

**NPA Annual General Meeting (AGM)**  
**On Saturday, 12<sup>th</sup> October 2024 at 13:00**  
**Kirklands Community Centre, Menston**

[Election of Committee members](#)

We have some procedural items to get through before the reports. Please ensure that you have signed in to the meeting on the attendance sheet. We have now to propose and second the new members to the committee. The most expedient way of doing this is for two committee members to propose and second the appointments.

The new members are:

- Nadine Blakemore as chair
- Graham Norton as vicechair
- Jennifer Gourley as Membership secretary, noting that Jennifer would like to retire when her 3 years term comes to an end on 22nd March 2025
- Rebecca Brown as Secretary
- Treasurer - tbd

[Chair Report](#)

It's been another busy year for the NPA. The membership has now grown by 140 to 973 since the AGM last year (2023 membership grew by 182 to 833). In addition, we are showing a very healthy balance sheet which is mainly due to the increase in members and some very successful events.

To cope with this large membership, we have implemented a system called LoveAdmin which is an online platform that connects automated payments, bookings, helps with contact management, communications and reporting. Whilst not everything went to plan, I think the system is now bedding in and we are seeing the benefits of it. This includes the easy way to email our members, setting up and paying for events and downloading of financial reports. More work is still needed to standardize the data, but we are on a good path.

[Membership report:](#)

Since our membership secretary can't be here today, I am now including parts of her report here:

It is now a full year since Northern Potters Association moved from a paper-based membership system to an automated system held on the Love Admin platform. The Love Admin platform has worked for booking events, emailing members and taking payments by Direct Debit from members who have set up their mandate, it has, however, created a huge amount of extra work standardising the data copied over from the spreadsheets as well as adjusting and learning about the new platform which we perceived as stressful and frustrating.

All members have now an account on the LoveAdmin system and can update their data without the need of contacting the membership secretary. Please note, that changes to the email address used for sign up is only possible via an admin to avoid fraud.

Total membership on the system: 973 (plus 11 admin roles such as membership secretary)  
New members since October 2023: 140  
Nr of members who have cancelled their membership: 44  
Nr of members who still need to activate their mandate: 502

Single members: 844  
Business Members: 52  
Full time student members: 12  
Honorary members: 6  
Please note that the system cannot handle join members and those who used to be signed up with this type of membership will receive an email soon.

There are a few more actions/ issues that need addressing relating to the database on the new system which our membership secretary has spelled out. Barbara Wood has been helping us address them and will continue to work with us.  
A special thank you goes to Barbara and Michelle Park for helping us to get to where we are.

Jen has made it clear that the numbers are subject to change and will be corrected when we address all the actions she has identified.

Members can now choose to be part of more than one region, to receive local news. This means that the numbers of the regional members are not easily relatable to the overall membership.

There is a small number (58) of members who have not given consent to our GDPR policy. There is a large number of members who need to update their data still on the system in regards to consent. This will be addressed asap.

190 members have opted to receive their magazine via pdf only (compared to 119 last year). Like many other organizations too, we have so far sent the pdf magazine to all members though. There are 61 members who have yet to let us know their preferences. Any leftover magazines from the print-run are sent to Lyn Grant and are distributed in the goody bag for Potters Camp or used as marketing material for new members.

#### Supplier discounts:

This year, we were able to renew some membership discounts, as mentioned in our newsletter. These are:

CTM in Doncaster – 5%

Potclays – 5%

Clayman Supplies Ltd. – 5%

Scarva – 10%

Potteryworks – 10%

Sedgefield Pottery Supplies – 5% and 10% for clay collected from the shop

### Bursary Scheme:

The bursary scheme has been running for the 4. year and was developed to enable our members to access NPA funds directly. It is funded from excess funds that are not required for the running of the NPA. Bev Seth has taken over the role of Bursary coordinator earlier this year and collects all application for the relevant meeting. Many Thanks to her.

The total amount of funds has been increased from £1000 to £2000, and members can apply for funds up to £250 each. For this FY, we will account for them from FY to FY rather than AGM to AGM, this will make the financial accounts much easier.

