

PAOS AGM

08.11.23

19.00 -20.50

Board Members Present

Lisa Roberts (Chair) Amy Wright (Treasurer) Helen Catlin (Membership)

Alison Parry (Secretary) Tony Nero (Marketing) Jim Tovey (Website)

Board Members Apologies Martina Karklina Pauline Wheatley

The formal agenda is as follows:

1. Welcome
2. Chair's Report
3. Financial Summary and Treasurer's Report
4. Membership Fees 2024
5. Open Studios' Dates 2024
6. Nominations / Vote for Committee Members.
7. AOB

1. Welcome

I would like to welcome everyone to this year's AGM for Peterborough Artists Open Studios. We have had another busy packed year and it is lovely to see so many of you here with us tonight.

First of all I would like to thank all the committee members for all their help and support this year and to take a moment to remember our dear friend Sue Keen who we lost this year after open studios.

Sue was a wonderfully funny and creative friend; her passing is desperately sad and she will be hugely missed. Sue was our secretary for many years and she helped many artists to support open studios and to bring their creative passions to the public. We as a committee and PAOS members will miss Sue's company and laughter and beautifully crafted textiles and drawings. I will always remember Sue's kindness and generosity and we miss her very much.

2. Chair's Report

This year open studios welcomed:

- 114 artists
- 105 exhibiting
- 9 non-exhibiting
- Over 52 venues

This year we have seen many ups and downs; the cost of living is affecting us all personally and professional. Audiences were around the same levels however sales did seem to be down, with people considering where to spend their disposable income.

Members reported that artists showing in groups this year had more visitors and sales than members showing on their own. However, members that actively promoted their events did have more visitors.

The cost of living also affected us through the cost of paper going up and we had to reduce the weight of the paper and not spend extra funds on a heavier cover to keep us within the budget.

We had many comments about the paper and members did feel that they would like to spend more to have a heavier cover next year. We also had a new design for the brochure and although there were many positives to the redesign, there were also some big misses. We have taken on board your feedback and will look to redesign the index section and to review the map to enable visitors to see who is showing in groups and in what areas, to help them plan their visits.

3. Financial Summary and Treasurer's Report

- Questions from members
- Members said they needed to see what the brochure would look like with some members wanting to be more involved with the layout.
- Committee said they would provide a full calendar of events for a 2 way feed back.
- There was concern about the layout of maps for next year, perhaps a breakdown of smaller maps as people like to plan visits beforehand.
- A member suggested the use of QR codes to provide more information.
- The number of brochures printed was of concern as some members had a lot of surplus. The committee emphasised that they would go out earlier next year so more time for distribution..
- Some members were concerned about the quality of the images in the brochure and that they had been cropped. Assurances were made that this wouldn't happen again. A lot of different devices are used to take images and the committee would like to support members with this.
- It was suggested that the word count in the brochure should be reduced 'How many people read the text?' A member suggested using bullet points.

4. Membership Fees 2024

For 2024 the committee have reviewed the membership fee. We have reviewed other open studios; what they offer their members and the fees they charge, fees range from £70 for basic membership (listing on the website) to £160 for all the extra items including marketing, booklets, exhibitions and activities. Peterborough has the lowest cost for members in the country and our membership fees have been the same for 4 years.

Members agreed last year to keep the fees at £50 as we were coming out of Covid. However with the cost of living we can no longer afford the quality products that members want. This year we made a loss, eating into our reserves.

To enable us to have a brochure that members want and to support the website and activities the proposed membership fee will increase from £50 to £80

The main reason for increasing the membership fee is down to the current cost of paper. We have gone out to the market to get quotes for design and printing of the brochure for next year.

Quotes for 5000 copies have ranged from £7,500 to £4,753.

We have gone for 64 pages as last year and a heavier paper of 80gsm, to support member's requests, with the lowest quote of £4,753.

This will enable 4 artists per page. We will also have a standard size for photos next year and images will need to be supplied to this size or cropped to fit.

The Moment magazine provided the lowest quote and we will be using them again next year to design and print the brochures.

Copy and proofing dates will be provided after membership has closed on the 14th February.

We will also be using some of our reserves to update the website and make it more user friendly for our members to use and post events on the site and to provide more information and images on artists pages. We want to make the website a go to place of information for each member.

We will launch PAOS at the start of May next year.

Included in the membership fees next year.

- Listing on the website
- Post events and activities on the website
- Listing within the brochure
- Marketing for the weekends
- Take part in a selling exhibition at Peterborough Museum during open studios to promote the weekends – June.
- Selling exhibition at Peterborough Museum in October
- Opportunity to take part in Christmas fair.

The fees have stayed the same for a long time and we have tried to support artists through the difficult times, however this year we were not able to cover our costs and members were not happy with the paper used. To enable us to produce the standard members want, we will have to increase our membership fees. We feel that our fees are still low and competitive, and we will be able to give artists value for money.

- Questions from members
- The majority of members understood the need to increase the membership fee in fact it was noted that the first fee 20 years ago was £30 so there has been very little increase since.
- One member did say that the increase might put some people off applying but the committee emphasised that the fees have to pay for the brochure.
- Is exhibiting at the museum the same time as Open Studios a good idea? It was felt that this would work.
- Some members suggested keeping the cheaper brochure paper used this year and put more money into the website. It was recognised that members really value the brochure therefore it needs to be improved.

- The main complaint was the fact that the brochure was confusing which was due to the design and layout. The committee has assured members that this will be resolved next year.
- Can we have a social gathering before Open Studios? It is hoped that there will be more social gatherings next year this might encourage more members to attend the AGM.
- Can we have a ballot for spaces at the Affordable Art Fair? Or people have preference if they didn't get a place last year? Most people who applied got a space.
- Motion 'To raise the membership fee from £50 to £80 in 2024' the motion was passed with 22 votes.

5. Open studio dates

Open studios will take place on the:

- Membership opens – 14th December – closes 14th February.
 - Brochures ready 1st May.
 - Launch event 4,5th May.
 - Open studios - 29, 30th June – 6,7,13 &14th July
 - Selling exhibition at Peterborough Museum – 21st June – 6th July
 - Selling exhibition at Peterborough Museum – 6th October to 4th November
 - Christmas fair 7th December
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- Questions from members No questions

6. Nominations / Vote for Committee Members.

This year we have two committee members standing down:

- Martina – for website and marketing
- Pauline – for members

We would like to thank both Martina and Pauline for all their work on the committee over the past years and for their dedication to our members, providing everyone with help and support when needed and for looking after the banners for many years, we are not sure were we are going to put them now!

The committee have agreed not to replace Martina and Pauline and the rest of the committee will take up their roles and actions.

We will therefore not be nominating or voting for any new committee members at this AGM. All other roles to remain the same.

We would also like to thank Helen and her family for visiting so many artists this year and gaining their feedback and taking some amazing photos of all our artists in their studios. Helen and her family clocked up a lot of miles this year and we would like to present her with this gift to say thank you from everyone at PAOS, as Helen is not an artist but makes so much effort to support everything that we do.

- Questions from members No questions

7. AOB

- Questions from members No questions
- A new member congratulated the committee and said how impressed she was with the organisation of the Open Studios.

The committee apologised for mistakes in the brochure and said 'It was a steep learning curve after a difficult couple of years'

8. Thank you all for coming

The meeting closed at 20.50 pm