

NPA Annual General Meeting (AGM)

**On Sunday, 27th September 2026 at 13:30 at Potters Camp
Hutchinson Hobbs, Holdensfield Farm, Yarm, TS15 9PB**

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. Our committee currently consist of the following members:

The members are:

1. Chair - Nadine Blakemore (elected)
2. Vicechair (vacant)
3. Secretary – Ela Trent (to be elected)
4. Membership secretary - Wendy Wall (elected)
5. Treasurer - Beverley Fallowfield (elected)
6. NPA magazine Editor - Ceri Jones, Laura Bigot and Helen Almond (to be elected)
7. E-newsletter Editor – vacant
8. Social Media lead - vacant
9. Website lead - vacant
10. Potters Camp lead - Tiffany Prescott
11. Events team: Wendy Wall, Kate Stride, Mo Schofield with help from Sylvia Schroer and Alison Young
12. Bursary coordinator – Sarah Vanic (to be elected)
13. Lyn Grant - committee member
14. Gerry Grant - committee member
15. Kathryn Stevens - committee member
16. Liz Carlise – committee member

Chair Report

In this report, you will find a general update on everything that has gone on during the past year here at the NPA committee.

Another year has gone, how? Time flies. It was another busy year for the committee with many volunteers stepping away, but luckily many stepping up. It's been fabulous to see that we have a very good and stable membership system in place and – Wendy – our membership secretary is an absolute superstar. Also a big thank you to Bev – our treasurer. I know all positions are important but to the running of our NPA these two are absolutely high priority and it's very reassuring that we had stability over the past year. Overall, it feels that we are in much less stormy weather and, having learned from the past years, we have put a lot of safeguards in place on all possible areas, in case a volunteer steppes away for whatever reason.

The one area we just got started on last year was our website. The plan is to integrate it better with the T4 platform and update it. Unfortunately, that did not happen because we got interrupted due to health issues. That said, we have now formed a new sub-committee and are on it again. I am pleased to say, that we also have put measures in place to make

sure we don't lose access and/ or the domain (you would be surprised how often that happens).

Regions

As you might remember, and due to the large area we cover, the NPA used to be divided into six regions. Each region had a team of coordinators who organised events and stayed in touch with you, our members. Over the past five years, it has become increasingly difficult to find enough volunteers to support this structure, which has meant that only the East and South East regions had active coordinators. We regularly received queries from new members about which region to choose and how the system works. These questions have become harder to answer, especially without regional coordinators to welcome new members. So it was decided to abolish the regional structure and replace it with an Events Subcommittee made up of former regional coordinators.

All events are now set up and advertised via T4, and all members can book onto any event, regardless of where it is held. This gives everyone the same opportunity to take part. Some events, such as the Potters Circle, will continue to be held online, meaning that even those of you living in more remote parts of the NPA region can easily join in.

Fraud

Yet again, we have seen a lot of fraudulent activity and have been subject to a really bad scam that saw us losing money from our account. Luckily, the Co-op bank completely refunded everything that was taken. This has led us to remove the names of all committee members from the website making it harder for fraudsters to target us directly.

Overall finances

As reported last year, the NPA is still running with a large surplus of funds, mainly left from the Covid years when all events stopped. As before, we have used these funds for the bursaries, sponsoring lots of events as well as reducing the ticket price for this Potters Camp. With our 50th anniversary looming next year (huh?), there will be many more events planned and I would encourage you to take part. We are also thinking about sponsoring some charities. All decisions on how money will be spent, are taken at the committee meetings so if you have any suggestions, feel free to email me.

Volunteers

It is normal for an organisation that relies on volunteers to have a relatively high turnover, it's part of the deal. One can only help out when there is time, and time can be very precious. We are always looking for helpers and in our 50th anniversary year we are especially looking for members to help with organising events.

A recent campaign to recruit more volunteers was very successful and the following members have said that they are able to help:

- Heather White - website
- Cristina Moldovan – e- news
- Kritika Ram - events
- Katch Skinner - events
- Sally Rogers – events

- Karen Morrissey - events
- Erica Renzi
- Sarah Hall

You might remember, last year we had to pay for a temporary secretary and treasurer and I am pleased to say that we now have volunteers covering these important posts.

I have been chair since taking over from John Cook in January 2022 and it's been an absolute pleasure to hold this position for the past 4 years. I feel that we have achieved a lot during these years. One very big part of my tenure was our move away from scattered Excel spreadsheets to the LoveAdmin/ T4 platform. I know some of you have had your problems with it but it has certainly made the lives of our volunteers a lot easier. It's secure, GDPR-compliant, and it means our volunteers no longer have to juggle endless versions of documents back and forth via email.

