



**THE ARTS
SOCIETY**

**THE ARTS SOCIETY
CONFERENCE**

TRANSFORM | REGENERATE | INSPIRE

DELEGATE RESOURCE PACK
BRISTOL 2023

TABLE OF CONTENTS

01	A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR OF TRUSTEES
02	INTRO
03	SERVICES REVIEW FEEDBACK FROM SOCIETIES & COMMITTEE MEMBERS
02	TENSIONS
12	STATEMENT OF MUTUAL OBLIGATIONS
13	SERVICES
15	EDUCATION
16	MEMBERSHIP AND SOCIETY SUPPORT
19	FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION
20	VOLUNTEERING & GRANTS
21	CENTRAL ACTIVITIES
22	TRAINING
23	BRISTOL CONFERENCE SERIES
24	DISCUSSION PAPER: PURPOSE
26	DISCUSSION PAPER: LOCALISM
28	VOLUNTEERING - THE LOCAL POWER OF MAKING A DIFFERENCE
32	AVOIDING THE “KODAK MOMENT”: THE NEED FOR TRANSFORMATION
36	COMMITTEE AND MEMBER’S SURVEY RESULTS SUMMARY & PROPOSALS
39	PROPOSED INITIATIVES
40	INITIATIVES
48	SOCIETY HEALTH CHECK - JANUARY 2023
49	SOCIETY HEALTH CHECK QUESTIONNAIRE
51	THE ARTS SOCIETY CONTENT AND MEDIA SURVEY

A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR OF TRUSTEES

On behalf of the Arts Society Board of Trustees, thank you for taking the time come to Bristol and participate in what I'm sure is going to be an exciting, stimulating and informative day for all of us who love The Arts Society and want it to thrive in the future.

The documents in this pack represent a formidable amount of work by the Arts Society professional staff, and not a small amount of commitment from members who have filled in questionnaires, attended meetings, and read the bulletins that have been sent out over the last few months.

We have listened, digested and really thought about what you have told us. We know that you are all volunteers and that you spend considerable amounts of your time running your societies, going to Area meetings and planning for the future. It is truly appreciated. All of us who volunteer know the benefits of feeling valued, and the frustrations when things don't go to plan. I hope we can all go away from the Bristol conference feeling energised, recommitted and reconnected and I hope we can have a little fun too!

There are multiple challenges ahead. We have to be visionary, we have to plan and we have to be realistic and practical. It's a big ask but I'm sure that together we really can go on bringing more art to more people and find new and exciting ways to meet our charitable objects.

Please enjoy yourselves. Most of trustee board will be present. Please talk to us over the course of the day - we've all run societies and we really want to hear your voice as we make decisions for the future of The Arts Society.

Liz Woods

Chair of the Board of Trustees of The Arts Society

INTRO

This Conference resource pack compiles many of the findings and recommendations of our research since the Covid pandemic. Once our world got turned upside down in 2020, it soon became clear that there would be no turning back to the world as we knew it. Whilst some “normalcy” has been restored, the “new normal” is still being shaped.

The resources in this booklet reflect this.

Readers can expect

- Quantitative insights from questionnaires & surveys with Societies and individual Members
- Our conference insight papers (published in the Bulletin as the Bristol Series)
- Recommendations & Reports

The conference itself is part of our process to make decisions for the future, and discussions in Bristol will help us develop our offer and support for Societies.

This means that your familiarity with this resource will aid informed and insight-driven thinking.

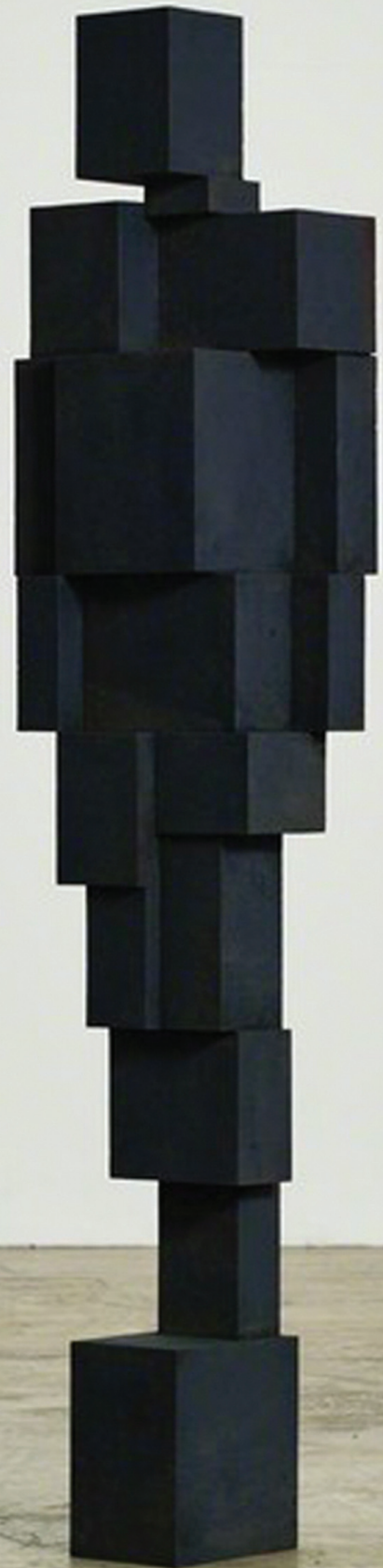
Thank you for joining us in Bristol!

Florian Schweizer
Chief Executive



THE ARTS
SOCIETY

SERVICES REVIEW
FEEDBACK
FROM SOCIETIES
& COMMITTEE
MEMBERS



SERVICES REVIEW FEEDBACK FROM SOCIETIES & COMMITTEE MEMBERS

317 RESPONSES IN TOTAL



16.5%

submitted on behalf of the committee

83.5%

submitted for themselves

OF THESE



35%

Society Chairs

11%

Programme Secretaries

16%

Treasurers

10%

Membership Secretaries

10%

Committee Secretaries

TENSIONS

The questionnaire asked a number of open-ended questions such as:

What 3 services should The Arts Society definitely provide?

What is your vision for The Arts Society in 10 years?

Over the past 5 years, what have we got right (or wrong)?

Thousands of comments and suggestions were fed back this way, so it would be impractical to reproduce all comments here. Inevitably, Societies and individual respondents will have their own opinions and views, based on their needs, experiences, challenges and ambitions.

The picture that emerges from this is one that clearly suggests a diversity of opinion and a spectrum of expectations. The spectrum can best be described by identifying some of the tensions between the positions communicated to us. Below are some of the key tensions that we've extracted from the responses you sent us.

NATIONAL AWARENESS



HIGH COSTS OF RAISING AWARENESS

Publicity and awareness have been a concern of local Societies for over 50 years. It is often seen as the reason why there is no membership growth.

"More of the same [services] but increased national awareness and greater membership numbers."

"A wider knowledge and recognition of what an Arts Society is /does."

"An organisation which has much more of a public profile thereby encouraging people to join their local Society."

This sentiment is against the context that there is no evidence that an isolated national campaign would bring new Members whilst local Societies report that word of mouth is the most effective model of recruitment. It also is unclear how such a campaign would be funded or executed, given the concerns over the use of "expensive agencies" and the expectation to reduce costs.

"The Society will need to be slim."

"Saving on costs."

"Do less and charge less"

"Too much spent on consultants."

YOUNGER PEOPLE / BROADER AUDIENCE



NO INNOVATION

There is - and always has been - a desire to recruit “younger” people and lay the foundation for the future.

“I want a Society that it is inclusive of all ages and classes”.

“I hope the Society will grow and bring in younger members and lecturers.”

“The ageing membership and difficulty locally attracting younger members.”

But aside from frequent comments ‘that we don’t want to alienate our existing members’ and ‘young people don’t have the time’ there is also a resistance to innovation and change. Many local Societies don’t value input from the centre into local innovation activities and prefer to continue unchanged.

“The mistake was trying to capture the youth vote. Most members just want to go to good lectures, in my view. Including under 50s!”

“Don’t be too ambitious - concentrate on what you do well, rather than looking for new ideas/ approaches too often.”

“Too much chasing a younger membership - just accept the AS appeals to the educated retired - and nothing wrong with that!!”

“Don’t try to encompass all age groups, trying to do so is too expensive.”

TOO CENTRE FOCUSED



CENTRAL RESOURCES NEEDED

There is a perception of The Arts Society being too centre focused with not enough knowledge of what happens in local Societies.

“Visit to Societies to see what it’s all about”

“Represent only the South East”

“Less central control ...Give control back to regions”

“An inability to gauge local difficulties such as the post-pandemic drop-off in membership numbers and struggles to meet budgets. Lectures fees should be capped and the capitation fee is punishing.”

When asked what services The Arts Society should cease to provide, some suggested

‘being involved with local society management and initiatives’

For these Societies there is limited value in central resources and best practice knowledge being shared. At the same time many Societies want “to thrive at local level with central support” want more advice and more (pro) active interventions from the centre. Some Societies rely entirely on marketing materials and platforms created by the centre. Respondents in favour of central resources tend to attend training, networking events and rate central communications highly.

“For small Societies, purchasing marketing aids may be financially difficult.”

The Arts Society should not “allow societies to remain in silos.”

“Your support over the pandemic which kept us going was second to none. A major achievement at that meant so much to so many. Never forget that.”

“Our local society must be able to draw upon a highly professional organisation as the basis for our local credibility. This you have done. Thanks”

“New promotional and BEING there at the end of the phone and being so helpful. Training is excellent.”

“I’m impressed with the breadth of services offered to committees and members.”

TOO MUCH WORK FOR VOLUNTEERS



CENTRE DOES TOO MUCH

A classic dilemma. Volunteers feel overworked and that too much is expected of them.

“Don’t forget we do this as volunteers - we are not paid”

“What are we paying for if volunteers have to do so much?”

“The Societies and area are all run by Volunteers and I feel that centrally The Arts Society forgets this.”

On the other hand there are concerns that central staff (and Areas) ‘do too much’ and that the ‘costly services’ are prohibitive for the local Societies’ viability. “Too much advice as most people on the committee are experienced and have common sense”. An specific example would be the printing of mailing labels: a service most Societies have no use for, whilst other Societies completely rely on this to communicate with their members. Cutting that service may have severe consequences for such Societies. Several Societies asked “please give us plenty of notice when you stop providing any services”.

“Much of the work is not valued by the local membership.”

“Too much information to wade through, at times.”

“Not used all the available talent to help with spreading our story.”

The Arts Society is “probably more than we need it to do”

“Ever increasing provision of activities that compete with Societies.”

“Avoid initiating too many activities.”

NO UNDERSTANDING OF LOCAL ISSUES



TOO MANY QUESTIONNAIRES/MEETINGS

There appears to be a concern amongst some respondents that the centre does not listen and is unaware of the realities of Societies.

“Tried to pull too much control to the centre. Local people know their “market” better than the centre.”

“Not looking at the demographic of the area a local society serves”

The survey reflects the perennial perception that the needs of certain types of Societies are not taken into account, e.g. small rural Societies. (“Listen to the Societies. Avoid London centric thinking. Visit Areas with listen rather than tell Approach. Visit Societies outside London.” At the same time, many respondents opined that there are “too many meetings” and “too many questionnaires”

“The blanket fee charged to all is inequitable and should be structured with larger societies - usually in urban areas that benefit from AS activities - paying slightly more than rural socs.”

“Many of the low ratings given by me are related to a large affluent Society which can paddle its own canoe.

“Avoid initiating too many activities (Some Societies are overloaded). Stick to core activities.”

REDUCE THE SPEND



MORE MARKETING AND MORE TECHNOLOGY

The concern around the Service Recharge is a major point for many respondents. They would like to The Arts Society to do less and pass on savings.

“A slimmed down version of its present self.”

“The Society will need to be slim and efficient.”

“Do less and charge less.”

“More cost effective & so lower charges to local Societies.”

“Reduce the cost to the Society to no more than 35% or less.”

“In order to assist Societies in maintaining financial viability contributions should be reduced and, hence, the range of services offered by the Centre being reduced to the minimum.”

These are some of the general points made about reducing the central service provision. This is in stark contrast to statements about the expectations of what the centre does (or should) deliver.

