



A Message from Your Chair

We've just had our fifth Annual General Meeting, open to our community, since our re-birth in 2020. And, my, what a great meeting it was! It was attended by a cluster of very interested and enthusiastic supporters. After the formal presentation, we had a fantastic exchange of ideas, which also led to welcoming a new Trustee, April; a volunteer coordinator, Heather; and others wanting to provide something back to NAC in the form of volunteering.

I loved the energy generated at the meeting and look forward to channelling that energy to bring about improvements and diversification of our unique charity, better to improve the wellbeing of our community and to develop, even further, the creative talent of our participants.

I am sure that you have seen many new and exciting developments at NAC over the past months (despite the dearth of grants over the past year). This is due to the hard work and dedication of a small band of Trustees and volunteers. As we go forward, with growing our team of experienced and enthusiastic volunteers, I can promise you even more from our boutique charity.

So, after the AGM, a hectic week followed with our latest paint and sip; moving on to working with Sue to erect the craft club's new shed. It made a lovely change from all the accounts and paperwork. But, unfortunately it was back to those tasks at the weekend! 😞

As Spring creeps into our lives, we can emerge from our Winter hibernation and get back into the swing of creating something wonderful at our Arts Centres – and don't forget to visit Woodhorn to see the fantastic artwork from your fellow NAC artists. The exhibition runs until Sunday 10 May 2026.



Committee Meeting Update

A Warm Welcome to Our New Trustee, April

We're delighted to welcome April as our newest trustee, bringing a wonderful blend of creativity, experience, and practical know-how.

April had a long career as a specialist in dementia care which she studied at Worcester University, going on to develop national, award-winning programmes designed to enhance the lives of people living with dementia and their loved ones, many based around creative arts, and horticultural therapy. She was privileged to witness the joy of creating and sense of achievement people gained through these activities.

April is also a qualified management coach and mentor and particularly enjoyed training and coaching teams of professional carers to deliver excellence in dementia care.

After re-locating to Northumberland in 2021 so that her husband could 'return to his roots' following retirement, April fell in love with the area and discovered the Jewel in the crown; The Newbiggin Arts Centre. A welcoming place, full of warmth and possibilities. April describes herself as an adventurous beginner having enjoyed the various classes and workshops she's attended and particularly loves mixed media, texture, and collage.



Having gained so much from the Arts Centre she felt it was time to try and give something back, hence joining the team as a Trustee and is looking forward to working alongside and supporting the team who work so hard behind the scenes. She says, *“As a Trustee, my focus will be on exploring how the Arts Centre can further support the wellbeing of our community, especially those who are caring for others.”*

Say hello to April, our new Trustee for Wellbeing - she's here to keep us grounded... and maybe to wonder what she's signed up for!

Hands That Help NAC

Our recent AGM was a fantastic morning, full of discussion, ideas, and real enthusiasm for everything we do at NAC. One visitor described NAC as a 'gem' in our community, sparking lots of enthusiasm about how we can make the centre even better.

One thing that really stood out was the strong interest in volunteering—many members are keen to get involved and make a difference. That's perfect, because we currently have a couple of areas where we could use some extra hands:

Children's Friday Night Club – Volunteer Helper

We are looking for a volunteer to help Donna run our popular Children's Friday Night Club at Gibson Street, which takes place during school term time on Fridays from 6–7.30pm.

The club offers a lively programme of fun, learning and social activities, with a wide variety of creative sessions including painting, crafting and other hands-on projects.

You don't need to be an expert—just someone happy to lend a hand and help the sessions run smoothly while the children enjoy themselves.

Website Volunteer

We are also looking for someone who could help us with our website.

We do our best with the skills we have, but as it's such an important way of sharing what NAC offers, we would love some help to improve what we have and keep it updated so it remains engaging and interesting (hopefully it's not too bad already!).

This could be a great opportunity for someone early in their career who would like to gain experience for their CV, or for someone with website skills who would like to share their expertise for the benefit of the community.

If you'd like to find out more about either opportunity—or just have a chat first to see what's involved—please get in touch with Wendy.

Gift Aid Reminder – Make Your Support Go Further

A quick reminder that Gift Aid is now available at NAC. If you're a UK taxpayer, a simple declaration allows us to claim an extra 25p for every £1 you donate — at no cost to you.

One form covers both past donations (up to four years) and future ones, helping your support go even further.

Forms are available at clubs, classes, workshops, and events, or you can ask Wendy for one.