With more than 900 members, our NPA is in a very strong position and I feel it is the right moment to make room for another passionate potter to take over with fresh ideas and energy - but with our Vice Chair position vacant – the question is who will take over?

Membership report from Wendy Wall

In April 2024 the committee took the decision to stop taking payments by standing order and to that end I began sending out emails to all members in the month before their subs were due to inform them of the decision and to forewarn them that their membership would lapse if they didn't set up a direct debit mandate in their members account. Sadly we lost quite a few members during this process but we have consistently gained between 15 and 20 new members every month since we started using Love Admin (now Thrive4).

In April 2025 we decided that since so many members/lapsed members were still paying by standing order that I would send a paper letter (see below) to anyone who was still doing this. There were approximately 250 members. Since I started sending the letters I have had very few replies but standing orders are being cancelled. A few people replied to say that they were no longer making, some agreed to us making a donation to charity on their behalf and a few wanted a refund. 80 were members who had set up their direct debit and forgotten to cancel the standing order. I still have November – April 27 to send out.

Statistics

	2026	2025
Total number of members on Thrive4	930	864
Honorary Members	8	6
Student Members	6	n/a

Day to Day work of Membership Secretary

- Responding to emails from members,
- Sending Welcome email and Supplier discount email to new members

- Checking student applications
- Other issues which arise.
- Liaise with Magazine Editor and produce list of members requiring a paper magazine

Supplier discounts:

This year, we were able to renew some membership discounts, as mentioned on the back of our August magazine. Please have a look at pages 26 to 27 for more details. Here is a quick reminder of them all:

CTM in Doncaster – 5%

Scarva – 10%

Pottery crafts – 10%

Potclays – 10%

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

Kiln Linings – 10% (on orders over £200)

In the Making – 15% on aprons only

Whenever you are ordering and whether you are ordering online or by phone, make sure you know what the full price is for each item. Contact the supplier sales team if the discount has not been correctly applied. Please remember that suppliers offer discount in goodwill and at their discretion. To help the NPA maintain positive supplier relations, politely request any available discounts or vouchers when ordering.

Treasurer Report from Bev Fallowfield

The financial statement for 2025-26 was audited by Steve Wood FCMA and a copy of the detailed statement will be sent via email to all members. It will also be shared in the next issue of the NPA magazine and on the website under the “documents” tab.

- At the end of 2025-26 FY the NPA total assets were: £30.843.56
- NET operating income in 2025-26 FY was £36.22

Main sources of income and expenditure summary

a) Bursaries

Total amount paid out: £1.645,00.

As Bursaries are paid in two instalments and often across consecutive financial years the paid-out figure may be different to the total amount awarded

b) Membership

Total membership NET income: £22.841,29

c) Advertising

Total advertising income: £1.808,44

d) Events

Total events income: £11715.81

Total events expenditure (cost of delivery): £18.626,97

Net income from events: -£6.911,16

Additional points to note:

- QuickBooks accounting software was used for the bookkeeping and accounts maintenance for the 2025-26 FY. The software ensures consistent and accurate financial record keeping and enables more in-depth analysis of the NPA's income and expenditure.

Bursary Scheme:

The bursary scheme has been running for the 5. 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. Sarah Vanic collected all applications for the relevant meeting. Many Thanks to her.

The total amount of funds has been £2000 per FY, and members can apply for funds up to £250 each. 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. At the end of the calendar year, we will publish deadlines for applications on our website, so that the committee can discuss them at the next meeting and a decision can be made in good time.

We have seen a steady decline in the number of applications and only £1.645 have been use this past year. Our new magazine team will run a feature in the next edition to remind members that this funding is available to them.

Exhibitions and Events from the Events team

This year we have continued to run several events that have been running in what was the SE region. The difference this year has been that they have been open to all the membership due to the abolishment of the regions.

Cromford Ceramics Fair took place in August this year. 35 members paid £35 each for a table in the marquee which is provided by Cromford Mill. This event was well attended and feedback was on the whole positive. There is a gallery onsite that features several NPA members and they have suggested a collaboration and a larger event in 2027.

Art in the Gardens, Sheffield is a weekend art fair taking place in the first weekend of September that has had an NPA presence since 2017. This year 13 members displayed their work in the marquee that we hire from AitG. It was a fun weekend and some people saw some brisk sales.

