



## A Message from Your Chair

Welcome to our new Vice-Chair, April Dobson! We all look forward to working with you as we go forward with our mission here at Newbiggin Arts Centre. I just hope that we can keep up with your phenomenal work ethic, enthusiasm, dynamic personality, and youth (no chance for me on the last point!!).

This means, of course, that Sue Andrew has stood down from the role. We are very thankful however that she will continue with her other Trustee work, especially running exhibitions, teaching and looking after Thursdays when I am not here. Thanks Sue for all the hard work to date – and more to come!

Well, last week was Volunteers' Week 2026. But our appreciation is not restricted to only one week per year. We are all very conscious of all the hard work that the Trustees and our core of regular volunteers do to keep the Centres running smoothly (with a 'not-so-little' help from Wendy! 😊). So, I would like to take this opportunity to lengthen the campaign and week of celebration to say “**Thank you**” to each and every one of you. Without your endless dedication and granting of your valuable time to the cause, we wouldn't have been able to achieve all the fantastic things which we have done.

And, to think, only 5 years ago, we were putting the finishing touches to Front Street and getting ready for the launch. Haven't we all come a long way since then?

Steve



## Committee Meeting Update

May has been a whirlwind month for us here at the Arts Centre - in the best possible way! From a surprise appointment to welcoming new interns, celebrating our four-legged friends, and launching our very first Open Exhibition, there's been no shortage of excitement. Let us bring you up to speed...

## A New Chapter in Our Succession Plan

We're delighted to share that April Dobson, our Trustee for Wellbeing, has agreed to take on the role of Vice-Chair.

This is an important part of our succession planning, with April stepping into a role that supports Steve and occasionally keeps him in line (or at least tries to!).

Over time, April will gradually take on more of the Chair's responsibilities, helping to ensure a smooth transition whenever Steve decides the time has come to spend a little more time on other pursuits.

Of course, anyone who knows Steve will not be surprised to hear that he's already threatening to stick around as a Board member long after handing over the Chair's badge!

Meanwhile, Sue Andrew has stepped down from the Vice-Chair role with a certain amount of relief. This will give her more time to focus on the things she enjoys most – developing exhibitions, supporting our clubs, and lending a hand with the occasional class. We're incredibly grateful for all Sue has contributed as Vice-Chair and are pleased that she'll continue to play such an active role in the life of the Arts Centre.

Please join us in congratulating April on her new role and thanking Sue for all her hard work and dedication.

## **Meet Our New Intern – Pablo**

We are delighted to welcome Pablo, a second-year art student from Newcastle University, to NAC as our newest intern.

Pablo's mentor, Susan Parker, is already looking forward to sharing his talents with our members and visitors:  
*"Pablo is immersed in the art of origami and has studied it extensively. I have seen some of his amazing creations on his social media and can't wait to see what intricate and colourful pieces we can produce ourselves. I know it's going to be a lot of fun! If you're up for something different and maybe a little challenging, come and have a go under Pablo's expert tuition. He will give you fold-by-fold guidance."*



"Me, My Shelf, an Aye"  
2026

Now, in Pablo's own words:

*"Hello, I'm an art student at Newcastle University, just having finished my second year of study. I grew up on a small island off the coast of Northern Ireland and completed an art foundation year in Belfast before coming to Newcastle."*

*The subjects which interest me most when making art are perception, people and animals. My practice involves interactive work (mainly questionnaires), printmaking (recently monoprinting), and origami. I will be holding an origami course at the centre, starting on 29th June. In addition to folding existing origami designs, I also create my own from scratch."*



Crab, original origami  
2024

We're excited to have Pablo join us and look forward to seeing his creativity inspire others. Whether you're completely new to origami or looking to develop your skills, his upcoming course promises to be a fascinating introduction to this intricate and rewarding art form.

## **Pet Portrait Winner and Tombola Success**

Our recent Pet Portrait fundraiser and tombola were a fantastic success, helped along by beautiful warm sunshine and plenty of community support.

Congratulations to our lucky Pet Portrait winner, Keith Farrar, whose beloved Jack Russell will soon be immortalised in paint! The competition proved incredibly popular and raised over £300 for Newbiggin Arts Centre.

Our tombola was also a great success, helping to raise additional funds to support the work of NAC and all the activities we provide for the community.

A huge thank you to everyone who bought tickets, donated prizes, stopped by for a chat, and supported us throughout the day.

The wonderful response means we'll definitely be looking at running the Pet Portrait fundraiser again in the future.



Thank you for helping us make it such a successful and enjoyable event!

## **Our First Open Exhibition**

We were thrilled to host our very first Open Exhibition and to welcome 23 talented artists from across the county to take part.

The exhibition featured an impressive variety of artwork, with artists working across a wide range of subjects, styles and media. The result was a vibrant and inspiring display that showcased the creativity and talent found within our local artistic community.