“National advertising of The Arts Society, so that people get interested and look for their local branch”.

“Have a clear and coordinated social media campaign.”

“I think you are covering everything.”

“In view of loss of members for most Societies it is important to provide central support for individual Societies without added expense.”

“Having infrastructure to continue its responsive support to local Societies as well as engaging in ‘wider picture’ work that cannot be done locally eg research, creating online content etc.”

LOCAL IDENTIFY



NATIONAL ADVERTISING

There is naturally a challenge to promote (inter)nationally an organisation that derives much of its identity from local Societies which are - in their own way - diverse and serving a wide range of communities. Many Societies value their independence and want to be free to “do their own thing”.

“Go back to core values and being more local / regional.”

“Mind you, we do not want to promote our Society, as it would just add to our growing waiting list.”

“The brand becomes known by the public through local societies.”

“The Arts Society is THE MEMBERS of local Societies, and that must be remembered. Having said that, HO is needed to provide various services so that local societies can achieve their best.”

Returning to the (strong) theme of national advertising, respondents views range on how the centre can facilitate this:

“I don’t think social media matter much to our demographic.”

“Our Society believes it is most important HQ raises TAS’s national profile. We despair at the narrow ‘localism’ view. Why have a national HQ if local Societies have to do all the work in raising TAS’s profile.”

“Ideally: higher national profile linked to media figures and promotions across tv, radio, internet. – YouTube tasters.”

“Advertise in the National Trust magazine.”

“Online content.”

PUBLICISE BRAND

<>

DON’T RUN PUBLICITY EVENTS/WE DON’T WANT MORE MEDIA TRAINING

In terms of publicising the brand there is tension between a clear expectation to promote the brand and make The Arts Society a household name on the one hand (see above), and a limited appetite for media/publicity training. (See quant).



ONLY

27%

OF

225

RESPONDENTS THINK WE SHOULD PROVIDE MEDIA TRAINING.

Many respondents were clear that the centre should reduce its role in raising awareness.

“You should cease to try to capture notice on social media.”

“Don’t do anything which looks like competing with the local Society.”

“Stop provision of publicity material. Local is better”

“Cease central publicity.”

Furthermore, Societies are not in favour of The Arts Society running promotional activities or other events, which are perceived as duplication.



ON A SCALE OF

0-5

ONLY

1.9

WANT THE CENTRE AND AREAS TO RUN ITS OWN EVENTS

AND ONLY

2.2

DON’T WANT THE CENTRE / AREAS TO RUN PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES

In fact Societies don’t see a central role in delivering arts content, apart from some digital/online content (for Members).

ZOOM WAS THE BEST THING YOU DID



DON'T DO THINGS VIRTUALLY

When asked about the things we got right in the past 5 years, many respondents mentioned the introduction to Zoom and how the Centre rolled this out in the early stages of the COVID pandemic.

Over the past 5 years, what have we got right?



Many cited agility and training as vital developments to keep Societies going during lockdown.

The longer-term implications in the post COVID era are less favourable regarding ongoing technological transformation. Many respondents want to turn away from virtual initiatives and programming, and consider the role of The Arts Society in leading on online education as less relevant.

“Trying to be all things to all men and the expansion of online activities and lectures. Fellowship is key to the success of local Societies and the future of the organisation as a whole.”

“The various UK Governments need education about the importance of the arts, the delivery of which is essentially local.”

The Zoom Guest Scheme received unfavorable comments before it had launched because some feared it would undermine the local Societies’ efforts to rebuild their local retention efforts. Likewise many Societies indicated a reluctance to embed virtual elements into the running of the Society, in particular with reference to Directory Day. Some Societies also mentioned that Training should return to in person delivery, although a majority is in favour of online training.

SHOULD WE PROVIDE TRAINING?



The biggest tension is between the costs arising from being an association with a central office that provides services to Societies, and the expectation that having such an office should address all the needs of local Societies. The current Statement of Mutual Obligations outlines broadly what the centre should deliver: and yet many respondents are concerned that a) costs are perceived to be increasing and b) the centre is bloated.

“Increasing capitation fee is leading to members leaving.”

“Societies have had a dramatic fall in membership and therefore income due to COVID. The centre has not reflected this and it’s services have become very expensive.”

“Not sure societies see VFM from their service fee.”

“Not responding quickly enough to changes in how offices operate.”

In real terms changes The Arts Society has

- Managed to keep the Service Recharge below inflation since 2020 (Service Recharge Increase: 15.5% vs Inflation: 27.6%)
- Reduced expenditure by 17%
- Reduced the staff headcount by 31%

The biggest increase in the Service Recharge comes from people / Members not joining / renewing resulting in a drop in Membership numbers by 26.3% since 2020. The pandemic also had a significant income on commercial income from travel affiliate commissions which have traditionally been used to subsidise the Service Recharge. These are developments beyond The Arts Society’s control.

Changes and initiatives - which rely on having a central work force - have been welcome by others

“Genuinely listening to local Societies’ views and needs.”

“Great new database - advice and support on committee roles, legal problems etc.”

“The continuing improvement of the lecturers -the selection process definitely finds the best. Innovations such as the Instant Expert/Artvent for members.”

“Sensible to move to more efficient cost effective premises.”

“Great support from head office /building a well known and trustworthy brand that is value for money for our members. “

Against this there is also a shopping list of things respondents want to see from the centre.

“Providing more support for smaller Societies.”

“Look to the long term future and whether the current settings of monthly lectures, study days and volunteering is sustainable.”

“Cut down in the lengthy questionnaires eg evaluation about lecturers from local Society, less cumbersome system would be very beneficial.”

“Research and recommend a standard membership system (NOT Excel)”

“Provider health & safety advice to local Societies.”

“Improve the website. Pay more attention to IT issues.”

“Better quality control over lecturers.”

“In view of the loss of members from most Societies it is important to provide central support for individual Societies without added expense.”

STATEMENT OF MUTUAL OBLIGATIONS

To provide effective support, advice and training both at National and at Area level in order that Societies may work to the highest possible standards in support of the interests of their members.

285 Respondents



To provide the Directory of Lecturers, recruiting the best lecturers available, with related advice and help.

283 Respondents



To provide relevant programmes of education at National and Area level and offer support to Societies to do the same.

272 Respondents



To at all times be financially prudent, using professional advice, and provide guidance and advice to Societies.

277 Respondents



At all times work to the highest possible standards conforming to the current financial, health and safety, employment and charities legislation.

272 Respondents



To undertake to supervise and manage an efficient and transparent governance system.

273 Respondents



SERVICES

Central Website.
265 Respondents



Have a central Facebook account.
252 Respondents



Offer a space to local Societies on the central website.
257 Respondents



Have a central Instagram account.
250 Respondents



Have a central Twitter account.
256 Respondents



Produce The Arts Society Magazine.
268 Respondents



Produce e communication to individual Members (such as the Instant Expert and Monthly Highlights).
263 Respondents



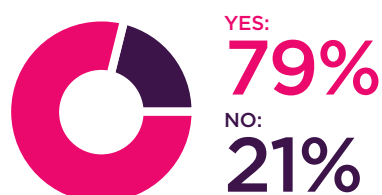
Produce e bulletins for Society Committees.
262 Respondents



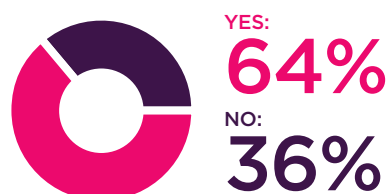
Hold TownHall meetings (the twice yearly Zoom meetings with Trustees and Management).
262 Respondents



Should we hold meetings outside London?
229 Respondents



Should we hold large meetings in London?
223 Respondents



EDUCATION

Assess the performance and quality of lecturers.
263 Respondents



Advice on lecturers and lecture events.
259 Respondents



Directory Day - IN PERSON.
262 Respondents



Online Directory.
252 Respondents



Directory Day - VIRTUAL.
259 Respondents



MEMBERSHIP AND SOCIETY SUPPORT

Membership Cards. 238 Respondents



Negotiate Member offers. 244 Respondents



Membership database. 245 Respondents



Set up new Societies. 241 Respondents



Handle enquiries of address changes from individual members. 238 Respondents



Provide Committee email accounts. 240 Respondents



Have a volunteer Society Support Team.
238 Respondents



Provide Zoom licences.
245 Respondents



Offer bespoke design services.
232 Respondents



Society Member address label printing.
235 Respondents



Visits of central officers (such as Trustees or CEO) to Societies' special events.
242 Respondents



Area Support structure.
245 Respondents



Area meetings.
250 Respondents



Copyright training and advice.
245 Respondents



Create research and insights for Societies (e.g. the Purpose paper in the February Bulletin).
238 Respondents



IT Support & advice.
246 Respondents



FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

General finance advice.
247 Respondents



Finance and Governance Networking sessions.
233 Respondents



Legal status advice.
246 Respondents



Support with the preparation of Annual Accounts.
232 Respondents



GiftAid Advice.
239 Respondents



VOLUNTEERING & GRANTS

Central support for Volunteering activities.
235 Respondents



Central grant giving to local Societies.
246 Respondents



Area support for Volunteering activities.
238 Respondents



Administering Marsh Awards for Volunteering with
The Arts Society.
238 Respondents



CENTRAL ACTIVITIES

Organise central lecture events (anywhere in the UK or online).
226 Respondents



Running a central membership scheme for individuals.
222 Respondents



Facilitate innovation within Societies.
229 Respondents



Forge partnerships with other arts organisations.
230 Respondents



Promotional events (eg having a stand at a fair).
227 Respondents



Create and sell merchandise (eg pin badges or tote bags).
225 Respondents

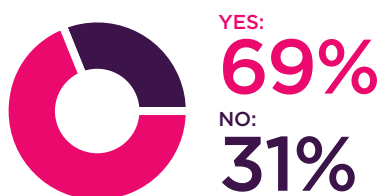


Promotional events (eg having a stand at a fair).
227 Respondents

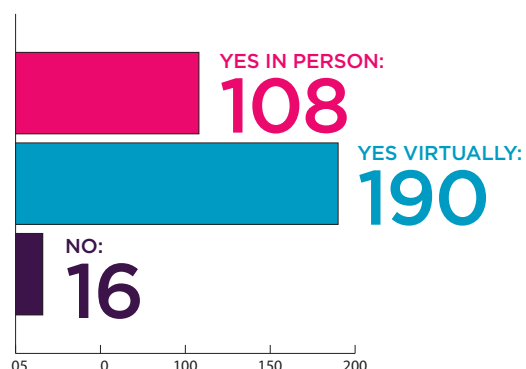


TRAINING

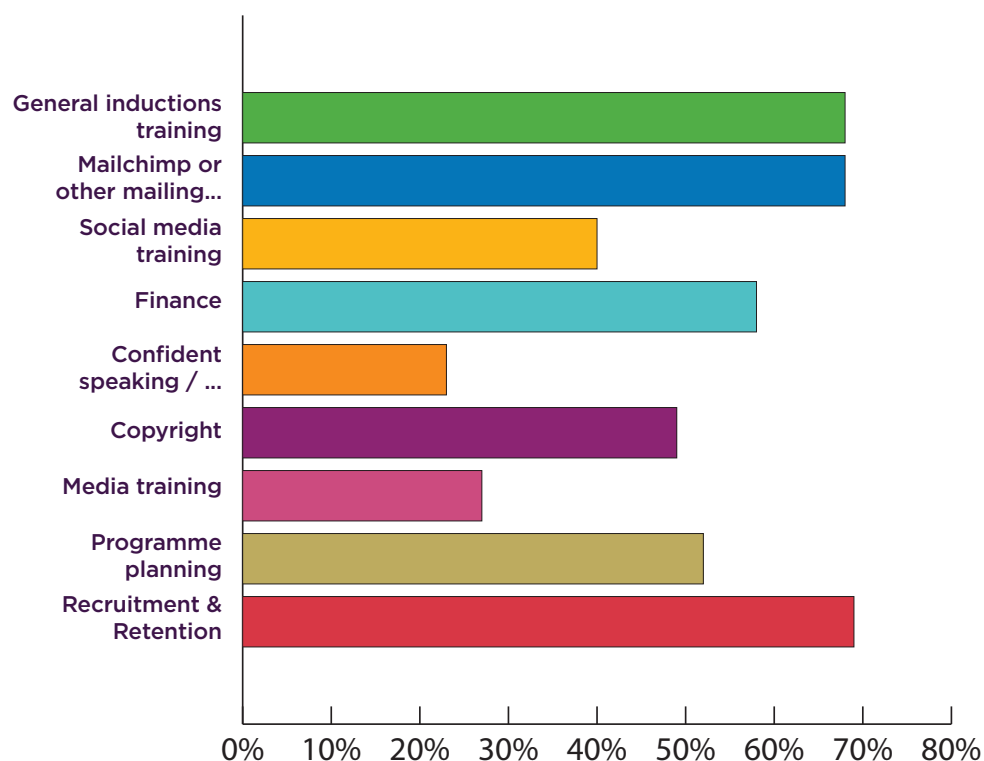
Have you ever attended Arts Society training?
243 Respondents



Should we provide training?
241 Respondents



If you've answered Yes, what kind of training should we provide (you can select multiple options).
225 Respondents





THE ARTS
SOCIETY



BRISTOL
CONFERENCE
SERIES

DISCUSSION PAPER: PURPOSE

WHY THINK ABOUT YOUR SOCIETY'S PURPOSE?

