

A Message from your Chair

Firstly, I would like to welcome Chris Craik as our latest new Trustee. More details about Chris (and the other Trustees) in next month's newsletter.

As you will see below, we have invested heavily in digital art equipment for our Gibson Street 'Electronic Classroom'. We intend to use these for photography and digital art; making the resources available, not only to our existing members, but also extending our demographics to teenagers and younger adults.

Finally, the new kitchen is progressing at Gibson Street. We now have all the wall units in place, as well as the coffee machine! Over the next week, I hope to install the new flooring and then it will be up to "Front Street" standards!

News from Board of Trustees

As most of you are probably aware, our Chair, Steve, has been working very hard over the last few months refurbishing the Gibson St. centre (which by the way, is almost done!). This is in addition to his other 'chair' duties: applying for grants, managing the financial, administrative, building maintenance, and running various classes and clubs. All this while having to spend half a month in Lancashire!

The Board of Trustees has agreed that this can't continue, it's way too much for one person and doesn't fit in with our values of promoting well-being. As a result, we are currently working on creating a new structure of how we are organised. We hope that this will allow us to offer you and potential learners even more to enjoy. So, stay tuned, some more exciting things to come!

Electronic Classroom

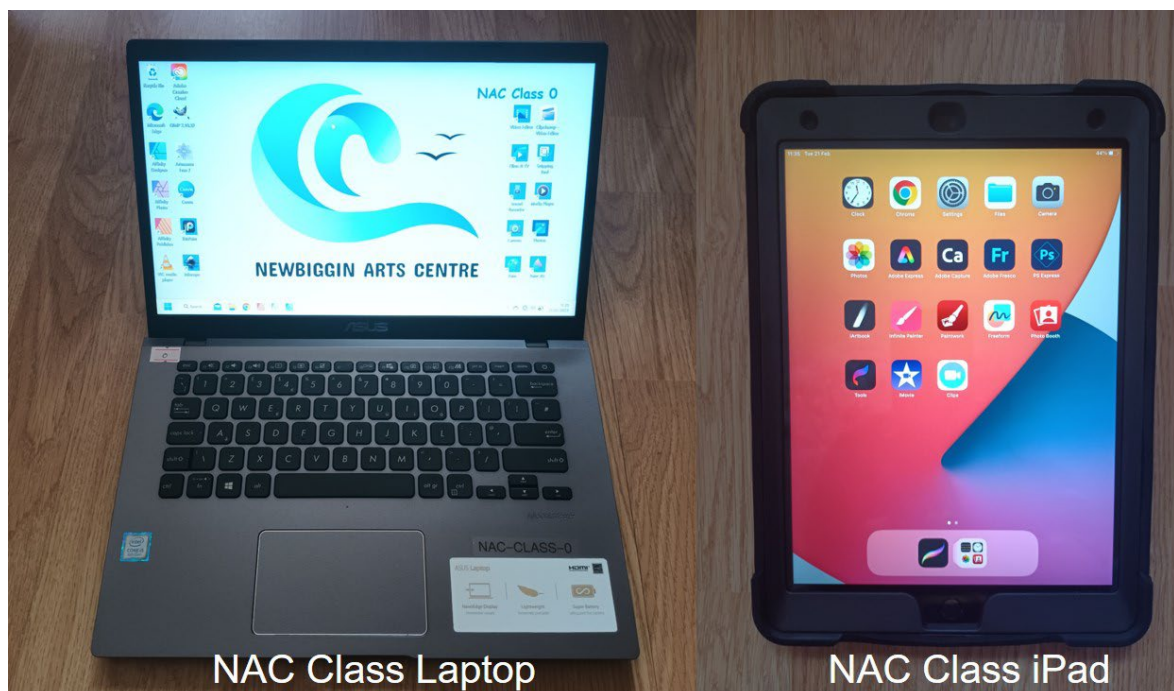
We are now in receipt of 16 fantastic laptops which have been donated to our charity by Novatech, the Portsmouth-based specialist computer manufacturer.

We intend to use them in our Gibson Street 'electronic classroom' for photography and digital art. Steve is currently configuring the computers and loading up the software; primarily 'Affinity' which is good for both photography and digital artwork, but also some of the free graphics packages too, such as; IbisPaint, Artweaver, Inkscape, Gimp, Canva, Adobe web-based products and the full range of Microsoft standard packages.

We did have funding for these laptops as part of the Northumberland County Council Community Investment Programme grant for the electronic classrooms (which also includes the Wi-Fi, TV, projector screen, computer camera, etc.). So, as we didn't have to spend all the money on the laptops, we have also bought 16 iPads (complete with electronic chargeable pencils and rugged cases!) and Steve is installing Procreate as well as other packages, such as Adobe, iArtBook, Infinite Painter, Freeform and iMovie.

Our intention is to run classes and clubs in both photography and digital art. We hope that these will be attractive to our existing members. But we also hope to create interest from the under-represented demographics – the teenagers and younger adults.