Art at the House will have taken place by the time of the Potters Camp but is about to take place next weekend on the 19/20th September. 16 members will display their work in gazebos in the woods at Cliffe House in Shepley.

HEART Ceramics Fair took place in Leeds in march 2026. This was a new show for the NPA and feedback was positive. We are hoping to repeat the event on a larger scale in 2027. York potters Fair has opened for applications and will take place in December

We hope to continue with these events and would like to hear from members who might like to run events throughout the NPA region.

Potters Circle was conceived with the idea that members who couldn't attend events in person could attend online events. They have been a great success and we have had 7 talks so far. Approximately 40 people attend the events on the day of broadcast but many more sign up to get the recording.

Classes

Classes have continued to sell well with one class notably selling out within 7 seconds of being listed! Since the last AGM we have run classes by Rebecca Appleby, Brendon Hesmondhaugh, Mary Sewell and Paul Smith as well as a very well received class in making brushes which we hope to repeat.

After it was decided to give up on having regions we realised that we would have to have a different approach to putting on events for our members. To this end we contacted members by email asking for people to run classes on behalf of the NPA. The idea is that NPA members will run a class for NPA members. They provide the venue and the expertise and we list the events on the T4 shop and also subsidise places for our members. We got quite a few replies but not many were ready to go. So we decided to start with 4 trial classes. We have given each class a subsidy of £15 per person and they have been listed in the T4 shop.

Mary Sewell's class booked up almost straight away but sales have been slower with the other classes. Jill Ford's class was originally mid-week and didn't sell but when we changed the date it sold out straight away.

Jill Ford – originally Aug 11th changed to September 12th - 5/5 Mary Sewell – Oct 4th 5/5
Mike Scown – September 19th 3/10 Lizzie Pickup – Oct 4th 1/10

We have some classes that will be ready for next year and we are still looking for more. We have agreed to pay the tutor regardless of how many people book onto the course but if no one books we would cancel. We would like to run the trial for a year to see how it works out.

As a team we are still trying to find ways that we can support members all over the region to put on events. At the moment there are only three of us on the sub-committee. We also have fantastic people in Leeds and York. We have another member who is based in Lincoln and we are hoping that she will coordinate events there but we could really do with more volunteers especially in the NW and SW.

The big challenge for next year is the 50th anniversary and how do we celebrate.

Potters Camp from Tiffany Prescott

This is our fourth Potters Camp, and having started in the West in 2023, East in 2024, south east in 2025 we have today been invited to the north east. And it's a 2 day festival – just as some members have wished for at last year's AGM. A special Thank you to Tiffany Prescott

for your lead and all the volunteers for your help, especially Lyn, Gerry, Liz, Chrissie, Wendy and Mo.

Currently we have over 40 people with paid in advance tickets- we have promoted it constantly alongside the festival via emails and social media. Due to combining it with the festival of NPA members exhibiting could very well have affected the numbers booked but many people also have said they are away at the end of September.

Workshops

We have 6 pottery camp workshops for the attendees which will take place in the Workshop Tent – while the speakers and presentations will take place in the other tent.

Goody Bags

- We have had some incredibly generous people donate to the goody bags and supporting the festival in other ways.
- Cromartie have offered a Gift Card of £100 for the Joan Hardie Award.
- Potclays have offered clay for the Pottery Camp workshops and have also supported the free workshops offered by Mayco led by Todd Hickerson.
- Mayco has provided free workshops and glaze and brochures.
- Ceramind Tools have given a £50 gift card and free rib tools/clay stamps for the goody bags.
- Sponge Stamper Tools have provided a pottery paint stamp for all goody bags.

I would like to propose that we offer a free advert for our supporters or good coverage in the article for the next NPA magazine to thank them for their generosity. And we have decided to run with #NPAPC2026 for promos on social media.

The budget is still as originally planned.

Website

Unfortunately, our website coordinator had to step down for health reasons and we had a few month where we struggled. However, Jack Hardie has kindly stepped in and helped out.

In our last committee meeting, we discussed website management challenges and I can confirm that the domain is now payable from the NPA account rather than any individual member. Jack has also shared the log in details with Nadine, so we will have access in case of emergency. A sub-committee was set up to look at potential changes and further integration with the Thrive4 app over the coming months.

You might have noticed that all the committee members names have been removed from the website and only the generic email addresses are still there for members and the general public to look up. All committee members names remain published in the magazine for members to know and get in touch with. This measure was taken due to an increased number of spam messages that was specifically targeted at new committee members.

