

**Minutes of the 71st Chairs Meeting of
The Arts Society Hampshire and Isle of Wight Area**

Held at 10:30 on 2 March 2026 at
The Gurkha Museum, Winchester

Present:

Charles Harris	Area Chair (CAST)
Trevor Walters	Trustee and Treasurer, The Arts Society
Gillian Waller	Former Chair, TAS Basingstoke
David Isherwood	Incoming Chair
Pat Hindley	Hon Treasurer
Diana Heatly	Secretary
Simon Reynier	Website Manager
Ali Green	H&IOW Jean Bolton Series Organiser
Lucy Tew	H&IOW Spring Series Organiser
Glenys Lloyd-Williams	Drama Grants
Carol-Anne Harrison	Incoming Secretary
Jane Hutchence	Liaison

26 Chairs and representatives from 17 Societies in the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Area

Apologies:

Penny Davidson - Chair, Grayshott
Rita Hembry - Committee, New Milton
Debbie Barton - Chair, Portsdown,
Nick Launders - Chair, Romsey
Catherine Bartrum - Secretary, Basingstoke

1. Chair's Welcome

The Chair, Charles Harris, welcomed all attendees, including special guests Trevor Walters and Gill Waller, to the meeting.

Minutes of the 70th Chair's Meeting of TAS H&IOW Area held on 6 October 2025

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 October 2025 were agreed.

Matters Arising

No matters arising.

2. CAST'S Reports

• Chairman

Theme: Why?

Charles Harris began by sharing some positive news.

David Isherwood would be taking on the Chair's role today.

Charles recently visited TAS Alton, where he was warmly welcomed.

The Jean Bolton Study Series was highly successful last autumn. The Spring Series, launched in February, sold out in-venue tickets for the first lecture. Two further lectures are scheduled, and tickets are already selling well.

A small committee of four at TAS New Milton continues to work diligently to secure its future. They have a full lecture programme planned for the coming year. Their survival is largely due to rescue efforts and financial support from TAS Central, including a local leaflet advertising campaign.

Charles highlighted the challenges Societies face in recruiting committee members and emphasised the importance of a positive, welcoming, and friendly approach.

Central's decision to discontinue Google Technical support will have a more significant impact on some Societies than others, particularly in relation to the use of Mailchimp and Zoom. Societies who set up their own, independent workspaces will not be affected. Charles emphasised the necessity of the cyber security decision and asked for a show of hands from the audience to identify those who will be affected. H&IOW Area will need to reconsider the way they operate for study days, particularly in relation to advertising, bookings and the use of Zoom.

Charles thanked his team and celebrated the unique contributions each person made.

- **Treasurer**

The H&IOW Area funds are looking healthy so far this year.

Finance report 2025

Final figures for H&IOW Area Chairs meeting 2nd March 2026

There was a net shortfall of £7,121.45 for the year, due to the planned introduction of the Drama grants (£3,300) and increased Area grants awarded (£3,764). The Lloyds cash account includes approximately £3,000 of advanced ticket sales received by 31st December 2025 for the 2026 Spring Study Day series.

Balances as at 31st December 2025: (1st January 2025)

Lloyds Treasurers Account	£2,620.21
(3,242.06)	

NADFAS Imprest (Held at Head Office)	£12,000.00
(18,500.00)	

Total Current Assets	£14,620.21
(21,724.06)	

The Spring and Autumn Jean Bolton Study Days series once again made a good surplus, which enabled us to invest £3,500 in a professional sound system to support the lectures in the live venue and provide excellent sound quality for those attendees on Zoom.

The Area Study Days are the Area's only source of income to maintain funds to provide grants for Societies. We appreciate Society support to attend and advertise these events to members and to non-members to publicise The Arts Society to new audiences.

Affiliation fees were not levied on Societies again in 2025. We will not levy Area fees on Societies in 2026.

Grants

Area Grants totalling £3,764 were awarded to six Societies in 2025, supporting Bursaries, School Arts projects with an Artist or visits to Arts venues and funding the printing of the Catalogue for the re-opening of Southampton City Art Gallery.

The H&IOW Drama Grants totalling £3,300 were awarded to eleven Societies to support Amateur Dramatics Groups in their area.

It is proposed that the Drama Grant is continued for the 2026 year. However, it should be reviewed with the ongoing expected surplus from the Area Study Days.

- **Jean Bolton Study Series & Spring Series**

The Jean Bolton Course ran in Oct/Nov 2025 and whilst numbers in-venue remained modest, the income from the Zoom audience enabled the event to achieve a surplus of £3,500, which will be made available for grants. Marketing is key, so all societies will be asked to publicise the events as usual. A new autumn series is already being planned on the theme of *Colour in Art*. Marketing will begin in April and suggestions were made regarding the distribution of flyers.

Spring Series - Ancient Worlds; New Horizons

Ali Green spoke about the Spring Series of study days which will be held from February to April this year at the Gurkha Museum and on Zoom. In-venue tickets for *India* in February sold out and tickets for March and April are selling well. Further details are available on the TAS H&IOW website.

Ali Green is seeking help from individuals with a talent for leaflet design, marketing skills and technical expertise.