For the technically-minded, the laptops are refurbished high-specification ASUS laptops with Intel 8th generation core i5 processors and brand new SSD drives – absolutely ideal for our purposes. Most of the iPads are 9th generation, but we also have four 4th generation iPad Air devices



New Classes

We are really excited to be able to offer something completely different...Digital Art! As you will remember from last month's newsletter, Steve was looking for a volunteer who had the skills and commitment to tutor a digital art class. Well, we are happy to say, we have someone!

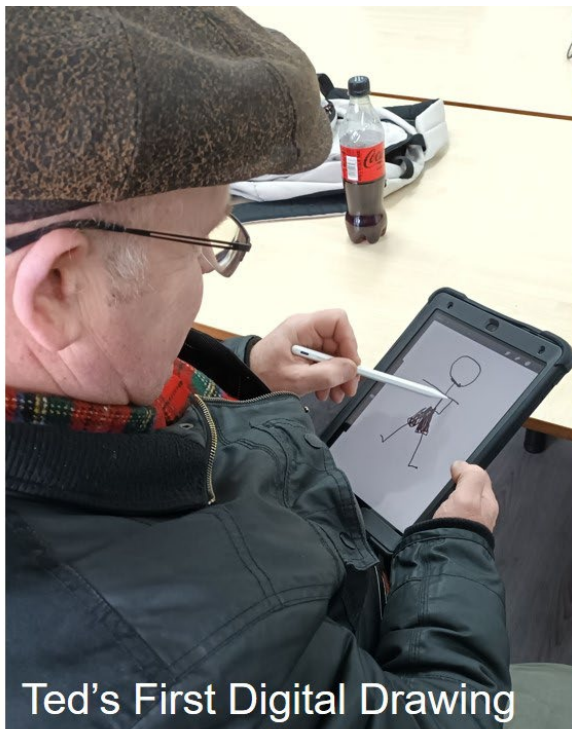
Alexx Hancock is a student who will be offering an 8 week digital art course starting on Saturday, 15th April (the first Saturday after Easter) from 1:00 to 3:00. The sessions will cost £4 per session, and they will be held at the Gibson St. Centre.

This should be a fun and (sometimes challenging!) course, suitable for anyone, as Ted found out when he and Alexx gave it a trial run. In spite of having trouble getting the IT to work, including the digital pencils needing to be fully charged, they managed to 'cast' the tutor's iPad to the TV so they could all see what they were doing, and even managed to print the 'student's' drawings at the end of the session.

So, if Ted can do it, anyone can!

If you are interested, you can **register** at info@newbigginartscentre.org, or call 07766 856365.

If you need **more information** about the course, please contact Steve at: Steve@newbigginartscentre.org or give him a call at 0784 852285.



Ted's First Digital Drawing



Our Digital Art Tutor - Alexx

Figure Drawing

Due to the success of our Friday afternoon Figure Drawing classes, we have reached capacity and there are several people expressing an interest in joining. So, we have decided to start an additional 8-week course on Monday evenings (7-9 at Front Street), starting soon after Easter. If you are interested in joining (£10 per session) please contact us at: info@newbigginartscentre.org, or call 07766 856365.

Other sessions

In case you haven't noticed; there are some sheets on the notice board in the kitchen on which you can record your interest in the upcoming new sessions to be held at Gibson Street. If you are interested in any of these sessions, please fill in your details and we will get in touch with you in due course, when details have been finalised.

As people come and go, we have some vacancies in our various clubs and classes. Please drop by, or contact us (details below) if you are interested.

Wild Northumberland

Our annual excursion to the Woodhorn Museum was a great success and everyone had a great time. Well over 20 of our members turned up to view and discuss the Wild Northumberland exhibition of local artwork. There was serious

discussion about the merits (or otherwise) of the various paintings and photos. Prominent in the discussions was the high quality of the pastel drawings/paintings; sparking off an interest in joining our Wednesday morning pastel session at Gibson Street. Unfortunately no-one had the presence of mind to take any photos of the group (we were all too engrossed in the artwork), so it is lost to posterity. ☹

Iain Bolton's Photography Exhibition

Saturday, the 11th of March had a great turnout, with around 20 visitors (including several dogs) for Iain's exhibition. There was lots of great conversations about the work and the centre, with several people ending up staying for most of the afternoon.

The Children's Group

We will be showcasing examples of our young people's paintings on a regular basis. This is a recent painting done by eight-year old Safra. Well done Safra!



We Need You!

As you probably know, the NAC is run entirely by our volunteers. As we continue to grow and develop as an art centre, we are looking for volunteers to join us to help us become even better.

We need people with all kinds of skills; but having enthusiasm and commitment is the most important. Helping can be anything, from cleaning up materials, opening up the studio on the weekend, helping with the administrative work (and there is a lot of that!), to leading a session or working as a trustee, helping to guide our direction.

We wouldn't exist if it wasn't for our volunteers, so please, if you would like to be a part of this, get in touch. We would love to have a chat with you to see how best to get you involved.



Please get in touch...

01670 708269 or 07766 856365

Children's Group: 078 58 447 090

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www.newbigginartscentre.org

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