	Minutes of **Suffolk Craft Society AGM** **Sunday 5 October 2025 11am** **Constable Memorial Hall** **Gandish Road East Bergholt** **Suffolk CO7 6TP**
Attending Anstee-Parry, Mary Bowmaker, Juliet (Chair) Bryan, Terry Carter, Lin Chester, Liz (Vice -Chair) Constable, Cathy D'Arcy, Cathy Dedman, Nicci (Treasurer) Garcia, Paul Gladwell, Raeleen Goodall, Moira Grant, Noreen Hansen, Greta Hines, Susi Holt, Ruth Levitt, Diane McEvoy-Swift, Heidi Madder, Sheila Marshall, Arabella Maxfield, Helen Papworth, Mark Pirie, Claire (Secretary designate] Reynolds, Kate Rolfe, Jo Rowe, Nicholas Simmons, Paul Stroh-Rubens, Ursula Winteringham, Toby Woodcock, Sarah (Secretary)	**Apologies** Baker, Mavina Bartram, David Carter, Tony Dane, Alison Freer, Sally (Honorary Member) Fryer, Jean (Honorary Member) Gaylard, Clare Gidney, Cindy Germain, Tim Khan, Hassina Nutbeem, Jenny Pasteur, Sarah (Friend) Schomberg, Pam (Honorary Member) Schwegmann-Fielding, Anne Tatham, Neville Thane, Sarah (Vice President) Wenban, Peter (Friend)

1. Welcome and Apologies

Juliet Bowmaker (Chair) welcomed members and noted the list of apologies above.

2. Minutes of AGM 2024

Members had received the Minutes of the AGM held on 22 August 2024 prior to the meeting. The minutes would be revised with the correct spelling of Mary Anstee-Parry's name and to enter Noreen Grant as an attendee.

The 2024 AGM Minutes were proposed by Mary Anstee-Parry and seconded by Susi Hines-agreed *nem con.*

3. Report from the Chair and announcements for 2025.

Members had received the Chair's written report dated August 2025 (Appendix A) prior to the meeting. The Chair gave an additional update at the meeting:

i. The Ickworth exhibition team did an excellent job, curating 650 pieces over 3 day set up. The turnover was over £20,000 and together with the new £15 exhibition fee per exhibitor, the show returned a profit of over £4,000.

ii. An Exhibition Working Party led by Sarah Woodcock would review issues raised from the latest show, including displaying books, considering limiting the number of pieces each member could submit to exhibit, and manage exhibitor expectations.

iii. The Chair had met with Harry Young at Snape Maltings and pleased to confirm the bench by Tim Germain would be installed on the Hepworth Lawn at the Maltings before the end of the financial year, five years after it was initially suggested.

iv. The Chair had held an initial meeting with the Society of Designer Craftsmen to outline the brief for a joint project for 2026 with the outcomes exhibited at the 2026 Ickworth Show and a Society of Designer Craftsmen Show in November 2026. Members would receive more information in due course.

v. Pleased to announce that the Committee had agreed to grant Honorary Membership to Ursula Stroh-Rubens.

vi. The Chair confirmed they would be stepping down as Chair of the Society by May 2026. Juliet thanked the members for a very challenging but stimulating 4 years and will leave with lots of happy memories.

Within the written report (Appendix A) the Chair had reported on shows in the previous financial year:

vii. In May 2024 the Society showed at The Minories, Colchester, attempting to reach an audience in Essex and southwest Suffolk. The Society struggled to attract footfall and made a slight loss overall.

viii. In August 2024 the second show at Ickworth was blighted by lack of a working lift until after the setup of the show but this venue produced the most successful show in 2024, helped by being open daily and overlapping with Open Heritage Week.

ix. Twenty three Makers exhibited at Made London in October 2024, based at One Marylebone, a converted Sir John Soane church, but despite a grant of £800 from the Friends, the Society made a loss.

x. The show at the Guildhall in Bury St Edmunds gained more sales than the previous year and was becoming a fixture in West Suffolk's calendar.

xi. Turnover from all shows gave just under £36,000 for the Society and £24,132 was paid to Makers.

xii. The Chair complimented and thanked the show organisers and other key personnel for their hard work in raising the Society's profile.

xiii. The Chair's Report also gave and update on the Society's Small Grants Scheme with the first award of £500 to Moira Goodall to purchase new studio equipment.

xiv. The Report noted nine new members had been elected to the Society in the past year.

4. Report from the Vice Chair

Members had received the Vice-Chair's written report dated September 2025 (Appendix B) prior to the meeting/

Liz Chester, Vice Chair, thanked all those members who had gone above and beyond this year in the running of the Society.

It was noted that membership of the Committee was for 3 years and essential there was a turnover to bring fresh ideas and ensure people did not get burnout. If any member was interested in joining the Committee please let a member of the Committee know.

The Vice Chair thanked the Chair for their work in pushing the Society and trying new things.

5. Financial Reports and adoption of accounts to the year end March 2025

Members had received the following financial reports (Appendix C) ahead of the meeting:

Within the Treasurer's written report it was noted:

i. The Society continued to make a loss (£6,019) in 2023-24.

ii. The application administration fee to join the Society rose from £10 to £15.

iii. The online shop had slow sales but £13 profit had been made. Further thought was needed about marketing this facility. Even with increased subscriptions the Society's current membership did not cover the annual fixed costs.

iv. Current bank balances as at 31 August 2025: Barclays Business account £9,384, Premium account £26,329

v. The Friends made a profit of £804 from subscriptions and raffle tickets sales. Current bank balances as at 31 August 2025 Barclays Community account £2,184, Premium account £13,013.