- **Am/Dram**

Eleven societies have successfully applied for the grant. The screen displayed slides with pictures illustrating examples of activities undertaken by those who received funding. Many have enjoyed getting involved, attending plays or pantos, organising presentations and using the opportunity for mutual promotion.

The £300 grant offer remains open for 2026.

- **Web Master**

The H&IOW website remains active, and all information and updates on the Area Study Days are available. Societies wishing to include information about their own events can have the details posted with a link to the relevant society. Simon Reynier, the webmaster, is always available for help and advice and can be contacted via the email address provided on the website.

- **Facebook**

Facebook Address: The Arts Society Hampshire & Isle of Wight Area.

3. TRUSTEE ON THE SPOT

Trevor Walters was elected as a Trustee in September 2025 and is currently Treasurer of The Arts Society.

The presentation continued with the theme “Why”. Trevor provided a brief overview of his journey from member of TAS to the National Executive. He then shared his reflections on the past three months since becoming treasurer.

The loss of three key individuals in August was a significant setback. He is now in a consolidation phase and finds the organisation to be in good shape.

Compliance and Security

The GDPR is a significant area of concern and the implementation of cyber security measures is underway.

Changes to the Articles of Association are in progress.

Trevor encouraged Chairs to consult online resources and bulletins for updates.

Closure of Gmail

Essential for security and used by many of our societies but not all. Societies have been given sufficient time to make alternative arrangements.

Society Support

Central now uses local and national advertising, including Boom Radio, a localised radio channel, and corporate videos. TAS magazine remains an effective advertising medium.

Statistics

£250,000 has been spent on infrastructure and support.

The TAS currently has 62,000 members, and this needs to grow.

A new central office is currently being used by a small staff of four who rotate and work from home using Zoom and Teams calls.

A significant amount was spent on redundancy. TAS is currently seeking a national sponsor. Further information will be available in the coming year.

Staff

A slide displaying the office structure was presented, covering office staff, volunteers, and Hilary Kay, President of TAS.

Financial matters are being outsourced to a company in Woking.

Trevor noted that while TAS Societies are distinct and unique, TAS Areas are closely aligned with TAS Central.

Volunteering

Volunteering is a key area that requires significant growth. The challenges of recruiting volunteers are recognised.

Treasury Matters

Grant provision is fundamental - Study Days are an effective method of raising funds.

TAS is currently investigating new strategies to increase deposit interest.

Staff levels are monitored as well as the cost of national events, including the AGM and Directory Day.

Copyright

It is important to note that lecturers are increasingly concerned about copyright issues, particularly with the use of photographs.

There are links on TAS's main website to free images. Further guidance on copyright law will be posted on the website.

Q & A

Audience questions were addressed regarding affiliation fees, the consultation process, and the availability of the latest accounts. Accounts are available to view on the website.

4. WHY?

Charles shared his conclusions on the theme of 'Why' and praised the breadth of what TAS offers, especially in overcoming cultural barriers.

5. ART TALK

Charles Harris held an informal discussion-style interview with David Isherwood, newly appointed H&IOW Area Chair.

Supported by a slideshow, David addressed questions about the origins of his interest and enthusiasm for art, his heroes and heroines, and what excites him most about TAS.

6. PRESENTATION

Gill Waller is the 2025 winner of the Marsh Individual Award for Volunteering with The Arts Society and former Chair of TAS Basingstoke.

Gill shared her many experiences of the school projects creating exhibitions at Basingstoke Train Station and The Willis Museum & Sainsbury Gallery, Basingstoke. She provided details on the various TAS grants awarded for each project.

The Arts Society Basingstoke, led by Gill, worked in partnership with local schools, sixth forms, and colleges on projects specifically designed to engage young people.

To celebrate 200 years of the Railway, art students at Queen Mary's College have created permanent artwork for Basingstoke Railway Station.

Vanessa Rolf, a professional artist and art college lecturer, took time from her schedule to support Gill's presentation. Vanessa, who has worked alongside Gill, commended the energy, positive approach, remarkable efforts, and ambition of TAS Basingstoke.

LUNCH

7. Farewells

Pat Hindley expressed gratitude to Charles Harris, the outgoing Chair, and Diana Heatly, the outgoing Secretary, for their dedication over the past three years. As a token of appreciation, Pat presented them with gift cards on behalf of the Area Support Team.

8. Cluster Meetings

Diana Heatly provided a brief summary of the progress of cluster meetings, which have involved local societies getting together to share best practice and exchange new ideas. Following the first cluster meeting, hosted by TAS Petersfield, TAS New Forest held its own meeting.

Key points raised included strategies for increasing membership, raising subscription fees, committee succession, and welcoming new members.

9. 3-Minute Updates

David Isherwood hosted Society 3-minute updates.

Each of the societies present gave a brief report on their latest Society news.

Updates focused on recent achievements, upcoming events, and volunteering opportunities.

Several societies expressed their gratitude for the drama grant.

Inclusion and equality are important issues, and there has been a suggestion that we need a policy to address them.

Volunteering and committee recruitment continue to be a significant, ongoing issue.

Some societies reported that they are struggling to find replacements for key roles, and two societies are currently operating without a chair.

10. AOB

None

The meeting ended at 15:00.

11. Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be held on 5 October, 2026 at The Gurkha Museum in Winchester