We were delighted by the positive response from visitors, many of whom took the time to share wonderful comments about the quality and diversity of the work on display. It was particularly rewarding to see so many people enjoying the exhibition and engaging with the artists' work.

As our first Open Exhibition, the event was a fantastic learning experience and has provided us with valuable ideas as we look ahead to future exhibitions. We would like to thank all the artists who submitted work, everyone who visited, and the volunteers who helped make the event possible.

The enthusiasm and support we received have encouraged us to make the Open Exhibition a regular feature of our programme, and we are already looking forward to the next one.

## **Art for Wellbeing – Supporting Northumberland's Carers**

We're delighted to be launching another first for Newbiggin Arts Centre as part of our growing commitment to supporting wellbeing through the arts.

**On 22nd June, from 2pm to 4pm**, we will be welcoming members of the Northumberland Carers Group for a dedicated *Art for Wellbeing* session. This special event, led by Sue Andrew, will provide carers with an opportunity to take some time for themselves, connect with others, and enjoy the benefits that creativity and artistic expression can bring.



At NAC, we believe that art has the power to improve wellbeing, reduce stress, and create meaningful social connections. We are therefore particularly pleased to be working alongside Northumberland Carers to offer this opportunity to those who spend so much of their time caring for others.

If you are caring for someone and would like to get involved, or if you need advice and support, please contact Northumberland Carers on **01670 320025** or email [info@carersnorthumberland.org.uk](mailto:info@carersnorthumberland.org.uk).

We look forward to welcoming everyone and hope this will be the first of many opportunities to support carers through creativity, community and wellbeing.

## **Creativity Taking Shape in Our Ceramics Club**

One of the great joys of our new Ceramics Club is seeing members develop their skills and confidence as they explore the world of pottery.

The piece pictured here was created by one of our younger members, who has been attending both our tutored pottery classes and regular club sessions as part of a personal development programme. In just a few short months, the progress they have made has been remarkable, demonstrating what can be achieved with enthusiasm, practice and a willingness to learn.

Our Ceramics Club provides a friendly and supportive environment where complete beginners and more experienced potters can work alongside one another, share ideas and develop new skills at their own pace.

If you've ever fancied trying pottery for yourself, we'd love to welcome you. We currently have spaces available at our informal, pay-as-you-go club sessions, held on **Wednesday evenings from 6pm–9pm** and **Friday mornings from 10am–1pm** in our Gibson St. studio. And, keep your eyes open for news of the next round of ceramics classes with Sarah.

For more information about our pottery classes and club sessions, please get in touch using the contact details at the bottom of this newsletter—you might be surprised by what you can create!

## Something is Coming...

We can't say too much just yet, but we *can* say this: please keep **Friday 24th July** firmly marked in your calendar.

It's hard to believe, but it will be almost five years since we first opened our Front Street studio. In that time, so much has happened—new faces, new creativity, new projects, and a growing community that continues to surprise and inspire us every day.

As for what's next...well, let's just say we think it's worth getting excited about.

Keep your eyes open. More details will be revealed soon.



## Did you know...

### Give as You Live

Did you know you can support Newbiggin Arts Centre every time you shop online—without it costing you a single penny?



Through **Give as You Live**, a simple free fundraising platform, everyday online shopping can turn into valuable support for NAC. Once you register, you simply choose Newbiggin Arts Centre as your chosen charity, and then shop as normal at hundreds of well-known retailers including eBay and many more.

From that point on, a small donation is generated for NAC every time you make a purchase - at no extra cost to you. It really is that simple.

It might not sound like much on its own, but it all adds up. Over time, lots of small contributions from supporters can make a real difference, helping us to run activities, maintain our spaces, and continue offering creative opportunities for the community.

To show what's possible, one of our supporters has already raised over £250 in the past five years (you guessed it, it was Steve!), simply by doing their usual online shopping. No extra effort, no extra cost - just a steady stream of support generated in the background.

If you'd like to get involved, you can sign up here:

<https://www.giveasyoulive.com/join>

Then simply select Newbiggin Arts Centre as your preferred charity and carry on shopping as usual - knowing you're helping support the Arts Centre every time you click "buy".

**Small actions, big impact—and every purchase helps keep creativity thriving at NAC.**



## Classes, Clubs, & Workshops

### **Don't Miss Out – There's More Than One Way to Get Creative!**

Please don't be discouraged if a class or workshop you're interested in is fully booked when you try to sign up.

At NAC, we always keep a waiting list, and once there's enough interest, we do our best to arrange an additional session so more people can take part. So even if you miss out the first time, it's always worth getting your name down.

In the meantime, there are still plenty of ways to get involved and keep your creativity flowing. Our regular clubs run throughout the week and offer a more relaxed, drop-in style of activity (although it's always best to check availability before coming along).