The Accounts and Financial Report were approved, proposed by Liz Chester, seconded Toby Winteringham; approved *nem con*.

6. Appointment of Independent Examiners for the financial year end to March 2025.

The meeting was advised that Altorian, Chartered Accountants (Suite 1, Dairy Barn Mews, Summers Park, Manningtree, CO11 2BZ) were willing to act for the Society again; proposed by Paul Simmons, seconded Nicci Dedman, approved *nem con*.

7. Subscription rates for 2025

The Chair confirmed the increase of subscriptions from £75 to £100 had made a big difference and was helping to make inroads into the Society's previous losses. The meeting noted subscription rates would remain at £100 for 2026.

8. Election to the SCS Committee and other SCS vacancies.

The meeting was advised Ruth Holt and Alison Dane were retiring from the Committee at this AGM after many years and at the end of their current three-year term.

The Committee recommended Moira Goodall and Nicholas Rowe be elected as new Committee members. Proposed by Paul Simmons and seconded by Mary Anstee-Parry, agreed *nem con*.

The meeting was advised that Sarah Woodcock would be stepping down as Secretary after 3 years in post but would remain on the Committee. The Chair thanked Sarah for all the support as Secretary.

A gift and flowers were given to Ruth Holt, Alison Dane and Sarah Woodcock in thanks for their hard work for the Society.

The Chair confirmed Claire Pirie was appointed as the new Secretary.

The meeting noted the position of Vice-Chair for 2025-26 would be confirmed at the next Committee Meeting to be held 29 October 2025. **Post Meeting Note:** Liz Chester confirmed Vice Chair for 2025-2026 by the Committee.

9. Re-election of Trevor Pickett as Patron

As required in the Constitution, members confirmed Trevor Pickett as Patron for the ensuing year. The Chair thanked him for his support of the Society. Proposed Ruth Holt, seconded Toby Winteringham, agreed *nem con.*

10. Proposal to add a Conduct Policy to the Byelaws

The proposed Conduct Policy (Appendix D) had been circulated to members ahead of the meeting. Cathy Constable proposed, seconded by Arabella Marshal, that a Conduct Policy as drafted be added to the Byelaws of the Society: agreed *nem con*.

11. Report from Friends Group

Paul Simmons reported that Friends' membership numbers continued to fall (35 at September 2025) but the existing Friends were loyal and very supportive. All members were asked to encourage visitors to exhibitions to become a Friend as they received 10% discount on all purchases.

The annual Raffle continued to be a popular fundraiser bringing money to fund new initiatives of the Society. The 2025 Friends Raffle had £528 ticket sales to date, and the tickets would be drawn on the last day of the Guildhall.

Paul Simmons notified the members present that he would be retiring from office at the 2026 AGM and a replacement was needed.

10. AOB

None declared to the Secretary.

The meeting was followed by an Open Forum (notes below) and finished at 12.37pm.

Open Forum Notes:

The following points were raised:

Ickworth Show

i. The number of pieces each member had displayed was raised by several members. Once member had submitted 11 pieces ranging in price however only the 4 more expensive ones were displayed and did not know if this impacted sales. As there was a £15 exhibition fee some members felt there should be a better balance of the number of pieces displayed by each exhibitor.

ii. Issue regarding the safe storage and respect of work in storage as other pieces were piled on top of boxed delicate work. It was noted that the Exhibition Organiser had resolved the issue within hours once notified. All members were asked to respect others work.

iii. The way/location of how work was displayed was also raised by several members. For future exhibitions, members with specific display requirements should leave a note with their work so the curating team were aware.

iv. Suggested a flyer be given to all those entering the National Trust site with details of the Exhibition including a map of its location within the grounds.

v. Suggested that makers details be displayed/available so visitors could learn about the makers/work which would support sales.

vi. The amount and quality of some of the display equipment was raised.

vii. The Curators were congratulated and thanked for a successful show. The meeting noted that it was a difficult job to balance pieces to ensure the exhibition worked as a whole. As confirmed earlier in the meeting, an Exhibition Working Group would be set up Sarah Woodcock to review all points raised to shape future exhibitions. All members were welcome to provide feedback to the Group.

M.A.K.E.R. Newsletter

viii. Noted that exhibitions are advertised to those on the Society's mailing list via the Newsletter which is issued every two months.

ix. Ruth Holt confirmed she was stepping down as Editor of the Newsletter and new volunteers were required to develop the newsletter. Nicholas Rowe volunteered to provide the technical support using the Mailchimp software. Moira Goodall volunteered to be the new Editor with support from Cathy Constable.

East Suffolk Exhibition Venues

x. Venues for an East Suffolk exhibition were discussed. It was noted that following the Peter Pears Gallery refurbishment/remodelling the Ballroom Arts Gallery was too expensive and not taking bookings for 2026. The meeting was advised that locations in Framlingham, Woodbridge, Flatford and Ipswich had been considered by the Committee.

xi. The possibility of exhibiting in Norwich, Cambridge and other West Suffolk venues was also raised.

xii. It was noted that the Committee planned to continue exhibitions at NT Ickworth (Summer – including Heritage Open Week) and the Guildhall Hall, Bury St Edmunds (November) but not the Minories, Colchester (Spring).

xiii. The Chair confirmed they were in early discussions with Snape Maltings regarding a Spring 2026 exhibition. The merits of the 3 exhibition venues at Snape Maltings was discussed. Members would be advised when 2026 exhibition venues had been booked by the Committee.

Online Shop

xiv. A question relating to pieces exclusively kept for the Society's online shop was raised. It was confirmed that if a piece of work was advertised for sale on the online shop then it must be available, however if there were multiples of the same piece that was acceptable.

The Open Forum was closed at 12:55.