It only takes a moment, but it makes a real difference to NAC — thank you for helping us keep creativity thriving in our community.

If you can fill in a declaration and get it to Wendy before the Easter weekend we will be able to claim even more in our submission which has to be made before the end of the tax year.

Shed Happens!

After a heroic day and a half wrestling with cumbersome plastic panels and stubborn metal reinforcements, Steve, our fearless Chair, and Sue Case, our intrepid Trustee, finally triumphed over the new shed in the back yard at Gibson Street.

The struggle was real—there was barely room to swing a screwdriver, and at times it felt more like a contortionist competition than a simple DIY task!



The new shed is destined for the Craft Club, ready to house their cornucopia of materials and equipment.



Meanwhile, the extra space it frees up in the Gibson Street storeroom will give our ever-expanding collection of pottery and ceramic creations a proper home while they dry, patiently awaiting their turn in the new kiln.

Well done Sue and Steve!

Another Lively Paint & Sip at NAC

Our third Paint & Sip evening at NAC had a bit of an Easter twist this time, as participants created beautiful “stained glass” style pictures inspired by the season.

As always, the evening was full of fun, laughter... and a little wine!

Led by our Chair, Steve, the group quickly got into the creative spirit. With plenty of chatter and enthusiasm in the room, Steve definitely had his work cut out keeping everyone on track as the evening became rather lively.

The results were fantastic, with colourful Easter-themed artworks taking shape across the tables — and everyone agreeing it was a brilliant way to spend an evening.



The good news? People are already asking for more. Steve has bravely agreed to run another session in a couple of months' time — just in time to welcome summer. So, keep an eye out for details... the next one promises to be just as creative, relaxed, and entertaining.

Fetch Yourself a Prize!

Win something truly special and support NAC at the same time! Every ticket helps us continue offering workshops, exhibitions, and community activities—keeping creativity alive in our town.

We're raffling a custom pet portrait - a one-of-a-kind painting that captures the personality of your much-loved pet. It's a unique keepsake and would make a perfect gift for any animal lover.

Tickets are just £5 each, and every ticket supports the work of Newbiggin Arts Centre.

The draw will take place on 24th May at the Newbiggin Dog Show. If you win, simply provide a photo of your pet and the artist will create your bespoke painting.

Tickets are available now and can be purchased or picked up from Front Street. Grab one for yourself... and maybe one as a gift too!

Newbiggin Arts Centre
The place for all things art... where Arts are for All

WIN A BESPOKE PET PORTRAIT!
Raffle Tickets – Just £5!

A custom hand-painted portrait created from your own photograph – furry, feathered, or scaly – all pets welcome!

Winner drawn 24th May at the Newbiggin Dog Show

Tickets and details available at the Front St. studio and also available on the day

The winner simply provides a photo of their pet for the artist to work from.

Painted by a talented local artist, this one-of-a-kind portrait makes a meaningful gift or treasured memorial to a much-loved companion.

Don't miss your chance, get your tickets now! For the price of a takeaway coffee, you could own a timeless portrait of your best friend. That's less than a bag of treats...and it lasts forever!

Contact Us at:
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New in the Newsletter: Tutor Spotlight

We're excited to introduce a new regular feature — our **Tutor Spotlight** — shining a light on the talented artists who lead our classes and workshops at NAC.

Each month, we'll share a tutor's creative journey, the sessions they run, and what they love most about teaching. You'll also hear stories from participants and see some of the amazing artwork created during their classes, giving you a real glimpse into the energy and creativity of NAC.

Our classes and workshops are at the heart of what makes NAC such a vibrant community, and this feature celebrates the skill, variety, and passion of the tutors who make them so special.

Introducing Heather Howarth

Following an exhibition of her work at Newbiggin Arts Centre, Heather Howarth is currently teaching her second series of classes in Pastels at the Arts Centre in Gibson Street. Students in both the morning and afternoon sessions are benefitting hugely from her supportive style alongside her skills and knowledge as an artist.

Many have fed back their appreciation with comments such as;

"She really spends time and gets to know us as individuals so she seems to know exactly what each of us needs".

"Heather shows us those tiny little techniques that can transform our pictures".



With a background in social work, and teaching ceramics, Heather began painting in earnest when she retired, often drawing from the beauty of the Kent countryside where she lived at that time. She tried pastels in an art class she attended and immediately loved them, creating atmospheric landscapes and other subjects. Her love of sewing, texture and patterns is also reflected in her pieces, and she says if she had her time again, she might well have studied textiles.