Because audiences and customers no longer just ask “what will I get” when I join but also “why should I join” and “will joining your organisation make me feel good”.

A lot of people are talking about purpose these days. Audiences, customers and employees are asking about it. Millennials (anyone born between 1981 and 1996) are particularly insistent about seeing evidence of purpose. Eighty-seven percent of Millennials, now the largest generation, believe that organisations should do more than generate profit - they have to stand for something beyond profit. The generation of baby boomers expect to lead a life with purpose, fulfilment and new opportunities to give back and be part of the community.

And yet, in most organisations today, people no longer know—or even care—what or **why their organisations are**. Future Members will want to know.

It's never too late to connect a purpose to your organisation, or to find your “Why.”

So define what your purpose is.

Purpose statements are founded on what organisations do best to advance or improve peoples' lives. The companies that excel at purpose move beyond a statement of social responsibility.

A meaningful purpose requires a thorough understanding of what the organisation is doing currently, what it plans to do next, and where it hopes to go in the future. Unlike a typical mission statement, however, the organisation's purpose aims

‘THINKING ABOUT PURPOSE
WILL GIVE YOU AN
OPPORTUNITY TO THINK
ABOUT WHAT YOU WANT TO
STAND FOR, WHAT IMPACT
YOU WANT TO MAKE.’

to primarily address the reason why the business does what it does.

The purpose for the organisation gets to the heart of **why** the company does what it does, helping to guide decisions by creating a framework that enables the organisation to achieve its mission (the **what** we do) and vision (the **where** we go). The purpose statement sets expectations both internally and externally (for Members and partners). While purpose statements are primarily used internally, they can also aid in shaping required external documents.

A purpose statement primarily illustrates how your organisation will impact its customers. Your organisation is in business to provide a product or service, so this statement should reflect how you will improve the lives of the people or communities you serve.

WHY DOES PURPOSE MATTER?

Thinking about purpose will give you an opportunity to think about what you want to stand for, what impact you want to make. It will help you think about making decisions in the future, as you can ask yourself, If we do this, will it serve our purpose? Are these actions aligned with our purpose?

This is important because audiences now expect you to be consistent, authentic and serious about the impact you wish to make. People will join one organisation but not another because of what each organisation stands for. If the company doesn't behave accordingly, they will not come back.

The Arts Society's internal purpose as of November 2021 is to

■ 'MAKE THE ARTS ACCESSIBLE TO ALL'.

To 'make the arts accessible to all' is why we, The Arts Society, exist. Our activities are aligned to this purpose, whether it is by supporting local Societies, making grants or promoting local volunteering in the communities our Societies operate in.

We are continuing to review this in line with current developments with the local Societies as well as in society in a broader sense. The Covid pandemic has caused organisations to reassess their priorities, and we are doing just that. We anticipate that the 'why we do things' will be something that will be discussed at the Bristol conference and AGM.

All local Societies should be part of the debate around **why we - and they - exist, and why we do what we do**. We hope local Societies will start discussions at committee level and think about their role in their community and why their existence matters to local people. This is the starting point to attract people to your Society and to engage people in what you do.

HOW CAN YOU DEFINE YOUR PURPOSE?

Sit down and think about why you exist.
Why do you do what you do?
Why do you do what you do where you do it?
Why does what you do matter?
Why should people care about you?
Why will your work make a difference?

Try to answer the hypothetical question:

■ WHY DOES YOUR SOCIETY EXIST?

in one sentence that you feel encapsulates your vision, your impact, your aspiration.

Does that sentence inspire you? Does it speak to you and your ideals? Do you think others can identify with it?

'ALL LOCAL SOCIETIES SHOULD BE PART OF THE DEBATE AROUND WHY WE - AND THEY - EXIST, AND WHY WE DO WHAT WE DO.'

Don't think about WHAT you do at this point, or HOW you do it - focus on the WHY.

You want people to care, to be passionate about what you set out to achieve, you want them to feel that belonging to your Society achieves something greater and complements their own purpose and beliefs.

Try to focus on the present and future, and why your work makes a difference.

Maybe start with a reverse proposition

What difference do we make in people's lives in our community?

Maybe take a look at some of these examples here, they may give you ideas on how to approach.

- Foot Locker: To inspire and empower youth culture
- General Electric: We rise to the challenge of building a world that works.
- MetLife: To help our customers navigate life's twists and turns.
- Intel: To create world-changing technology that enriches the lives of every person on earth.
- Kellogg: Creating better days and a place at the table for everyone through our trusted food brands.

Once you have your purpose statement, have it ready on a piece of paper at every meeting to remind yourselves why you exist, why you give up your time, why you think others should join and support you. And let it guide your decisions about everything you do.

So if you are struggling with recruiting younger members, or members onto your committee, remember **that what they are looking for might be different from your current members and that they want to believe in what you stand for**. By thinking about and working in a purposeful manner you may well unlock some of your Society's potential and connect with the next generation of members.

DISCUSSION PAPER: LOCALISM

WHAT IS LOCALISM?

It is the way that local people are able to make decisions about the area they live in, for communities to be involved in services delivery and for them to be proud of and care for their local area. It is about ownership. It is also a movement based on the post Covid mood that believes that “local” offers better, more sustainable and wholesome life experiences.

Think shopping at farm shops; think being more connected to where you live; think working from home; think ‘use it or lose it’; think making a difference.

WHY DOES IT MATTER?

Even before the pandemic froze life as we knew it, people across the world were embracing their lives in local communities and neighbourhoods. This growing consumer trend, described as “localism,” disrupted retail, and changed how people consumed and engaged with brands.

The shift toward localism was also driven by a rise in conscious consumerism, as people sought to make ethical purchasing choices, desiring authentic, locally and sustainably made products that supported local businesses.

Post-Covid, audiences, especially the “next generation”, are prepared – socially as well as economically – to invest more time and resources into creating and enjoying local experiences. They want to stay local, they want to re-centre their lives. In 2021 a consumer survey suggested that 9 in 10 people who had recently shopped locally would continue to do so. Google reports that ‘near me’ has become one

of the key search criteria. Throughout 2021, even as many parts of the world began to open up, localism has not declined. Instead, we’re witnessing a renewed commitment to local communities. As city workers continue to work from home offices, they’re spending more time in their local areas.

**‘EACH SOCIETY CAN
CREATE AN EXPERIENCE
THAT IS RELEVANT TO
LOCAL PEOPLE, INTERESTS,
PASSIONS, EXPECTATIONS:
AND YOU CAN USE YOUR
LOCAL INFLUENCES.’**

The Arts Society has always delivered value locally, to local communities, built on local networks and values. We have 380 local Societies, each one different and unique and yet all rooted in a common heritage and shared beliefs. That means 380 opportunities to make connections and empower localism to happen; these Societies can play an important part in empowering people to take charge of local culture and arts activities.

Each Society can create an experience that is relevant to local people, interests, passions, expectations: and you can use your local influences. You can address the practical needs in your community, and involve others to do so too. Local decision making can be more practical, more insightful and more relevant than centralised, national thinking. By involving people in what you do, by giving them the chance to make a difference with you, by being part of the conversation, you can engage people.

Our local model needs to be re-framed and – where necessary – re-focused. Since we first started, communities have shifted, areas that were previously Arts Society ‘home turf’ have changed: people move based on changing needs and life circumstances e.g. family care arrangements. Where there are few traditional members left, maybe we need to pivot the Society and hand it over to the ‘next generation’. So if the Society needs to change, it should change to reflect the local communities and reinvent itself.

Despite being a national, or even international organisation, The Arts Society has a significant advantage in its local Societies. It is the local nature of each Society which could make The Arts Society stand out from peer organisations.

HOW CAN YOUR SOCIETY USE LOCALISM AND STILL CREATE BROADER IMPACT?

To win hearts and minds, brands are rethinking their strategies by adapting to a more localised approach. They’re finding community connections and embracing local pride and thinking, all while adding a hyperlocal lens to creative work.

Language: consider the words you use in leaflets, on posters, on social media: bring it back to the local!

- Local is easy, convenient, sustainable, empowered.
- Invite local people to committee meetings to help make decisions; involve other community groups and go to community-based events
- Communicate with Purpose: why does your Society matter in your specific locality
- Tuning up the local: communicate that you are the FOR LOCAL audiences BY local audiences
- Communicate your local impact: what difference do you make? Demonstrate your commitment to the local community.

WHAT TO EMBRACE?

- Being agile – you can make decisions quickly, respond to opportunities and challenges in a way that suits your Society, you can respond to what happens near you.
- “Last mile” conversations: you bring world culture and world class content into the local community: this is a unique service and all

members have to do is turn up at their local venue

- Source locally: work with local caterers, local suppliers, local cultural partners: emphasise that you do that. You are part of the local events and culture infrastructure, you keep venues, museums, arts education, etc ‘alive’ – communicate that.
- Local press: when you create impact, you create stories: local impact means local stories: which journalists like. So dial up the local in your press release, make the stories tangible and
- Work with neighbouring Societies: where there are Societies in close proximity, work together, collaborate, capitalise on the compounded impact you and other Societies create.

The more we can demonstrate that each Society makes a difference locally, the stronger our message gets, the more people will hear about us. Not every local story will be big news, but the combined and compounded effect of what local Societies do becomes a story in itself. Our local Societies are important in the localism movement: if we amplify their messages through social and other types of media to a broader audience, the ‘local’ element is still something that people can relate to because everyone is local somewhere.

WHAT WOULD THIS LOOK LIKE?

In your communication emphasise that the Society is local and firmly rooted locally through pride, connections, networks. Focus on how what you’ve done and achieved has actually made the lives of others in the community better. Try to think about why being local is a benefit to your prospective members – how does your Society being local make their life better, and then articulate that.

Build such ideas into your press release; your website, your speeches. Perhaps speak to local businesses and ask if they want to sponsor a lecture at which many locals will be present. When inviting guests to functions, for example the Mayor, talk about what your role is in the community.

Try to get good wine deals from a local supplier rather than Lidl or Tesco; get the canapes from a local caterer: and tell people about all this: they will appreciate it, they will value it, they will respond to it.

Dial up the local. 380 Societies. That’s a lot of localism!

VOLUNTEERING

THE LOCAL POWER OF MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Volunteering remains a main objective for The Arts Society and we encourage all Societies to consider how they can engage with their community through voluntary activities. There are huge benefits to engaging with volunteering as a local Arts Society because you are - or can become - part of the arts and heritage where your Society is based.

Volunteering makes the arts more accessible in your community, and of course there is a great need to support the arts and heritage right now. Your local community needs you and because you are local, you know best where help is needed and how you can provide it.

Volunteering will engage you more closely in your community and forge partnerships with other organisations and institutions locally. It is also about what your members get out of the act of volunteering. Volunteering enriches the lives of everyone who takes part. Your members will make new connections and learn new skills. And in the process, you will raise the profile of your Society and hopefully will make more people see that the work of your Society is of great value in the community.

