

Hailsham Artists' Network
Report by the Chair
AGM 2023

The group has been meeting informally since 2018 and was formalised in March 2022 when we adopted the constitution which can be seen on the website. Floss Nicholls was elected as Treasurer, Valerie Evans as Secretary and myself as Chair. Towards the end of 2022 Sue Stoneman took over the role of Secretary and Valerie became Membership Secretary working alongside Floss, plus Jennifer Bisset and Barbara Olivier both joined as committee members.

It is now time for elections and I'd like to say a huge thank you to all members of the committee - everyone has done so much more than their role demands which has greatly improved the group for all members. It's now time to share the load. Valerie and I are both stepping away from the committee but we are not leaving the group. I would urge anyone who values the group and feels they can spare even a little time to help, to join the committee or one of the event organiser groups. Meetings are always fun and we do actually get things done!

During the HAN year we have had several group meetings open to all members, as well as committee meetings. We've tried various different venues - local pubs weren't popular because of the distractions of noise and one hall we booked was almost impossible to find, especially in the dark! THIS venue is very handy being in the centre of Town, but we can't book it on a regular basis so are open to suggestions for other venues.

Events over the past 12 months

Apologies if I have missed anything - it's quite a long and impressive list!

April - The first 2022 event that some HAN members participated in was the Hailsham Artists Fair at Bodle Street Green which was organised by Denise Bliss - a great venue and a good turnout.

June - The Sussex Day event at Marlow Ropes was a Meet The Makers event - it was remarkably well attended for an office space in the middle of an industrial estate on a weekday evening!

July - The Summer Exhibition at The Old Chapel in Alfriston was very well attended with some exhibitors making great sales.

August - Some HAN members took part in the Meet The Makers Marquee at the Summer Trifle festival, with some crafts people giving paid demonstrations.

September - the Art Trail

In June 2022 we applied to the Chalk Cliff Trust for funds to help with the website costs, member training on using the website, how to photograph work and use social media platforms. It also included an amount to cover the costs of the design and print of the Art Trail programme and the associated website updates helping to keep prices low for participants. We applied for £3000 but were actually awarded £5000. Then in July we had a meeting with Rob Reakes of Lightning Fibre about sponsorship of the Art Trail. Their generous contribution of £600 helped us to make entry into the 2022 Art Trail programme FREE for all participants.

The Programme featured 19 venues with just under 100 artists and makers participating. Group shows included the HAN show at the Bluebell Barn, Wilmington Art Group and the Reid Hall Friday Art Group. The HAN Gallery North exhibition continued into October and Lightning Fibre hosted an art and wine networking evening at their new offices in Eastbourne which involved several HAN members as well as Eastbourne artists.

Over the past few months we have been included in discussions about a community art project planned for the Eastwell Place Bridge over the Cuckoo Trail with local councillors and the Hailsham Festival committee. This looks set to start later this year so look out for publicity about that.

That brings us to 2023 -

we held a New year's Social get together (instead of a Christmas do) at the Hailsham Club in early January, then at end of January 10 members attended the very informative New Year's Resolutions Workshop with Julian Sutherland Beatson.

We held the Members training day in February run by myself, Floss Nicholls and Richard Goldsmith. The training videos and worksheets are now on the website for all members to access.

Our website was originally set up and designed by Karen Ravenbridge - I have been updating this with various resources over the past few months and you'll notice lots of members have now added their own artists pages and events so this will help not only the look of the website, but its visibility. The more YOU can make use of the group website, the better.

To sum up, a huge thank you to our current committee members and to all who have been involved in organising the HAN events over the past 12 months. Thank you to all members who have participated in meetings and events. Without you Hailsham Artists Network wouldn't exist. And thank you to our financial supports Chalk Cliff Trust and Lightning Fibre.

Thank you to all of those who have stepped up to help organise the year's events - Here's to a great 2023.

