



A Seasonal Message from the Chair

Christmas and the holiday season is the time for giving, and we couldn't be more thankful for the gifts of loyalty and support that you, as our members, have given us. Without it, we wouldn't be here, and thereby, we wouldn't be able to provide the wider community with the opportunities to learn, develop, and socialise that we do. So, on behalf of the Trustees, I would like to say a huge and heartfelt thank you!

It is also important to recognise and express our gratitude and thanks to all our sponsors, including: National Lottery Community Fund, Northumberland Inclusive Economy Community Partnership, Northumberland County Council, Newbiggin Town Council, Ballinger, Mercy Project, Hadrian Trust, Foyles Foundation and Catherine Cookson Charitable Trust. Without their financial support we couldn't have continued to develop and provide the many new courses and workshops that we can now offer, nor offer the quality of equipment, facilities and material.

As the big day approaches, it is also a good time to reflect. Over the past year we have had some ups and downs—thankfully, mostly ups! In addition to our regular classes and clubs, we have been steadily expanding our offer, with new classes, such as ceramics, photography, pastels, printmaking; and workshops, such as wreath-making, origami, and book cover making. We've even had a couple of evenings where people have been able to learn about living in Japan and Northumberland!

We have also benefited (hugely!) with the hiring of our first employee, Administrative Officer, Wendy Storey. She has been instrumental in helping us to expand and manage our office efficiently, and always with a big smile—so a huge thank you, Wendy, we couldn't have done it without you!

The year 2025 promises even more, so keep a look out for our January newsletter where we'll be giving you a sneak preview of new workshops and courses to come. We can't wait, and hope you feel the same!

My final message is one of good cheer. On behalf of the Trustees and Wendy, I would like to wish all of you a very Merry Christmas and a happy, healthy, prosperous and creative new year!