Over the last 50+ years, volunteering with a local Arts Society usually meant that members would take part in one of the volunteering 'arms' *Arts Volunteering*, *Heritage Volunteering* and *Trails of Discovery*. An expectation was set that Societies ought to do the volunteering as suggested and promoted by the national association. A support structure was created that (at peak times) involved around 25 volunteers looking after the volunteers in each "arm".

We now believe that how, where and in what manner Societies and their members volunteer should be up to each Society and its members. As long as local volunteering supports arts and heritage causes for

public benefit, the contributions made through your voluntary action will have the impact we ought to have as a charity. This may well be though the existing *Arts Volunteering*, *Heritage Volunteering* or *Trails of Discovery* activities local Societies - and individual members - can take part in; or through initiatives and projects local Societies initiate by themselves or with other Societies.

Local Societies know best where help is needed locally; they know who they want to support; they can build new connections and relationships in the community; they know how much time can be offered to projects. Local Societies can shape what volunteering looks like for their members and their communities. We are excited to learn more about your volunteering work.

'VOLUNTEERING WILL ENGAGE YOU MORE CLOSELY IN YOUR COMMUNITY AND FORGE PARTNERSHIPS WITH OTHER ORGANISATIONS AND INSTITUTIONS LOCALLY.'

All the resources and knowledge we've created over the years for *Arts Volunteering*, *Heritage Volunteering* and *Trails of Discovery* are still available to local Societies, and we will continue to share and promote best practice in volunteering. We are happy to facilitate and arrange training for specialist skills as required, and we want to bring volunteers together to share their knowledge and experience. We will continue to provide guidance and insurance for projects.

‘WE RELY ON SOCIETIES TELLING US ABOUT THEIR PLANS AND SUCCESSES.’

We are committed to promoting your volunteering successes and achievements more widely and more proactively. We want to tell more of your stories, raise awareness for what you do, and inspire others to do the same. We want to share what is achieved locally with external organisations - the charity commission, awards bodies, and so on - but for that we rely on Societies telling us about their plans and successes.

As before, if Societies want to volunteer under existing arms of Arts Volunteering, Heritage Volunteering and Trails of Discovery, we are delighted that they take part in these volunteering activities. We are, however, just as keen to see Societies making a difference and engage with the local community through volunteering in whatever way works best for them and helps them gain a higher profile locally.

WE WOULD LIKE SOCIETY COMMITTEES TO DISCUSS

How can our society find new volunteering opportunities that will raise our profile and do something positive for our community?

Have the community grants opened doors to new partnerships and connections?

How do we motivate our members to volunteer locally? Can we attract members through volunteering?

Are you in touch with local arts and heritage organisations? Have you contacted other organisations / venues (eg local railway station) to discuss if you can develop an arts or heritage activity with them?

Many community-related projects happen already thanks to local Societies up and down the country (and abroad). Read below two accounts from local Societies who have shared their experiences.

CASE STUDY 1

THE ARTS SOCIETY OF EASTBOURNE

As an Arts Society, we are always keen to support and promote worthy organisations who help the most vulnerable in our community. The organisations we select use art as an integral part of their programmes of support in a range of innovative ways. This year, your committee have chosen to support some very worthwhile charities and causes.

Firstly, “Holding Space”. This is an organisation that supports the parents of children with mental health issues. Since the pandemic, the number of children having such difficulties has increased significantly, Holding Space offers a confidential space for parents, carers, children and families to come together for support along their mental health journey. With our support, they are intending to hold craft/art workshops to aid these groups. We are grateful to the central office in London for authorising a Grant Aid to our Society of £250, which we were delighted to pass to Holding Space in order for them to develop their offering to the over 800 children affiliated to them in the area with mental health issues.

Secondly, once again, we are pleased to support the Towner Gallery with their vital outreach work. Their [Arts in Mind](#) programme is expanding, giving more participants the opportunity to learn to self-manage their mental health through art and creativity. Next year, a new programme for young people (14 to 18 year olds) will help them learn how creativity can benefit their mental health and well-being. There will also be new sessions for those living with memory loss and their carers. Additionally, each week they provide creative sessions for under 4s at Willingdon Trees Community Centre in Hampden Park and at Towner. At [Wriggle Room](#), children enjoy varied activities designed by artists. In school holidays, artists lead fun activities for families outdoors or in the gallery themed around nature and the environment, inspiring children’s imaginations and developing their skills and confidence by experimenting with new art-making processes and materials. I am sure you will agree that donating £750 to these superb initiatives was appropriate and worthwhile.

Thirdly, we awarded £250 to “Compass Community Arts”. This outstanding organisation is based in Eastbourne and is an intergenerational, co-creative,

artist led organisation for anyone vulnerable to social isolation, lived trauma, visible and hidden disabilities. The artists regularly work together to put on exhibitions and events and I know that many of you have visited these which in itself shows the support and recognition so important to the group and its artists.

Finally, we have continued to support West Dean College of Arts and Conservation with a £250 grant and have now got an award named after our Society! The award will be to an outstanding student aged 25 or less from either the School of Conservation or the School of Arts.

I should also mention that your Society donated £100 received from draw money to the Ukraine Appeal.

We are always on the lookout for other worthy, local organisations who use art as therapy or support and your suggestions for future donations would be most welcome!

Written by Chris Dye, Treasurer, The Arts Society Eastbourne

CASE STUDY 2

THE ARTS SOCIETY KINGSTON UPON THAMES

My taking over as the Arts Society Kingston committee member with responsibility for Young Arts, along with committee member Jane Seeley, roughly coincided with the decision of the national body to expand the brief to include community arts. This was closely followed by the golden jubilee decision to seek to broaden the Society's remit in general to include areas such as music, dance and architecture. Over the past five years we have worked to do just that. This is a summary of how, despite the looming shadow of Covid, lockdown and other national and international preoccupations, we have managed to achieve it. In each initiative we have sought to involve and engage both our members and the wider public.

DRAWING, PAINTING AND POTTERY

Our association financed workshops for Robin Hood Primary School (2017), Latchmere Junior School (Delft pottery) with a display mounted at Kingston

Museum (2018) and at 21 and Co, a support group for children with Down's syndrome.

In 2020 we engaged in the Art @ the Station project by getting funding for, and organising, the installation of eight A2 frames in the waiting room at Kingston station. Here we displayed work from pupils at Southborough School, Tolworth Girls School and our own members - all to general acclaim from the travelling public. This periodically changing display engages the general public in our mission, at the same time as providing a point of interest in an otherwise bleak environment.

DRAMA

In 2020 we co-operated with the drama department of Southborough School and financed drama workshops for the boys. Here we arranged for the Southwark Playhouse Director for Youth and Community work, Dave Workman and a colleague to visit the school and help with the workshops. Students from the art department took advantage of the initiative and joined us to enhance their skills in figure drawing.

DANCE

Committee member, Jane Seeley, organised a much enjoyed Street Dancing session with 21 and Co at the Normansfield Theatre in 2018. In 2020 the Southborough School drama workshops included elements of dance.

SINGING AND CLASSICAL MUSIC

Since 2018 we have arranged and staged three concerts, two choir concerts and a classical music recital. We applied for and gained grants from Greater London Arts (GLA) for each concert and our Society also made a financial contribution.

The 2018 concert "Choirs for Chloe and Co" involved two local community choirs, Euphonics and Singing It Back, Chaps Choir, a mens choir from Islington and Chirpy Cheeps, a choir for those with learning difficulties of all kinds. The £2,500 profit was split between 21 and Co and Otakar Kraus Music Trust (OKMT) to fund workshops in music and dance.

The 2019 concert "Choirs for Everyone" featured the same four choirs and was equally successful

raising £2,000 to be donated to the OKMT for extra workshops in music for children with learning difficulties.

The choir concerts not only emphasised that singing is for all, they also provided a showcase for local talent and audience enjoyment for our members.

The “Classical Music for All” recital also gained funding from GLA and our Society. We collaborated with “Strike-a-Chord”, an organisation which exists to give performance opportunities to students and recent graduates from The Royal College of Music. Esther Park, violin and Kumi Matsuo, piano, treated us and an audience that included 20 music students from Tolworth Girls Schools to a delightful repertoire on 7th October 2022. Again we were accompanied by the Mayor of Kingston as we had been in previous concerts. £1,770 was raised and this was donated equally to OKMT and Tolworth Girls School. The school will use their share to fund a visit to The Royal College of Music for a workshop. They will also receive experts from the College to work with them at the school. The OKMT share will be used to prepare

students with learning difficulties who would not otherwise have the opportunity to enter the national music grade scheme.

The fact that music students joined our members and the general public in enjoying such a wonderful recital is a practical step in making classical music available to all at the same time as showcasing Society activities.

In conclusion, whilst our Young Arts/Community activities have been somewhat curtailed by the effects of Covid and its aftermath we have been successful in keeping the flag flying for art in the community and especially for young people. Hopefully this will help them take up the responsibility when the time comes, if they have not done so already.

Written by Paul Jarman, Young & Community Arts Coordinator, The Arts Society Kingston

AVOIDING THE “KODAK MOMENT”: THE NEED FOR TRANSFORMATION

“YOU PRESS THE BUTTON, WE DO THE REST.”

These are the words of Kodak’s first advertising slogan. In later years, Kodak’s high-profile advertising campaigns invited its users to capture the joy of ‘significant’ occasions such as family events and holidays. These were labelled ‘*Kodak moments*’, a concept that became part of everyday life.

Far from evoking an emotional sense of nostalgia, unfortunately the ‘Kodak moment’ has now come to represent that moment when an organisation fails to realise how consumers are changing and how markets will ultimately evolve in new directions, leaving behind those who fail to keep up. The ‘Kodak moment’ is something that companies like Blockbuster, Polaroid, Blackberry and others know all too well.

(Digital) Transformation is probably the most important change in recent business history. It has transformed business models, processes and supporting systems for organisations who must compete in a digital economy while at the same time optimising how they work.

The Arts Society - and NADFAS - has a mixed history with the concept of (digital) transformation. The first website was created in the early 2000s (rather late), with hundreds of local Society sites launching at the same time. The arrival of the digital projector - which would replace the traditional slide carousel - sparked angry protests amongst Society committees who wanted NADFAS to campaign for the preservation of slides.

BUT ...

The Arts Society has also proven to be highly capable of adapting very quickly to changing technologies. In

2020 the Society was amongst the first organisations to launch a new digital channel for audiences in response to COVID. More than 300 Societies were on Zoom within 2 months of the first national lockdown and we were the first (out of several hundred) organisations to hold the volunteering Marsh Awards ceremony online. Some Societies actually gained new members during Covid and some currently retain their members because they’ve embedded Zoom into their long-term programme.

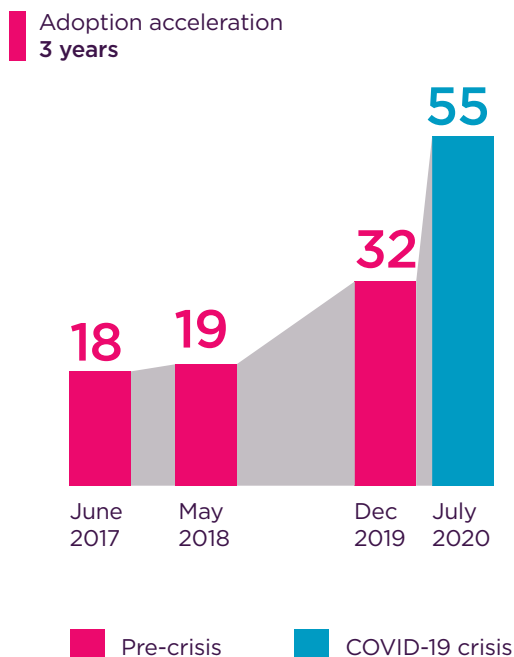
And of course all Societies did adapt to digital slides - in fact sooner rather than later.

