



Constitution of Saffron Walden Art Society (SWAS)

The objectives of the Society are the promotion and appreciation of the visual arts by organising demonstrations, lectures, painting days, exhibition visits and other activities relating to art. Photography is not included in the society remit.

The society is inclusive and welcomes people with an interest in art but not necessarily producing art work. We welcome people with disabilities and to enable them to attend Society events their carers will be admitted free of charge should their assistance be required. Standard charges would be made for coach places and ticketed events.

Membership

Membership of the Society shall be open to those interested in furthering its work, subject to payment of the annual membership fee and conformity to regulations made by the committee concerning the organisation and aims of the Society. On joining, new members will be directed to the current constitution, available to view on the SWAS website.

Members are welcome to bring guests to demonstrations and events subject to the relevant fees. There is no limit to the number of visits by guests. A visitor's name and address will be recorded on each occasion, purely for health and safety requirements.

The committee shall be able to elect Honorary Members noted to have made special contributions to the work and management of the society and possibly distinguished in the visual arts. Such members are then automatically life members and are free of annual membership payments.

We encourage students (any age in full time education) and junior members by offering reduced membership fees. Our Safeguarding Policy requires that all students aged 16 and under are accompanied by a responsible adult at all times.

The society holds members details on the SWAS database. This will be shared amongst committee members as required for society matters. For insurance purposes the SAA may require a copy for our policy. The database will not be shared with any other third party.

Use of the society's social media platforms is only to promote the work of members and the aims of the society generally.

Society Management.

A committee will be responsible for the management of the society, including the levels of membership fees and any additional fees for demonstrations and exhibitions, the annual programme and any other event organised for the society.

The committee to manage the society will consist of no more than twelve and no less than 6 elected members, including the officers. Up to three additional members may be co-opted when special events require additional resource.

One third of the elected committee members will constitute a quorum.

The committee may be re-elected, in their posts, at the AGM en masse by those members attending. Proposals for new members to the committee (providing they agree to their nomination prior to or at the beginning of the meeting) will be put forward subject to being proposed and seconded. Committee members must have an online presence as communication currently is preferred to be made by email.

Any alterations to this constitution must receive assent of two thirds of the members present and voting at an AGM or Special General Meeting. A proposal for any alteration of the Constitution must be received by the Secretary of the Society at least 21 days before the meeting, at which the proposal is to be brought forward. At least 14 days' notice of such a meeting must be given by the Secretary to the membership and must include notice of the proposed alteration.

The AGM shall be held no later than 31st March. In times of national emergency and in line with Government instruction and where the 31st of March date is not possible, it will necessitate holding the AGM at the earliest possible date. This will be notified to members when all issues around members safety and the venue being appropriate to guidelines have been considered and covered. An alternative to physically meeting could be via social media platforms which might be considered in exceptional circumstances. This would require members who wished to participate having an online presence. Members will be notified of the meeting and members wishing to put forward an issue shall submit it to the Chairman in writing at least 14 days before the meeting.

The business of the AGM will be to receive the reports of the officers on the activities of the previous year, to receive and adopt the society accounts, including independent auditors sign off and state where the society's accounts are held. It will also elect the committee, consider any special submitted issues and any other business put forward or suggested by the Chairman.

The quorum for an AGM or special meeting shall be a minimum of 20 members.

Special General Meetings may be called at the request of twenty members and fourteen days notice shall be given for any such meeting.

The financial year shall end on 31st December. All accounts shall be held in the name of the Society and operated by the Treasurer with assistance from other officers as required. Records of the financial administration and transactions for the Society should have current years plus the previous full 3 years accounts available for inspection. Due to banking fees, members making payments by cheque or requiring payment by society cheque shall be required to incur a charge of fifty pence.

Records of committee minutes and AGM documents and any other information of significant importance, shall be printed and held for the current year plus full 3 years, available for inspection.

The officers of the society shall consist of the following: Chairman, Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, Programme organiser, Membership Secretary, Media and Marketing Secretary, and any other specific roles which require management.

Members on the committee not holding an office will normally serve a term of three years. Officers will ideally serve a term of 3-5 years but this can be flexible upon their continued willingness to continue the role and with the agreement of the committee and ordinary members.

Vacancies for officers or members to the committee may be filled by the committee by co-option until the next AGM.

The committee will have the power to appoint sub-committees to help with running the society's programme with the work of such committees being ratified by the main committee.

Reasonable expenses incurred by members of the committee on behalf of the society, will be reimbursed, provided receipts and a completed claim form are submitted and agreed.

Society assets

The society holds various assets including the large display screens, the octagon, browsers and card racks. If members hold any of these items in safe storage on behalf of the society, those members may use the items free of charge, on a limited use basis and with one month's notice to the committee for their agreement. Due to the high value of the large display screens they will not be available for hire or general use outside of the society's main exhibition.

Dissolution

The Society may be dissolved by resolution passed by a two thirds majority of those present at a Special General Meeting convened for the purpose of which 21 days notice shall be given to the members. Such a resolution may give instructions for the disposal of any assets held in the name of the society. Disposal of the remaining balance after the settlement of any debts owed by the society shall be passed to a Society or Organisation(s) with similar aims and objectives to our society.

DM August 2026.