

The Arts Society Nottingham: AGM October 2025: Chair's report

At the end of another season there is much to reflect on, with a steady growing membership and a record number of guests attending our nine lectures. Our scanners and website booking systems have vastly simplified the administrative processes and enabled the committee to engage more with the membership.

As usual, Lynne and Rita have worked tirelessly to provide us with a varied programme of lectures, catering for a wide range of artistic 'tastes' and provide a sterling job in looking after our lecturers on the day. We are very grateful for their expertise and ongoing work in planning our programme two years in advance.

The Special Interest Days were very popular at our new Broadway venue of screen 4. The revised two lecture format and optional buffet lunch allows flexibility on ticket pricing and attracted higher attendance. Many thanks to Ann and Kate for organising these in-depth intellectually stimulating days in such an intimate venue.

Our summer visit to Coventry Cathedral and Guildhall was a resounding success with much positive feedback from our members. Liz Holden with help from Kate worked very hard behind the scenes to ensure that the trip ran smoothly. A big thank you for their attention to detail.

Heritage Volunteers has progressed well under the excellent guidance of Vivienne Jarvis. With the Wollaton Hall textile project finishing, two new projects are underway, book conservation at NCWC in Newark and a textiles project in Mansfield Museum. It is pleasing that both projects also involve TAS members from neighbouring societies such as Trent Valley, Dukeries, Gainsborough and Grantham.

Our £1500 Young Arts bursaries grant was shared by 3 final year NTU students from the Department of Fashion, Textiles & Knitwear Design to purchase materials, develop techniques and assist their major end of year project. Three of our committee attended the Graduate Show in May and were very impressed by the standard of their work.

We were very pleased with sales of the 50 Treasures of the East Midlands Area book, that encourages members and their friends to explore nearby places and artistic items of special interest.

At the end of the season, we said goodbye to three committee members. Lynette Harris, an excellent vice chair in recent years who also spearheaded our Young Arts partnership with NTU. Ann Hall, a longstanding committee member who has efficiently organised our days of special interest. Vivienne Jarvis our Heritage Volunteer rep, leaves to concentrate on her roles as chair of Trent Valley TAS and vice chair of EMA. We wish her well. A big thank you to Liz Thomas for supporting me as Secretary, Chris Castleden in organising plans for our 50th Anniversary celebrations and Janet Pether for her excellent publicity work.

We welcome Sally Green, taking over the treasurer's job from Steve Dance who will remain on the committee as tech support. Kate Lewis will take on the extra role of vice chair. Margaret Morris will take over Young Arts. We also welcome Irene Milburn back on the committee, as assistant membership secretary taking over from Sheelagh during the new season. Jo Fox and Heather Lawson join us on the committee, sharing the role of special interest days with Kate.

Finally, with all your continued support and by working together harmoniously as a committee it clearly can be said that we have made excellent progress during the season. A special thank you to non-committee members who have given their time to help with scanning and renewals. Enormous thanks from me to all concerned in helping us to be a very successful and happy society.

Ilanah Dance