Overall, the website has been a wealth of information, especially the events section. With the calendar page especially helpful. Also our Artist page remains up to date thanks to Jack Hardie and Wendy. Many Thanks to everyone involved with the website. If you have any suggestions for our forthcoming review – please do get in touch.

Information storage

Our google drive is now fully set up and most NPA material is stored on the drive in the cloud. Various members of the committee have access. Admin are Jack Hardie and Nadine.

Publicity

Sadly, Dawn Phillips had to stepped away from the publicity role and the Instagram and Facebook accounts were taken over by our fabulous events team. This goes hand in hand with advertising for our events and is working well. That said, the team is hoping that some of the new volunteers will be able to help as there is lots to do for the next – our 50th anniversary year.

Just as a reminder, the NPA has a private Facebook group for members only and an open for all Instagram account. All other regional accounts have been closed and archived, mainly because most of them were not active anymore.

Magazine and e-newsletter

We now have two publications our magazine and the e-newsletter. We publish both four times a year, so members receive “post” from us every 2 months.

E-newsletter:

This publication gets send to all members via email. We use this to send out information from the committee or requests for the magazine. We also publish dates for regional events, application deadlines and adverts from members for items for sale or free. Thank you to Tony Ovenell for collating the information until earlier this year and Wendy for helping out when Tony had to step away. We are hoping that Cristina Moldovan will be able to take over soon.

Magazine

Thank you to Chrissie Hunter for being our editor until May 2026 when she handed over to our new editorial team. Here are the notes from them:

May 2026 - Present

- From May 2026, Ceri Jones, Helen Almond & Laura Bigot have taken over, now offering a new editorial team.
- We are continuing to produce a quarterly magazine as before, however we have taken the decision to use a range of articles rather than focusing on a theme for each magazine, this allows more scope for content, and prevents backlogs of unassigned content. This also prevents members becoming despondent, when they don't see their article that they have taken the time to submit.

- The magazine will continue to complement the e-newsletter which is also quarterly; emailed to members during the month following the magazine publication. Currently managed by Wendy Wall, Memberships secretary.

Features - Ceri Jones

- Members are encouraged to submit pottery related articles for the magazine to inspire fellow potters, knowledge exchange, ideas and experiences
- Future and retrospective local and larger events are shared from across the area, including the NPA annual event at Fired & Inspired
- Networking opportunities and Potters Circle online events
- Reports
- New members and spotlight on current members
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NPA Magazine Copy/Publication dates for 2027

Final Copy Date/ Deadline for Ads	Proposed Publication Date
Mon 18 Jan 2027	w/c 08 Feb 2027
Mon 19 Apr 2027	w/c 10 May 2027
Mon 19 Jul 2027	w/c 09 Aug 2027
Mon 18 Oct 2027	w/c 08 Nov 2027

Printing & Distribution - Laura Bigot

- Since taking over the magazine after May, we have printed and distributed one issue of the magazine in August.
- Costings were as below:
- £875.00 for printing with Post-Haste Printers Ltd
- £1,431.86 for distribution with Nite Direct Marketing Ltd
- We printed 700 copies of the magazine, 647 went to members and the leftovers went to advertisers and committee members for administrative and publicity purposes.

Advertising / Diary / Admin - Helen Almond

Advertising

- Current 'per issue prices' remain the same as 2025
- Members' prices/commercial price for 4 or more insertions shown in brackets – there is also a further discount for multiple insertions for members
- Small ads. free to members
- Full Page 176w x 216h £90 (72)
- 1/2 Page 176w x 106h £50 (40)
- 1/4 Page 86w x 106h £30 (24)
- 1/8 Page 86w x 53h £20 (16)
- Full single page Advertorial + ¼ page ad. £110
- Double page Advertorial + ½ page ad. £175
- Deadlines for adverts are as per deadlines outlined above.

Diary & Admin

- The diary is being kept up to date with events taking place across the region.

- Transferring the information into the magazine in its current format has proved somewhat challenging. We will review the existing format and explore ways to streamline the process and make future updates more efficient.

Ongoing software costs:

Microsoft 365 subscription (renewable annually in January) £84.99 incl. VAT

Adobe InDesign subscription (renewable annually in December) £262.51 incl. VAT

Volunteering:

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

Equally, a big THANK YOU to all the volunteers for helping with Potters Camp as well as all the other fabulous people who I might have missed. Apologies if I did.

Nadine Blakemore (NPA chair)

27th September 2026 at Potters Camp