All the application documents can be found on our website and the committee considers each application on its merits during quarterly meetings on a first come first served basis. This year we started to publish deadlines for applications on our website, so that the committee can discuss them at the next meeting and a decision can be made more quickly. This change was implemented following a discussion at our last AGM.

Another criteria for successful applicants of the bursary scheme is to share their newfound knowledge with our members via an article for the newsletter and only then, the bursary would be paid out. In a recent discussion, the committee agreed to change this, so that applicants receive 50% of the bursary upfront and the rest once an article has been received.

The below table shows the applications since last AGM.

Date Application Received	Applicant	Application Amount £	Financial Year	AGM peric	Decision Made	Approved – Y/N	Amount Awarded £
04/09/2023	Ruth Dunning	280.00	2023/24	Sept 2023/24	03/10/2023	Y	250.00
24/03/2024	Rebecca Brown / Perry	193.50	2023/24	Sept 2023/24	24/03/2024	Y	193.50
24/03/2024	Kim Graham	131.00	2023/24	Sept 2023/24	24/03/2024	Y	131.00
24/03/2024	Adam Cowdill	170.37	2023/24	Sept 2023/24	24/03/2024	Y	170.37
24/03/2024	Michael Spoor	250.00	2023/24	Sept 2023/24	24/03/2024	N	
01/07/2024	Lynne Rose	250.00	2023/24	Sept 2023/24	29/08/2024	Y	250.00
01/07/2024	Elaine Lim- Newton	240.00	2023/24	Sept 2023/24	29/08/2024	Y	240.00
01/07/2024	Jenny Thomas	?	2023/24	Sept 2023/24	29/08/2024	Y	
01/07/2024	Fiona Reid	250.00	2023/24	Sept 2023/24	29/08/2024	More info required	

Bev has since been in touch with Jenny Thomas and she wished to ask for £250.

### Exhibitions and Events:

Lots of events and exhibitions are now well established and all our regions are busy, which is wonderful to see. A lot of these events are advertised in the magazine (4 times a year), the new e-newsletter (4 times a year), the private Facebook group and open Instagram and Facebook pages. We have also added many events to our website on a regular basis.

Booking for NPA events is available via the LoveAdmin system and for external events, such as Potters Camp, we used Eventbrite.

The reason our own membership system was unable to handle this event for non-members is the need for setting up a direct debit, which we agreed would inconvenient people not associated with the NPA. This is mainly due because NPA is not a registered charity and as such we are not able to set up PayPal to make the checkout process easier.

#### Potters Camp:

This is our second Potters Camp, and I am pleased to say that we have sold 18 tickets more compared to last year.

I would like to say a big Thank you to all our volunteers, helpers as well as our sponsors - Northern Kilns and Potclays.

#### Regions:

This year, we have welcomed new coordinators take over the East region, South East and North West. Welcome to all the new coordinators, and a big thank you to our other regional coordinators. Any here? Please can I have a round of applause, please?

Over the past year, we have established regular meetings with all the regional coordinators, held a week before the committee meeting, to aid any decision making as well as an active What's App group.

#### Website:

We have spent a lot of time over the past years working on ways how we can improve ways of working, and offer valuable information to our members. Our website has grown with this and has expanded with pages now linking to our membership portal LoveAdmin, reasons to join, events across the regions, links to book an event, marketing of courses available to the public, as well as previous magazines, our artist pages and links to suppliers, galleries and other ceramic associations. A big Thank you to Jack Hardie and Chris Barnes to keep this up to date.

#### Information storage:

Over the past year Jack Hardie and I have set up a Google Drive and 6 committee members have access. This replaces storage of NPA material on private computers making us compliant with GDPR regulations.

#### Publicity:

Our private Facebook group now has 524 members (up from 450 last year) and is very active. Admin are Lyn Grant, Tracy Dryden-Jones and I.

I would like to encourage anyone who is organising an event to post events in the group as well as letting us know so we can publish it in the e-newsletter and magazine. Also, just to note that some of our regions have their own regional Facebook pages and private groups which are lovely to see.

In addition, the NPA now has an open Facebook page where posts can be shared publicly and everyone can post and comment. This was a request from members for a while and the group was set up at in Spring this year.