Heather's passion for teaching is almost tangible. She loves children, and most of all loves to help and enable people to bring out their creativity and recognise their own potential.

Heather recounts how her own style as an artist developed despite some challenges. *“I always loved art, right from when I was little, growing up in South Shields, but I struggled. I was extremely short sighted and because of that the edges of every painting were blurred. But, out of that, my own way practice grew, and it’s what now makes my art mine.”*

Heather has a saying that completely sums up how she feels;

“Life is short. Art is forever.”

Thank you Heather, and wise words!

Keeping in Touch — Your Choice

We love keeping our community up to date with what’s happening at NAC, but we also want to make sure you only hear from us if you’re happy to do so.

If at any time you’d prefer not to receive the newsletter or other NAC emails, just let us know and we’ll happily remove you from the list — no problem at all.

We’re grateful for your support and interest in NAC, whether you follow every update or just drop in from time to time.



Did you know...

... you don't need to be an expert to enjoy watercolours?

Watercolours aren't just for experts! *Even beginners can create beautiful effects—mistakes can lead to happy accidents and surprising results.*

It's harder to ruin than you think. *Watercolour paints are forgiving; layers can be lifted, colours blended, and paper textures add natural beauty.*

Watercolours are great for wellbeing. *The flowing, translucent nature of the paint encourages mindfulness, focus, and relaxation.*

Experimenting is part of the fun. *Try different brushes, papers, or even salt and cling film to create textures—you don't need perfect control to make amazing results.*

Watercolour is versatile. *You can do detailed illustrations, loose washes, abstract art, or combine with ink and pencil for mixed media creations.*

Why not give it a go? Check out our Wednesday morning watercolour club.



Classes, Clubs, & Workshops

Join our latest workshops...

Photography Workshop Series

Take your camera skills to the next level with a **series of five hands-on workshops**. Learn new techniques, explore creative approaches, and capture your best shots yet.



Create Your Own Heirloom Keepsake



Join us for a fun, social, and creative session where you can make your very own keepsake—perfect as a gift, decoration, or cherished heirloom. Suitable for both beginners and experienced crafters.

Watercolour Club

There is still room to join our Wednesday morning watercolour club—a relaxed, friendly group where you can paint at your own pace, choose your own subject, and get guidance if you want it. Perfect for beginners or anyone looking to try watercolours in a fun, supportive environment.

For more information on these or other classes, clubs and workshops, please check out our website or give Wendy a call—we'd love you to join us!



We'd Love to See You – Online or at the Studio

Don't forget to check out our website and Facebook page to see our full schedule, or please pop by the studio to see what's on offer and where we'll be happy to show you around and answer any questions.

For more information or to register for these or our other ongoing clubs, please contact Wendy at: info@newbigginartscentre.org or **07766 856365 or 01670 708269**



Exhibitions

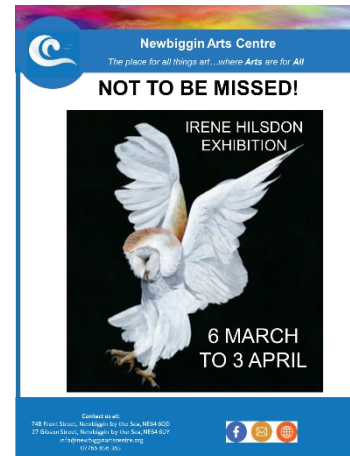
Last Chance

Don't miss the chance to enjoy this beautiful collection!

We're excited to share our current exhibition featuring the stunning work of Irene, a Northumberland-based artist. Since 1995, she's been creating finely detailed images of birds and animals, specialising in pastels and pastel pencils, and has exhibited at the **National Exhibition of Wildlife Art** and numerous other shows.

Recently, she's also been sharing her passion through teaching art and craft on cruise ships.

Plan a visit to see this beautiful collection up close — perfect for nature and art lovers.



Coming Next



Spring into Creativity: Our Members' Art on Show!

This exhibition celebrates the amazing creativity of our NAC community. It's a chance to admire, learn from, and be inspired by the talent of our members.

Come along to explore a variety of styles, celebrate their achievements, and maybe even spark ideas for your own artistic journey.

A perfect outing to enjoy the arrival of spring and support local creativity!



How to Contact Us

If you want to sign up for a course, provide us feedback, or send us your ideas on what we can do better, we always appreciate hearing from you.

Contact us at:

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