve Litherland, Diana Taylor, Jo Grant and Janet Axten could look at producing a film depicting the history of the Arts Club and/or the history of art and artists in St Ives. In this regard it was mentioned that greater use could be made of the Arts Club YouTube channel.

Janet Axten highlighted the importance of the exhibition in the Arts Club in February featuring works on loan from the St Ives Museum by distinguished Arts Club members and former Presidents. In return the Arts Club will, at some point, lend some of its paintings to the museum. A suggestion was also received to have an Arts Club tour of the Museum and it was agreed that it would be good if the Arts Club could take the lead in the renaissance of an interest in art in St Ives.

Jay Fowler moved a vote of thanks to the President, Chair and committee for all their work for the benefit of members, and this was unanimously agreed.

Chris O'Reilly thanked everyone for coming and the meeting closed at 11:55