On the Instagram front, I can report that the NPA main account has grown to 2308 followers (up from 1937) and that many regions have set up their own Instagram accounts. Admins are currently Tracy Dryden-Jones and I.

#### Newsletter & Magazine:

The NPA News continues to be of a very high standard and I would like to thank Chris for the time he spends making this newsletter so good 4 times a year. Also, a big Thank you to all our contributors and in particular our regional coordinators for their continued support.

One big change this year has been the reduction of the magazine from 6 to 4 and the introduction of the e-newsletter via email to all members. I would like to encourage all members to check the LoveAdmin system so that they are receiving their magazine correctly, either via post or via email. Please note, that we need to share your address with the printer and if members have not given their permission to our GDPR policy, magazines can not be sent out via post. At present, we email out 180 magazines to members as a pdf via LoveAdmin

Here are the notes from Chris:

- NPA Magazine for August/September/October 2024 was published with a print run of 700 copies printed by Post-Haste Ltd. They will continue to print and deliver up to 750 copies to the mailing house, for £925.
- Nite Direct Marketing continue to deliver the newsletter to subscribers in white recycled paper envelopes.
- The cost for sending out one issue was £1,293.18 in June. The increase from about £830 per issue last year was due to a rise in Royal Mail postage costs. Invoices are now sent directly to the treasurer.
- NPA member Donnas Peterson has been working with me to edit the November issue of the magazine. She will take over as editor when I step down after this meeting.
- The PDF magazine continues to be sent to members via email link. This is now done by Nadine Blakemore, our Chair, using the LoveAdmin database.
- Now that the magazine is a quarterly publication advertising income has decreased by a third - 6 editions a year is now 4 editions. Present per issue prices:
  - o Small ads (30 words) Free to members
  - o Boxed adverts
    - colour 1/2 pp £30 1/4 pp £18 1/8 pp £10
    - B&W 1/2 pp £20 1/4 pp £15 1/8 pp £8
    - Size 176Wx106H 86Wx106H 86Wx53H

Discussion points:

- The present advert rates are very low, having remained the same since before Joan Hardie's time as editor. Do we want to raise the charges for per issue advertising?
- Yearly advertisers are charged 5X the per issue rate. This is in effect a price rise as there are now only four issues per year.
- Now that the association has an email news bulletin and a magazine, going forward it might be advantageous to change the magazine editor's email address at some point. At the moment it is npanews@northern-potters.co.uk – This email address could be retired or become the email newsletter address and the magazine editor could have something like magazine@northern-potters.co.uk.

Call for contributions: As usual I would like to encourage more contributions. Don't be shy - the newsletter is here to be used by our potters' community, so write about the sort of things you would like to read about yourself.

**Magazine copy dates for 2025:**

20 Jan for Feb/March/April,  
21 April for May/June/July,  
21 July for August/Sep/Oct,  
20 Oct for Nov/Dec/Jan 2025-26.

### Volunteering:

I would like to say a big thank you to all volunteers who have given up their time for the NPA, and especially:

- Michelle Park who has stepped down after many years of volunteering, including in the role of treasurer.
- Nicola Roden who had to resign due to ill health
- Lynne Rose as Vice Chair
- Chris Barnes as editor
- Lyn Clarke who stepped down after many years as regional coordinator East
- Kathryn Stevens who stepped down as regional coordinator North West but remains on the committee, helping with Potters Camp and Mudfest.
- Juliet Myers who stepped down as regional coordinator South West after many years of volunteering

Jennifer Gourley, our membership secretary is stepping down after her 3 year term and a big thank you to her for sticking with us and the new membership system. We are now actively looking for someone to take over this role. Full training will be given and if you have a few hours to spare, please get in touch.

Many Thanks to Nog who stepped into the role of Vice Chair, Lisa Pritchard and Liz Anspokes for taking over South West, Bob Park for taking over North West, Sylvia Schroer for taking over East, Tony Ovenell for taking on the e-newsletter, Rebecca Brown for becoming secretary, Wendy Wall for taking over events, Pamela Thorby and Tracy Dryden-Jones for helping out when help was needed, to the team at the South East region for being so proactive, Donnas Peterson for taking over as editor and everybody who I might have missed. Apologies if I did.

Nadine Blakemore (NPA chair)