



Annual General Meeting  
Tuesday 19th November 2024  
Held at The Sound Lounge, 216-220 High Street, Sutton, SM1 1NU

## **Minutes**

Those present representing ANS were: Tom Franck, Gemma Baxter, Chris Ellis, Doug Shaw.

Apologies received from Cat Loriggio, Councillor Andrew Jenner, Gwen Wildman, Graham Reed, and David Drane

## **Welcome by The Chair**

The minutes of the 2023 AGM were approved

Our outgoing Chair Tom Franck spoke about ANS in its tenth year. In summary;

Our impact has been wide and varied - we've been able to support bigger projects such as the Wallington Music Festival, Carshalton Artists Open Studios, Folk In The Park. We were the only local charity invited to support the bid for the Cultural Impact Award. We subsequently helped to influence the project through being on the advisory board, and many of our Members were actively involved. We've supported community groups such as Sutton Women's Centre, Friends of Manor Park, and SACCO, and we've helped to enable a host of micro projects designed and led by local artists. Everyone who has received funding from the network was invited to stand for a round of applause.

We need to look to the future and find new ways to work, as our principal funder, the London Borough of Sutton, is ceasing its direct financial support for the charity this year.

Tom gave thanks to everyone who supports the network and thanked the committee and Doug for their ongoing work.

## **Updates & Review of The Year**

Our Vice Chair Gemma Baxter explained that in 2024 we moved from awarding grants every 6 months, to an annual programme. We also introduced a new STEAM themed commission idea, and introduced artist's continuous professional development as an award category for the first time. We heard from recent successful applicants including: Zoe from Quickdraw Stories, Sing Out Sutton, and Mel Simpson (who also shared a short video). Gemma updated us on another successful project delivered by Claire Chandler, and John Dodds enticed us all with the plan that Sutton Filmmakers grant funded project will be edited and ready to view next year. Pia Jaime spoke about her CPD award and the excellent use she has put it to.

Our Programme Manager Doug Shaw briefly explained that ANS had offered 8 artists mentoring for the Arts Council Developing Your Creative Practice programme. We were supported by Dijana Rakovic from CounterPoints Arts and we're grateful for her kindness and expertise.

Doug also spoke briefly about our Collective Roots project, delivered in partnership with Sutton Libraries. We ran 5 drop in conversation/creative workshops and invited citizens to respond creatively to thoughts about home, belonging, and connection. The bar area was decorated with some of the artworks made by participants in the project, and Doug made a presentation of a book



about the project, with a copy given to each participating artist and Gemma Baxter, who was so helpful in designing how the sessions ran.

### **Finances**

Our Treasurer Chris Ellis, provided a finance report, and the appointment of Community Action Sutton as our Independent Examiner for 2024/25 was agreed by a show of hands from Members.

### **Looking forward**

Tom confirmed the committee has agreed to run a grants programme again in 2025 (dates, deadlines, and details to follow), plus we will continue to look for networking opportunities and professional development support.

The change in our funding structure, brought about by the cessation of financial support from the council, means we need to explore new possibilities. Members are invited to contribute ideas.

At this point in the meeting, Tom Franck stood down as Chair, and Gemma Baxter made a thank you presentation to him

### **Election of Officers and Executive Committee for 2024/25**

The following officers indicated their willingness to stand for another term.

Gemma Baxter as Vice Chair

Chris Ellis as Treasurer

In addition, we received nominations for the role of Chair from Margaret Thomas, and a nomination to join the Executive Committee as a Trustee, from Maggie Cooper.

All four of the above nominations were nominated, seconded, then approved by a show of hands.

Our new Chair, Margaret Thomas addressed us briefly, and we look forward to working together in the months and years ahead

No other nominations for Officers or Trustees were received this evening, though we remain keen to hear from people willing to join the team.

We acknowledged and accepted a kind offer from new Member Monica Wraith who is volunteering to help, and we remain keen to hear from Members willing to volunteer.

The meeting was then closed, and we adjourned for a break followed by networking and exchanging ideas.