



THE ARTS SOCIETY CHICHESTER LAVANT VALLEY

Chairman's Report 2025/26

Dear Members

First, I would like to thank you for renewing your membership of the Society. There are significant financial pressures on all of us and it is good to see that you are still showing an active interest in the series of lectures, visits and Special Interest days which we are offering for the coming season. We feel sure you will enjoy these.

We are still happy to welcome new members and if you have friends or neighbours who may be interested please do not hesitate to invite them to come as a guest.

The lecture programme through the last season was very well received with 6 rated as 'Outstanding' Many thanks to our Programme Secretary Hilary Williams for organising the lecturers.

We had two Study Days shared with the other Chichester Arts Societies. Both were very successful and fully subscribed.

There was a very successful visit to Tudeley where All Saints is the only Church in the world to have all its windows designed by Marc Chagal. Following this members visited Standen House designed by Philip Webb and William Morris.

Our Visits programme concluded with two successful trips. The first was to Champs Hill to view the Bowerman Trust exhibition of paintings from the Cornish Newlyn School, and their gardens in full bloom.

The second was to the grade I West Thorney Church dedicated to St Nicholas, an ancient and immensely peaceful place on the edge of Chichester Harbour.

Two earlier intended visits unfortunately had to be cancelled, one due to the lecturer's ill-health and the other through lack of support. At the beginning of the coming season we will be asking members for their views on visits generally and the cost of these to better inform our future planning. Ian Milton our Visits Officer would welcome your responses to the questionnaire.

The major part of our Young Arts Programme this year supported four local charities in a joint exhibition at the Oxmarket Gallery entitled 'Art of Living'. Stonepillow, the Aldingbourne Trust, the Apuldram Centre and Chichester College each contributed works from their clients which were very well-received. Over 1600 people viewed the exhibition during its two-week display.

The CEO of the Apuldram Centre in particular wrote 'the artists achieved their lifelong ambitions and goals when they were able to display their art...Each artist sold at least one piece of art with some even selling their whole collection ... I cannot begin to express how grateful we are to you.'

A further measure of the success of the event for the Arts Society is that the charities have seen such huge personal benefits for their clients that they are now making arrangements to hold another similar event next year, funded by themselves.

We liaised with the other daytime Chichester Arts Societies in this and are planning further co-operation for other projects next year. Funding for this will come from the Arts Society nationally.

We also obtained a small grant from The Arts Society which enabled us to provide 70 art packs for children whose parents are dependent on the Chichester Food Bank . These were gratefully received and distributed. Many thanks are due to Deborah Bartlett-Pitt who sourced the packs and liaised with the Food Bank for their distribution.

The members of the Committee have now been in place for three years and I am very grateful to them for their support of the Society through the year. Although they are all willing to continue in place for the coming season and are standing for re-election en bloc, we would welcome some fresh ideas and energy from you our members to ensure the successful continuance of the Society. If you would like to contribute in this way please let us know.

Best wishes to you all.

Gillian Scott

Chairman

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