THE BIGGER PICTURE

Recent consumer surveys demonstrate that responses to COVID-19 have sped up the adoption of digital technologies by several years and it is evident that, like the movement from slides to PowerPoint, there is no going back. In just a few months the COVID-19 crisis brought about years of change in the way organisations in all sectors and regions do business. During the pandemic, consumers in all age groups moved dramatically toward online channels, and industries have responded in turn. There has been a rapid shift toward interacting with customers and users through digital channels. Rates of technical adoption are years ahead of where they were when

‘AND OF COURSE ALL SOCIETIES DID ADAPT TO DIGITAL SLIDES - IN FACT SOONER RATHER THAN LATER.’

previous surveys were conducted just before the pandemic. The graph below shows the average share (in %) of consumer interactions that were digital between 2017 and 2020.



If we want to avoid our own Kodak moment we must adapt to the new realities of the technological shifts that have changed all our lives in recent years.

The majority of industry leaders are saying that customers are changing faster than they can change their business. This shift has been driven by two years of major disruption, which has prompted people to re-think their relationships with work, technology, how they access leisure and entertainment - and with the planet. Organisations have no option but to design new ways of doing business.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR LOCAL ARTS SOCIETIES?

The overall decline in Membership numbers over the past years - which accelerated during the Covid pandemic - suggests that some local Societies may not be reaching - or catering to - the next generation of audiences. This may be the result of two connected challenges: we need to avoid the Kodak moment (= stay relevant with what we offer) and attract a new generation of members (= the people we need to be relevant to in the future and who we want to access our offer).

Our own research has shown that Members value accessibility and rate highly what their local Society offers them. They are highly invested in the local Societies' communications, and are likely to

'THIS POST WAR GENERATION BROKE AWAY FROM THE PAST BY ADOPTING NEW LIFESTYLES, OPINIONS AND BEHAVIOURS THAT IMMEDIATELY BECAME ASSOCIATED WITH YOUTHFUL VALUES.'

recommend the Society to others. They are our best ambassadors and according to our Societies' feedback, member-get-member campaigns are the most effective method of recruiting new members.

BUT WHO ARE THE NEW MEMBERS?

The majority of new people joining an Arts Society in the coming years will be the younger generation of "baby boomers" - those born between 1955-64, who make up some 10% of the population in the UK. According to the FT, this is also the wealthiest generation in the UK.

This post war generation broke away from the past by adopting new lifestyles, opinions and behaviours that immediately became associated with youthful values. With age just a number, 'boomers' tend to remain young at heart - they might share experiences with younger generations and often belong to the same "tribe". This is especially true for the younger generation of Baby Boomers who were small children during the social upheaval of the 1960s - the defining youth movement of this slightly later generation was punk not Woodstock.

These new potential Arts Society members still want to learn and try new things and to reinvent themselves. They are entirely amenable to making major life changes when situations call for them, whether they involve work, relationships, where to live, and so forth. Whether carefully planned out or serendipitous, reinvention is about looking forward

rather than backward, challenging the idea that older adults spend most of their time remembering better days when they were young. Just like younger folks, boomers are a work in progress, open to new experiences.

There has always been an intimate relationship between the post war generation and creativity, one that will no doubt continue to blossom. Research shows that creativity helps mid-lifers and older people stay engaged, feel good about themselves, and serves as a prime way for them to remain optimistic and excited about life.

Like youthfulness and creativity, community has always been an essential strand in baby boomers' DNA. Their natural leaning to create communities is in part a function of their being what was the biggest social change in history. While many such communities are somehow rooted in the past, they are not just looking back, but forward. Boomers are keen on forming new kinds of connections, friendships, and alliances, strengthening the role of community in their lives.

And - if we want to avoid the Kodak moment - we also need to think about Gen X (those born between 1965 and 1980) whose oldest members will turn 60 in only 2 years' time. They grew up in a time when technology was advancing fast, but it wasn't nearly as readily available as it is today. Because of this, this generation straddles both the digital and non-digital world, and understands the importance of both.

Gen X represents those consumers who remember a time without digital advertising and therefore respond equally to modern and traditional marketing. Perhaps the most noteworthy fact about Gen X is their extreme brand loyalty, relative to that of millennials and baby boomers. They have a high affinity for the brands they trust and are willing to pay a premium for their products. Gen X wants to have a more authentic

contact with brands. It's about getting things that are specially marketed to them.

It is with Gen X in mind that we may need to think about longer term investments to adapt to changing behaviours: whether it is social media or loyalty and referral programmes, your future Gen X members will have different expectations than current members.

Email marketing is still the best way to communicate with Generation X. This generation is already plugged into email constantly for work and updates from family, it's natural that they would react positively to retail emails. Not to mention they are checking email at work, at home, on tablets and iPhones and desktops.

This generation is less prone to moving in the waves of trends, and is more likely to buy a service that somehow benefits society or the environment.

You may not expect what seems to be an outdated form of marketing like Direct Mail to work with this generation. But according to research, 86% of this generation brings in the mail every day and 68% have used coupons they received in the mail. They are more likely to be receiving paper bills as opposed to electronic, and send birthday cards through Royal Mail instead of email.

SO WHERE NEXT?

So how do local Societies prepare to attract and welcome the next generation(s)? How do they adapt to a new generation of members? Are there hurdles in recruiting new members because their expectations and needs are different to existing members?

Some interesting facts that may be helpful in thinking about the direction of transformation:

- In the millennium year, a person who is now 60 years old was 37 years old.
- When the internet was launched to the public in 1993, a person who is now 80 was 50 years old.
- Baby boomers are more likely to utilise technology for everyday activities like staying in touch with friends and family or finding out the latest news and weather.
- Both baby boomers and millennials utilise social media to keep in touch with their loved

'ARE THERE HURDLES IN RECRUITING NEW MEMBERS BECAUSE THEIR EXPECTATIONS AND NEEDS ARE DIFFERENT TO EXISTING MEMBERS?'

ones, but there are some significant distinctions between how they make use of these sites. Social media is frequently used by baby boomers to keep up with news, communicate with loved ones, and share images and memories.

- Whilst the so called “Experience Economy”¹ is mostly associated with Millennials, baby boomers and Gen Xers also seek out ‘experiences’.

- Though strongly rooted in tradition, baby boomers also embrace the latest technologies. Nearly half (49%) of boomers surveyed agreed that they like to stay up to date with the latest payment methods. 57% of boomers find it easier to pay using contactless methods, while 45% of baby boomers in our survey agreed that mobile wallets make it easier to pay.

QUESTIONS TO DISCUSS WITH YOUR COMMITTEE

What are the hurdles for more digitally-minded people joining our Society?

Can we make changes in our Society to make new members more welcome and meet their needs?

Are our renewal process and other transactions (booking outings) user friendly?

What do we want our Members to tell their friends about us?

What are the reasons a 50 year old might want to join our Society? And what would put them off joining?

Clearly our current Members like what we do: but what do we have to do to prevent the Kodak moment?

¹ “an economy in which many goods or services are sold by emphasising the effect they can have on people’s lives.”



THE ARTS
SOCIETY

COMMITTEE AND
MEMBER'S SURVEY
RESULTS SUMMARY
& MARKETING
PROPOSAL



COMMITTEE AND MEMBER'S SURVEY RESULTS SUMMARY & PROPOSAL

THE PROPOSAL

We've harnessed the good practice and insight from our societies to develop a proposition and practical ideas that our Societies can achieve. This proposal uses both central and local initiatives to optimise the TAS offering.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS



IMPLICATIONS

EMPHASISE THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR NEW EXPERIENCES

- Increase your knowledge of a wide spectrum of the Arts you may have missed

- Learn about an eclectic range of subjects, presented by expert lecturers we've vetted for entertainment and expertise

- A premium, quality program from a global network of local societies

DIAL UP THE COMMUNITY & SOCIAL ASPECT

- Our members are our best advocates and we should be encouraging them to help us reach new people

- Meet and socialise with people with similar interests in a relaxed and informal place

- Plenty of opportunities to socialise

ENGAGE MEMBERS TO INCREASE ACCESSIBILITY

- Learn about people, culture and ideas through publications and at events local to you

- Interesting and imaginative day visits and mini-tours in both the UK and abroad organised for you

- Digital and physical (hybrid) access to events

OUR FOCUS



1. NEW EXPERIENCES

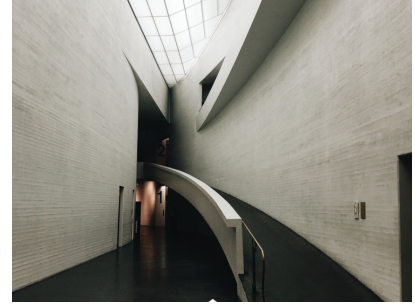
Our exclusive lectures, events and trips are one of the main draws for members and one of the key reasons for joining. Therefore we would like to highlight these more and where possible bring them to life for potential new members.



2. SOCIAL COMMUNITY

The opportunity to become a part of a community of art enthusiasts and socialise with other people with similar interests is what sets TAS apart from other memberships.

Therefore we would like to invest more in this community aspect and develop these social opportunities further.



3. INCREASED ACCESSIBILITY

Accessibility means more than access to Zoom lectures for our members. It's maintaining that feeling of community even if they are less able to physically attend their local events.

Therefore we would like to consider ways in which access can be increased to all from digital offerings to better physical mobility access.

PROPOSITION

DISCOVERY IS BETTER TOGETHER

Many people enjoy the feeling of finding something new, whether it's a hidden cafe, a shortcut to work, or a gallery abroad.

However, there's something even better about making discoveries together.

When we share our findings with others, we create opportunities for connection and dialogue.

We also get to enjoy the pleasure of seeing someone else experience the excitement of discovery.

In a world that can often feel isolating and alienating, these moments of shared discovery can be particularly valuable. They remind us that we're not alone in our explorations, and that the world is full of possibilities for connection and collaboration.

ACCESS, DISCOVERY, CONNECTION

PROPOSED INITIATIVES

CENTRAL AND INDIVIDUAL SUGGESTIONS ACROSS THE CUSTOMER JOURNEY

CAMPAIGN STRATEGY					
WHAT/ WHEN	WHY: OBJECTIVE	WHY: OBJECTIVE	HOW: CENTRAL INITIATIVES	WHO: AUDIENCE	WHERE: CHANNELS
AWARENESS	MAXIMISE reach & build interest in TAS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate value for money by featuring universal benefits and core offering. Linking messaging to healthy aging. • Central gift card initiative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highlight benefits and demonstrate value for money through taster sessions (gift card) and emphasising improved accessibility. 	Non-members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Word of mouth • Local news & community media outlets e.g., magazines • Unaddressed mail
EDUCATION	HIGHLIGHT events, trips and social opportunities made accessible through The Arts Society.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feature previous events that were particularly popular with user reviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local ambassadors that potential new members can talk to before signing up. 	Non-members & Approaching renewal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website • Word of mouth • TAS events • Local news & community media outlets e.g., magazines
CONVERSION	NUDGE customers into sign-up and renewal.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simplified central sign-up system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage new member sign-up at events with incentive e.g., merchandise • Referral incentives. 	Engaged non-members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website • Word of mouth • TAS events
SUSTAIN	ENGAGE members to engage and evangelise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital library access to popular past events from across societies • Art Guide • Magazine Member Contributions • Additional benefits within the arts and culture sector e.g., discounts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased access to trips and broader more collaborative and social events instead of 'lectures' • Additional local benefits within the arts and culture sector e.g., discounts 	Existing Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email • TAS events • Addressed Mail • Website • Community Forum

NEW LEARNING EXPERIENCES, SOCIAL OPPORTUNITIES, AND INCREASING ACCESS

HOW IT WORKS - LOCAL LEVEL

MEMBERS SIGN UP TO LOCAL SOCIETY

When new members query about joining, local societies will direct potential new members to the centralised site to sign up.

LOCAL SOCIETIES SHOWCASE THEIR EVENTS & BENEFITS

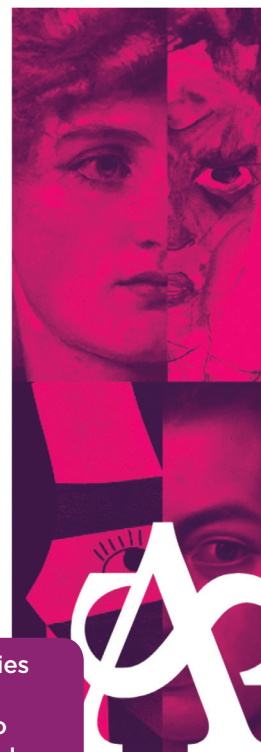
As part of the website update, local societies will provide content to showcase the benefits new members can expect to gain from joining their local society, including examples of upcoming and past events, and content from ambassadors.

