

The Arts Society Egerton Annual General Meeting –June 2026 Chairman's Report

2025 was another successful year with membership maintained at around 180. Our target remains 200 members. We are delighted that we get an average of 15 visitors per meeting. We publicise our meetings widely via parish magazine, social media and posters.

As our Treasurer reports, the financial situation of the Society is now stronger than it has been for some time. This is the result of the growth in membership numbers and visitors. The increase in membership and visitor fees, which still remain among the lowest in Kent, has also helped greatly. Our aim is to continue to keep our fees as low as possible while ensuring that we have sufficient funds to fund meetings, provide the best quality equipment to a standard expected by our lecturers and offer small community grants.

In 2025 we sponsored the Egerton Music Festival with an Arts Society Community Grant of £250 plus £50 from our funds. Later in the year we sponsored a Film Club screening of 'War Paint - Women at War' with a grant of £150. These grants not only help us to build effective community relations but they also help to promote our Society to a wider audience within the village and beyond. We also have a good relationship with Egerton Pre-school with whom we share the Hall, (they have to vacate to the Games Barn for our meetings), and with the Millennium Hall Committee on which we are represented by Christine Willis.

Our Programme seeks to be wide-ranging and top quality. We always welcome feedback and suggestions. Our 2025 Study Day was very successful with our own member and Arts Society lecturer, Malcolm Jones, along with cabaret performer and lecturer Robert Hazle, presenting a very interesting and highly entertaining day on the theme of Noel Coward, his life, theatre and music.

Our Website is expertly maintained by Paul Tubby. Please take time to look at it and share it with friends who may be interested in joining. See www.theartssocietyegerton.org.uk

Filling vacancies on our Committee has proved a real challenge. At present I am both Chairman and Programme Secretary and we are unable to offer Visits. There is also scope to develop Community Volunteering, including Young Arts projects, but we need offers to take on these roles.

My thanks go to the entire Committee. They are a great team and I value their support enormously. This year we co-opted Mike Allinson. He plays an invaluable role at meetings, operating the Sound System in particular. Our technical team is led by Paul Tubby. Wendy Licence is a highly skilled Treasurer. Christine Willis, Membership Secretary, works tirelessly at and in between meetings. Lynne Saunby has organised her first Study Day. Sue Wood is a most efficient Secretary. This year we will lose Rob Peaple. Rob has provided invaluable support and guidance to me in my first year as Chair of this Society and will be missed by all the team.

Rachel and Claire are a fantastic team, setting up the Hall for meetings, serving refreshments with a smile, and tidying up afterwards. Thanks too to our Auditor Ros Williamson.

None of this would be possible without a great team of volunteers who assist at meetings. They are Simon Barti, Roy Entwistle, Polly Lee, Maggie Peaple, Shirley Pritchard, Elizabeth Tweed and all those members who help to promote our Society in their communities. Most recently Kate Simms has taken on carparking duties to ensure we can get as many cars as possible parked in a limited space.

Last but by no means least we value our members; huge thanks for your support, for bringing friends along to our meetings and for providing feedback to enable us to build and develop our Society.

Gill Bromley