Unlike structured workshops, our clubs are not led by a formal tutor. Instead, they are supported by our experienced artists, who are on hand to offer friendly one-to-one help whenever you need it. All materials are provided (or you can bring your own), and there's always a welcoming group of people happy to share ideas, tips, and encouragement.

Many people find that our clubs are a great way to try something new, build confidence, and enjoy the social side of making art. There's always lots of laughter, plenty of learning, and often new friendships formed along the way.

So, if a workshop is full - don't worry. It might just be the start of something even better.

## **Spaces Available Now**

### ***New Ceramics Club – Now Open for New Members***

We are excited to invite new members to join our Ceramics Club - a relaxed and welcoming space where creativity can truly take shape.

Whether you're a complete beginner or already have some pottery experience, the club offers a friendly environment where people can work alongside one another, share ideas, and develop skills at their own pace. It's all about learning by doing, with plenty of encouragement along the way.

The sessions are led by Safron, with materials supplied, and we are fortunate to have our own kiln on site - allowing work to be fired and finished right here at the studio.

Our informal, pay-as-you-go sessions are ideal if you want flexibility while still enjoying the benefits of a regular creative practice.

We currently have spaces available at our sessions held in our Gibson Street studio:

- Wednesdays: 6pm–9pm
- Fridays: 10am–1pm

For a suggested donation of just £10 per session (plus a small contribution towards kiln firing), you get fantastic value - expert-led sessions, all materials included, and access to a fully equipped studio.

We strongly recommend (in fact we insist on) taking a pottery course before using the wheel, to help ensure a confident and safe introduction to wheel work. But, you can still have a go at hand building while you wait for a place on the next potters wheel course.

So, if you've ever wanted to try your hand at pottery, now is the perfect time to get involved and become part of our growing ceramics community!

### ***Arts for All – Midweek Creative Space with Gary***

If you're looking for a relaxed way to spend a couple of creative hours midweek, our Arts for All session with Gary could be just the thing.

Held on **Wednesdays from 1–3pm**, this friendly, informal class offers a welcoming space to explore a wide range of materials and techniques. Whether you enjoy

drawing, watercolour, acrylics, or simply want to try something new, you're free to work at your own pace and follow your own interests.

Gary is there throughout the session to offer gentle, one-to-one support whenever you need it - helping you build confidence, develop skills, and enjoy the process of making art in a relaxed environment.

With materials provided and a supportive group atmosphere, it's a great opportunity to experiment, learn, and connect with others who share a love of creativity.

We currently have a few spaces available for new members, so why not come along and see what you can create?

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

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.



## Exhibitions

### Our Exhibitions – Past, Present & Upcoming

At NAC, we host a changing programme of exhibitions showcasing work from a wide range of artists and creatives. There is always something new to explore, with current and upcoming shows offering fresh inspiration throughout the year.

If you've missed one of our exhibitions, you can still view a selection of past shows virtually on our website - so you can catch up anytime, from anywhere.

We look forward to welcoming you in person or online to experience what's on at NAC.

### What's on Now?

Irene's exhibition has only been open for a few days, but it's already proving hugely popular with visitors, who have been leaving lots of lovely comments about the work.

We're also delighted to share that several pieces have already sold - a wonderful early response to a truly engaging collection.

If you haven't had a chance to visit yet, don't miss it. This is a beautiful exhibition that's already capturing attention, and it's well worth seeing in person while it's here at NAC.

## What's Coming Next?

Our Summer Exhibition is just around the corner, and it's shaping up to be a real celebration of creativity here at NAC!

We'll be showcasing a brilliant mix of paintings, ceramics, and crafts made by our very own members - so expect plenty of variety, personality, and inspiration all in one place.

It's a fantastic chance to see what everyone's been working on, cheer on fellow makers, and maybe even spark a few new ideas for your own

projects too. Whether you're already part of the Studio or just love seeing local creativity in action, this one is not to be missed.

Make sure you put it in your diary—you won't want to miss it!

## A Celebration of Creative Journeys – New Exhibition at NAC

This upcoming exhibition is something a little different - and really special.

It's all about showing how we grow as artists over time. Featuring "before and after" work from our members, this exhibition gives a rare and honest look at creative development, from early experiments to more confident, finished pieces.

It takes courage to share your journey, and we're incredibly proud of those taking part. Not everyone feels comfortable showing their early work, but here, members are generously opening that up to inspire and encourage others - especially those just starting out.

It's a chance to see progression, celebrate progress, and remind ourselves that every artist starts somewhere.

A must-see exhibition full of honesty, encouragement, and inspiration.



## 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:

74B Front Street, Newbiggin-by-the-Sea, NE64 6QD  
27 Gibson Street, Newbiggin-by-the-Sea, NE64 6UY  
info@newbigginartscentre.org  
07766 856 365



## 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.