GIFT CARDS

A centralised gift card system



Option for local authorities to produce their own accompanying comms to promote the gift card and use as part of referral schemes



GIVE THE GIFT OF AN ARTS SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP

Help your committee find new members by gifting family and friends an opportunity to become a member of the Arts Society Gade Valley.

How it works:

- Purchase a gift card.
- Encourage the recipient to fill out a short registration procedure.
- Your recipient will have full access to the 2022/23 lecture season.

Cards will be available to purchase at the discounted price of £30 until 31st December 2022.

To reserve your gift card(s), or for more information, please contact our Membership Secretary:

☎ 01442866055
✉ membersgadev@gmail.com



THE ARTS SOCIETY
GADE VALLEY

HOW IT WORKS - CENTRAL LEVEL

COST-EFFECTIVE GENERIC GIFT CARD

In light of cost concerns with producing gift cards on a local level, we will create a centralised gift card system, upheld by all societies as a collective.

DISTRIBUTED TO LOCAL SOCIETIES

This centralised design gift card will be distributed to local societies, with the option for local societies to personalise at the local level.

HOW IT WORKS - LOCAL LEVEL

LOCAL SOCIETIES PROMOTE THE GIFT CARD

Local societies will promote this more centralised gift card campaign across their comms channels, with messages and content most relevant to their particular members.

With the option for localised societies to add more personalised content, such as leaflets or packaging, to the gift card offering.

**USED FOR GIFTS OR
REFERRALS**

Following the popularity and success of Christmas gift vouchers and friend referrals, members from across local societies will be able to purchase gift cards for friends and family even if they want to sign up to a different local society.

GIFT CARDS

Working in partnership with other local groups and societies to organise events for members

A broader range of events promoting the less traditional art forms

A curated list made
in collaboration
with local societies
suggestions

HOW IT WORKS - CENTRAL LEVEL

A CENTRALISED CURATED LIST OF EVENTS

Inspired by the feedback from existing members, we'll curate events and lectures covering a wider range of the arts, helping members explore and learn about art forms from outside of the traditional forms.

This centralised list will help members from across the societies find events most relevant to the arts they are interested in.

REGULARLY UPDATED WHAT'S ON PAGE

This curated list will be regularly updated on the 'What's On' page, giving society members across the country a chance to explore events and lectures of interest to them.

HOW IT WORKS - LOCAL LEVEL

LOCALISED SUGGESTIONS FOR MEMBERS

Local societies will be able to get involved in this curated list – suggesting events and lectures that they think will interest their members.

WORK IN PARTNERSHIP TO ORGANISE EVENTS

Working alongside the central committee members, as well as local organisations and groups, to help organise these events and lectures – ensuring that accessibility is a key consideration throughout the process.

THE ARTS SOCIETY GUIDE

More available spaces on trips and events, including more options for those less mobile

Events curated at the central level, with central in control of negotiations to offer more accessible prices and opportunities for local societies and their members

An accessible, digital platform that houses the very best of The Arts Society lectures and events

Repeating popular, oversubscribed trips, to give more members an opportunity to attend

HOW IT WORKS - CENTRAL LEVEL

ART GUIDE ESTABLISHED BY CENTRAL

To increase accessibility even further, the central society will put together a list of events and trips, ensuring that negotiations on prices and organisation for trips and venues is done centrally to help make events accessible to local societies and their members.

This can be used as an additional benefit for new members, offering a discounted rate for events and lectures

ACCESSIBILITY FOR ALL

We will also ensure the guide features a range of event and trip types, including, more accessible venues, events and trips that more members can enjoy.

Repeating the most popular trips to ensure that every member has an opportunity to attend.

HOW IT WORKS - LOCAL LEVEL

SOCIETIES SUGGEST EVENTS & TRIPS

Local societies again will be involved in the curation process, suggesting a range of events and trips that feature on the Art Guide.

SOCIETIES RAISE AWARENESS FOR THE GUIDE

Local committee members raise awareness for the range of trips and events available to their society members, encouraging both new and existing members to participate in organised trips and events.

FORMALISING EVENTS

Including refreshments and opportunities for new and existing members to interact and discuss the lecture/event



Emphasis on making lectures a full event



An opportunity for members to learn and socialise

HOW IT WORKS - CENTRAL LEVEL

MORE FORMALISED STRUCTURE TO EVENTS

To address the feedback from society and committee members, at the central level, we'll create a more formalised approach to events, that can be easily implemented across local societies.

OPPORTUNITIES TO SOCIALISE

And as well as introducing members to new and exciting art forms, this more formalised structure of events will be a chance for members to socialise and discuss what they have learnt at the event.

This could include offering drinks or a space for members to mingle after the lecture/event as part of their event ticket.

HOW IT WORKS - LOCAL LEVEL

FOLLOW THE CENTRALISED EVENT STRUCTURE

Using the centralised event structure as a guide, local societies will be encouraged to look for new and exciting ways to engage and educate their society members while providing opportunities for new and existing members to socialise, creating an overall event experience for members to enjoy.

A FOCUS ON CREATING AN EXPERIENCE

The focus will build from the current lecture format, offering more of an experience for members to immerse themselves in, including, refreshments, music and creating an ambience.

MEMBER CONTENT



POTTERY & ART A TRUE LOVE AFFAIR



Featuring
ambassador
content

My name is Emily, and I am a passionate potter. I fell in love with pottery when I was just a little girl, watching my grandmother mold and shape clay into beautiful works of art. As I grew older, my interest in pottery only grew, and it became a true passion of mine. Now, as a young woman, I continue to create and experiment with new forms, textures, and colors, always pushing myself to go

forms, textures, and colors, always pushing myself to go further and create something new. Pottery is a unique art form that requires both patience and creativity. It is a craft that requires time, effort, and dedication to perfect, but the results are always worth it. I enjoy the process of working with clay, from shaping it into a form to decorating it with intricate designs. Every piece of pottery I create is like a

UPCOMING EVENTS



As spring approaches, the arts scene is gearing up for an exciting season of events and exhibitions. From dance performances to art shows, there are a variety of opportunities for art enthusiasts to get involved in the community. These events are made possible with the help of volunteers, who play a crucial role in supporting the arts and making these events possible. In this article, we'll take a look at some of the upcoming art events in the local area and explore how volunteers can get involved.

Offering opportunities for members to submit content and share their thoughts and experiences

I WILL TALK YOU THROUGH THE CULTURE OF ART

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua. Ut enim ad minim veniam, quis nostrud



Regularly posing topics to discuss via magazine and newsletter content



THE ARTS
SOCIETY

HOW IT WORKS - CENTRAL LEVEL

INCREASED MEMBER CONTENT

Building on the community aspect of the society, we will encourage members to get involved by sharing their society experiences for the central society magazine and regular news bulletins.

ESTABLISHING A REGULAR FORUM FOR DISCUSSION

As part of this initiative, we'll also create content that will spark discussion amongst members, giving members opportunities to give their thoughts on topical arts news and events.

HOW IT WORKS - LOCAL LEVEL

SOCIETIES TO PROMOTE OPPORTUNITIES TO CONTRIBUTE

We'll encourage local societies to promote the initiative amongst their members, with committee members helping their society members create and submit content to the magazine and newsletters.

PROVIDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR DISCUSSION

And to further the initiative, we'll ask local societies to encourage their members to get involved in discussions, whether it be in written articles/content or in-person discussions as part of events and lectures.

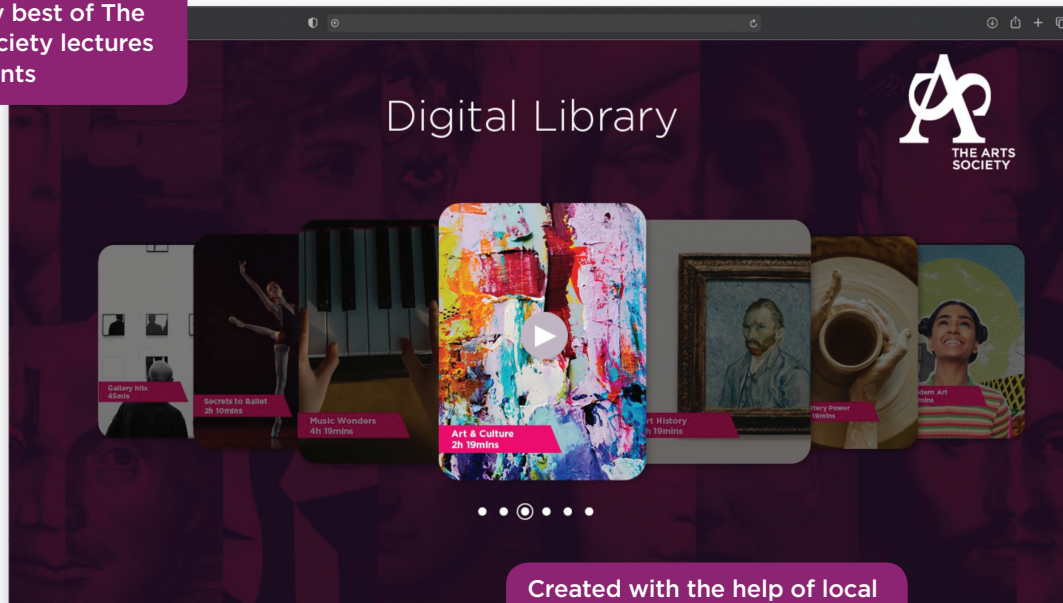
OPPORTUNITY TO PROMOTE LOCAL ARTISTS

Local societies will also be able to suggest content that showcases local artists and experts to a wider audience in the central magazine.

DIGITAL LIBRARY

An accessible, digital platform that houses the very best of The Arts Society lectures and events

Giving members an opportunity to explore content from other societies



Created with the help of local societies, who share their most popular content for all society members to enjoy

HOW IT WORKS - CENTRAL LEVEL

CENTRAL TO ESTABLISH A DIGITAL PLATFORM FOR ALL

Accessibility for members is key. The digital platform, therefore, offers an opportunity to curate a selection of events and lectures available for members who cannot travel to an event to still access the content.

ALL MEMBERS ABLE TO ACCESS CONTENT

By curating this on a national scale, with content from across local societies, society members will be able to access content from societies around the country - finding the content they are most interested in from the comfort of their own homes.

HOW IT WORKS - LOCAL LEVEL

LOCAL TO SUPPORT IN COLLATING CONTENT

While the platform will sit on the central website, local societies will play a crucial role in collating content to populate the platform with the most popular events and lectures enjoyed by their members.

OPPORTUNITY TO SHOWCASE LOCAL ARTISTS

As members have already expressed an interest in experiencing new artforms, the digital library presents an opportunity for local societies to showcase the work of local artists.

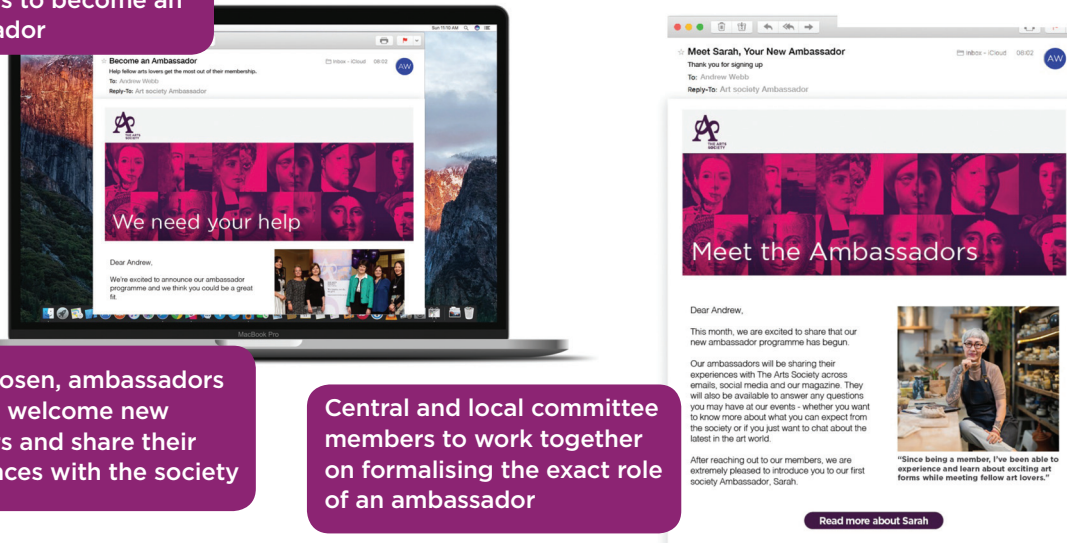
SOCIETY AMBASSADORS

Recruitment comms distributed by local authorities to encourage members to become an ambassador

Ambassadors become the voice of their local society, contributing to content on a local and central level

Once chosen, ambassadors will help welcome new members and share their experiences with the society

Central and local committee members to work together on formalising the exact role of an ambassador



HOW IT WORKS - CENTRAL LEVEL

CENTRAL ESTABLISHES THE AMBASSADOR PROGRAMME

To assist local societies, the central society will work closely with local societies to formulate what an ambassador role will entail and advise on ways to convince existing members to become an ambassador.

AMBASSADORS SHARE THEIR EXPERIENCES ACROSS CHANNELS

The ambassadors selected by local societies will play a crucial role in creating content, sharing their experiences for The Arts Society magazine and news bulletins.

HOW IT WORKS - LOCAL LEVEL

SOCIETIES PROMOTE THE AMBASSADOR PROGRAMME

Societies recruit amongst their existing membership for members who are interested in representing their local society, through email and events.

AMBASSADORS BECOME THE VOICE OF FELLOW MEMBERS

The society will then select 3-4 ambassadors to represent the society.

Ambassadors will volunteer their time to become the voice of their society - welcoming new members, answering member queries and representing the society at events and trips.



THE ARTS
SOCIETY



SOCIETY
HEALTH CHECK
JANUARY 2023

SOCIETY HEALTH CHECK QUESTIONNAIRE

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS 22/23



180

SOCIETIES TOOK PART
IN THE QUESTIONNAIRE



Average subscription
cost for societies:

£49

Lowest subscription
cost:

£30

Highest
Subscription:

£85

LEVEL OF RESERVES:



Average level of reserves:

£12,316.14

Highest reserve:

£84,500

(£80,000 LEGACY)

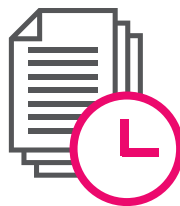
SOCIETIES WITH CHARITABLE STATUS:



30%

societies have
charitable status

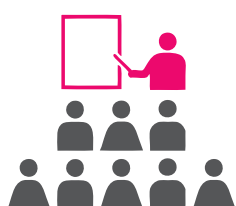
WAITING LISTS:



Only 15 societies from our
questionnaire have waiting lists.
A lot of societies claimed that
their waiting list was no longer
needed after Covid.

The waiting list numbers range
between 2-28.

NUMBER OF LECTURES:



Average Number
of Lectures:

10

WHAT DO SOCIETIES VALUE THE MOST FROM THE ARTS SOCIETY?



- Directory Day / Directory of lecturers / Quality of lecturers
- Support from head office
- Training/Online support
- Monthly Bulletins / Highlights
- Community Grants
- Area Meetings

SOCIETY MEETING TIMES:



50%

societies meet in the
mornings



30%

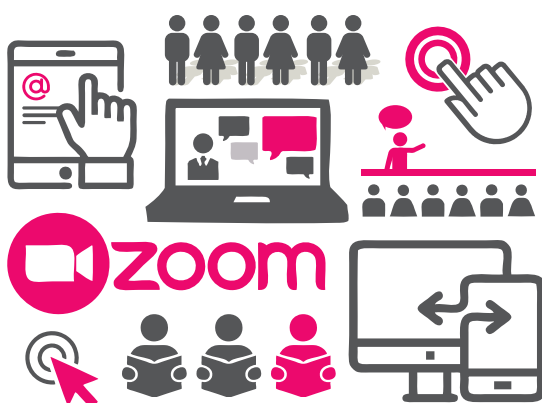
societies meet in the
afternoon



20%

societies meet in the
evening

SERVICES DELIVERED BY THE ARTS SOCIETY THAT HAVE THE LEAST VALUE - FROM MULTIPLE SOCIETIES:



- Magazine
- Training - Don't like the online aspect of it
- Instant Expert (Misleading titles, demeaning)
- Zoom Access Scheme
- Website navigation is old fashioned/difficult to use
- Lecturer Database - cannot see reviews (have to call up). Can't filter lecturers by subject
- Directory Day Costs



THE ARTS
SOCIETY

THE ARTS SOCIETY
CONTENT AND
MEDIA SURVEY

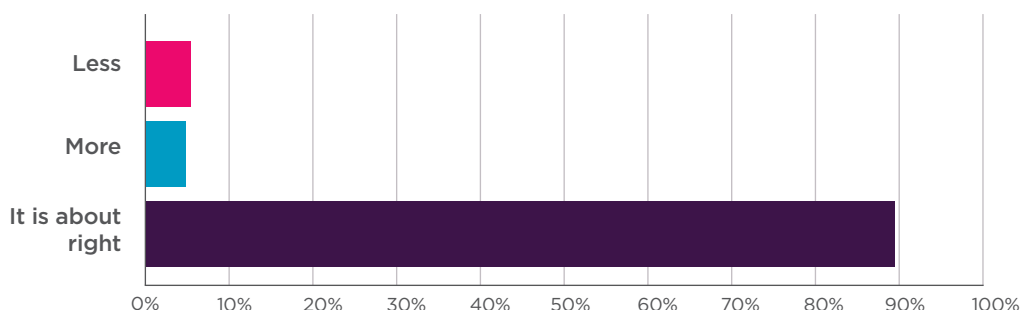


THE ARTS SOCIETY CONTENT AND MEDIA SURVEY

6150 RESPONSES RECEIVED (AVERAGE AGE OF RESPONDENTS: 76)

Q1. Do you think we should be creating less or more content? Or are we getting it right?

Answered: 6,030 | Skipped: 121



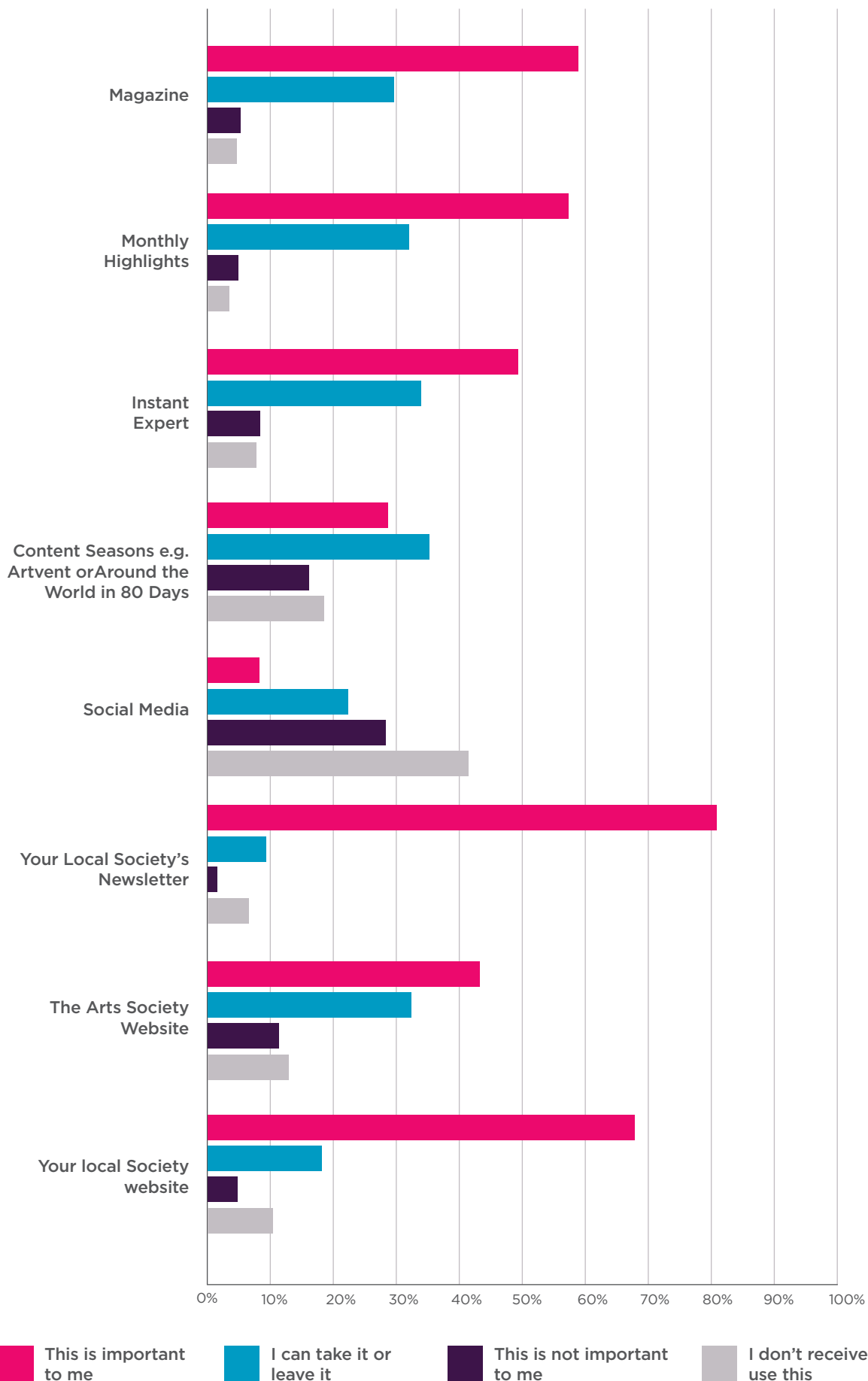
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Less	5.22%	315
More	5.11%	308
It is about right	89.67%	5,407
TOTAL		6,030

Q2. How do you feel when you receive communication and content from The Arts Society?

Answered: 5,563 | Skipped: 588

open especially Generally little topics another much delete Depends
say Expert overwhelmed subject need kept enough going relevant
know great sometimes coming new busy magazine
included communications news information think
informed anticipation find member something don
Arts things good many time inspired see quite
Happy Keen always well read lectures
Interested Pleased Intrigued look Glad
forward Positive content exhibitions receive
make enjoy hear Excited sent emails really
usually useful Society later Curious one learn touch
S happening Fine welcome feel etc Ok Eager will day
informative monthly events love Delighted bit often m articles
might Instant date want local

Q3. Please tell us what you think about our media channels.
 Answered: 6,101 | Skipped: 50



Q4. If you had to choose one medium only included in your membership, which one would it be?

Answered: 5,518 | Skipped: 633

Probably quarterly read visits Hard well info relevant good date updates group
paper important Zoom attend Live time Soc look events articles talks
say one see E-mail received Content included letter access
Online understand mail enjoy E via lectures days
expert copy Arts face newsletter know
website etc Local Don Magazine choose
society Post Email Difficult Monthly sure
highlights mean Instant use S Facebook news need
information Regular Print Programme media think
meetings exhibitions Social keep seasons go Paintings
Instagram Internet member line Written national artists membership TAS
web site magazine communications want question miss t everything links
really interesting Artvent

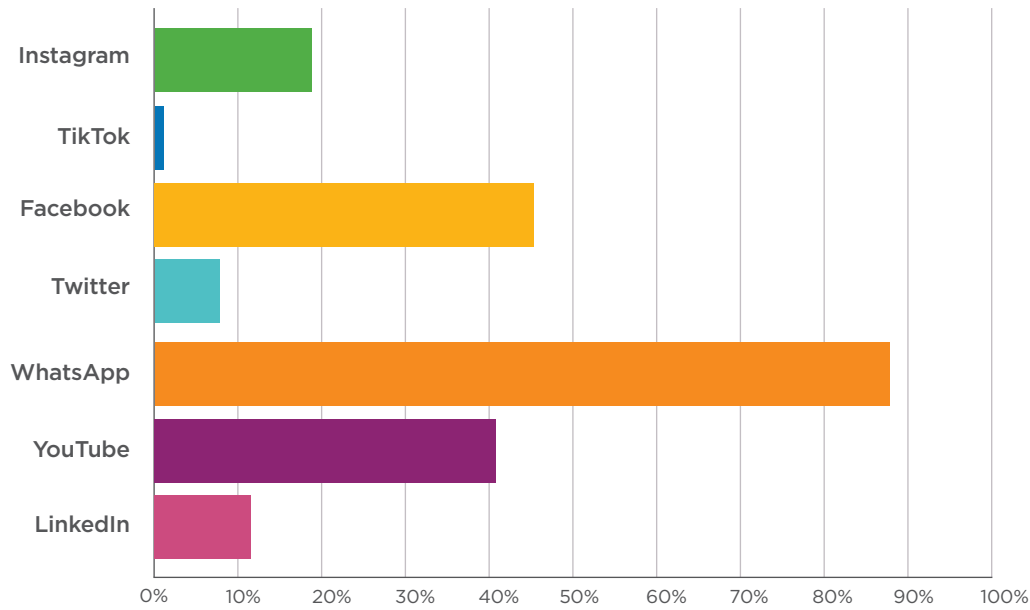
Q5. Are there additional media channels you think we should offer in order to improve your membership experience? (for example The Arts Society TV)

Answered: 3,633 | Skipped: 2,518

membership m magazine moment happy nice one something enjoy keep N
material offer monthly social recorded time younger available links might new
much work Maybe extra Zoom useful Sky important use may don
lot media well really aware t probably know Soc
channels Instagram think talks good perhaps Arts
view TV anything Society necessary interesting s
None Facebook sounds excellent lectures etc idea
things Yes make sure website YouTube current enough need
already meetings great additional local please members personally
programmes expensive watch live access Podcasts thank particularly
tube add Possibly see video worth content existing information free many
online

Q6. Which - if any - of these social media channels do you have an account with/or use in your personal life?

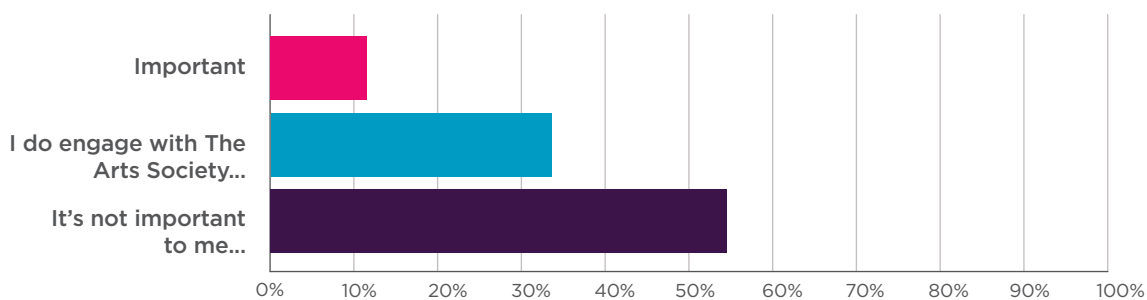
Answered: 4,969 | Skipped: 1,182



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Instagram	18.53%	921
TikTok	0.85%	42
Facebook	45.02%	2,237
Twitter	7.59%	377
WhatsApp	88.15%	4,380
YouTube	40.55%	2,015
LinkedIn	12.18%	605
TOTAL Respondents:		4,969

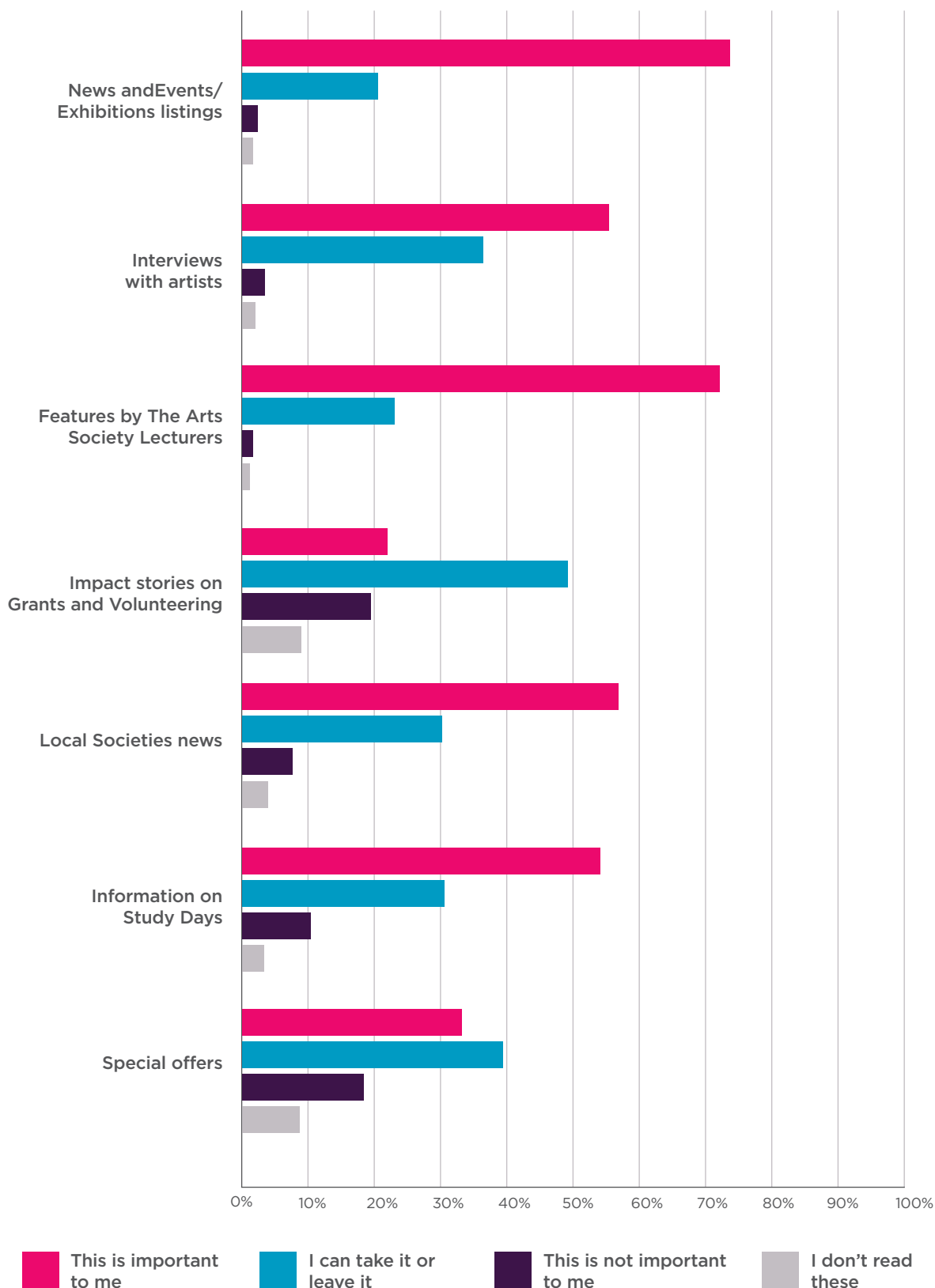
Q7. How important is The Arts Society social media to you as part of your membership?

Answered: 5,986 | Skipped: 165



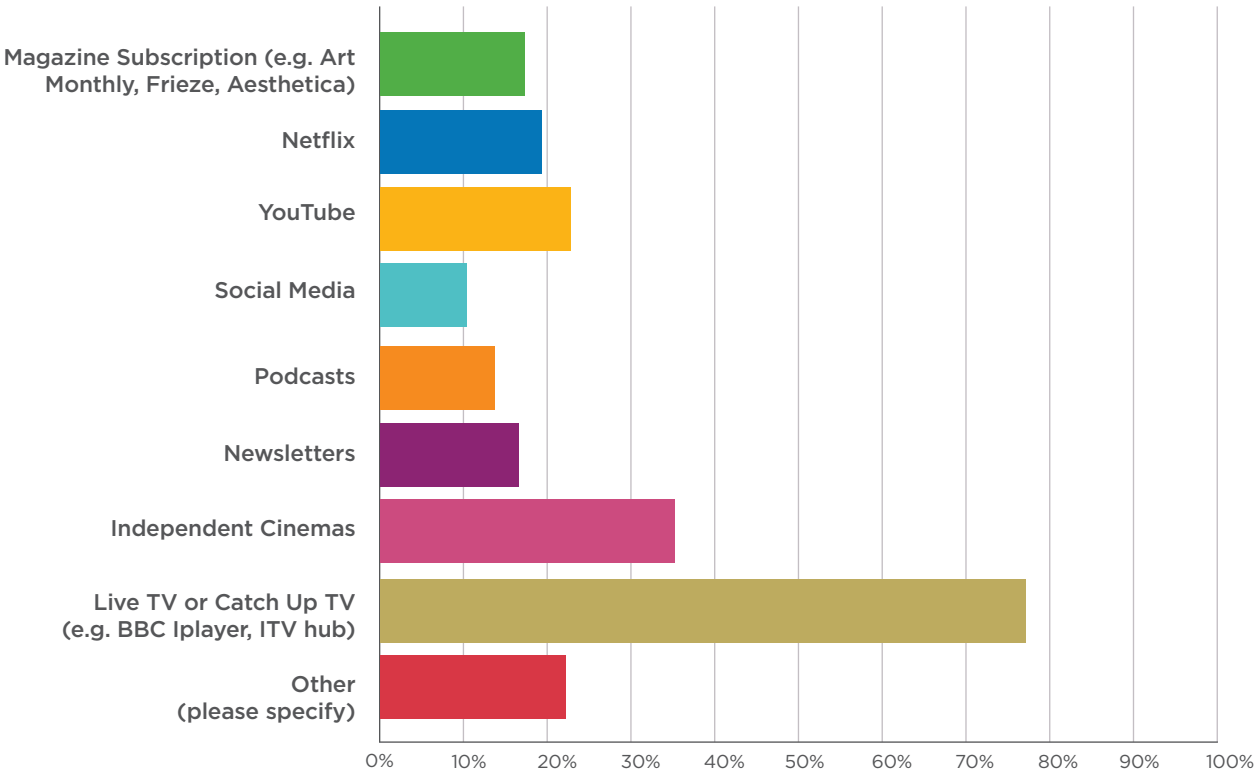
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Important	11.49%	688
I do engage with The Arts Society Social Media, but it's not very important to me	33.95%	2,032
It's not important to me at all and I don't look at or engage with The Arts Society social media	54.56%	3,266
TOTAL		5,986

Q8. Please tell us what you think about our magazine.
 Answered: 5,983 | Skipped: 168



Q10. Where else do you access Arts content?

Answered: 5,590 | Skipped: 561



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Magazine Subscription (e.g. Art Monthly, Frieze, Aesthetica)	17.91%	1,001
Netflix	19.98%	1,117
YouTube	23.42%	1,309
Social Media	10.63%	594
Podcasts	14.24%	796
Newsletters	17.48%	977
Independent Cinemas	34.38%	1,922
Live TV or Catch Up TV (e.g. BBC Iplayer, ITV hub)	77.84%	4,351
Other (please specify)	22.79%	1,274
Total Respondents: 5,590		

Q15. What do you enjoy most about your membership?

Answered: 5,891 | Skipped: 260

socialising wonderful interaction abroad committee given Zoom
activities experts now high many knowledge etc Going years
topics love special different magazine others live friendly
new sharing minded find quality one subjects hear
excellent places members Listening social
company local content study made art volunteering
talks access interesting things meeting
wide lectures range monthly see days
like-minded visits contact people tours Learning
group friends well trips similar variety artists
speakers informative Society great good something
enjoy exhibitions lecturers standard Attending programme
events occasional friendship really holidays Stimulating also
emails organised chance opportunity often know person
information time always even varied aspect



THE ARTS
SOCIETY

theartsociety.org