

# **Artists At Home Constitution as at 31.10.23**

## **Introduction**

Artists At Home (AAH) is a small unincorporated Membership association.

It was founded in 1973 by Julian Trevelyan and Mary Fedden with a few other like-minded artists. Since then, AAH has grown considerably. We have 116 Members currently, but only 97 'Exhibiting Artists' in 2022, with the balance on sabbatical.

Through the 'Open Studios' annual event held over the third weekend in June, artists across Chiswick, Hammersmith, and Shepherds Bush welcome the public into their houses, studios, and flats, to view paintings, prints, ceramics, sculptures, photographs, textiles, glassware, and jewellery for sale.

Since 2019 the online presence of AAH has increased significantly with an 'always open' website and year-round social media support. However, the annual live exhibition of work during Open Studios 'At Home' remains at its core.

## **1. Name**

The name of the group is Artists At Home. Our annual showcase is 'Open Studios'. The term 'Member' refers to those who have paid the joining fee, while the term 'Exhibiting Artist' refers to those who are participating in Open Studios in any given year.

## **2. Aims**

The aims of Artists At Home (AAH) are to:

- a) To enable its Members to promote their work through mutual collaboration.
- b) To facilitate the purchase of Exhibiting Artists' work through the annual 'Open Studios' event which encourages people to visit the artist's studio, meet them, and see the context in which their work is produced.
- c) To support the sale of Members' work year-round through the maintenance of a website and promoting it prior to the event actively through social media, PR and marketing.
- d) To liaise informally with other local art groups who may offer AAH members additional opportunities to exhibit their work.
- e) To encourage collaboration and engagement through informal social events for Members.
- f) To create opportunities for Members to share experiences and develop their skills.
- g) To give something back to the community through an online charity auction of Members' work at Christmas.

## **3. Membership eligibility**

- 1) Membership is open to anyone who:

- a) Lives/practices and plans to exhibit within the catchment area as defined by the map on the website: <https://www.artistsathome.co.uk/p/168/apply-to-join-artists-at-home>
  - b) Is a serious practitioner in the fine or applied arts.
  - c) Ideally uses an e-mail list, website, or social media to promote their work. This drives traffic to their page on our website with a beneficial halo effect for other members.
  - d) Is committed to the mutual nature of AAH and the responsibilities of Membership which are set out below.
- 2) Membership is not open to anyone who:
- a) Lives/works outside our defined catchment area whose boundaries are shown on the map on our website.
  - b) Wishes to exhibit in a studio complex located within our defined area, where other artists work. Thus, other non-paying artists would benefit from free footfall generated by our publicity. This 'free ride' would be unfair to our other paying Members. An artist may create their work in a complex but exhibit at their home if it's within our catchment, or they could be hosted by another Member.
  - c) Outsources the manufacture of their work to third parties. Thus, the exhibition of factory/mass-produced items such as textiles, jewellery, and pottery are excluded. We allow works on paper such as limited editions which are produced by specialist printers. And there are sculptors who employ foundries to produce their casts and editions. The Chair with the Steering Group will adjudicate on instances of a 'grey area' in preserving the ethos of 'work made by artists at home'.

#### **4. Membership fees**

1. The annual fee and joining fee are agreed by the Steering Group.
2. The annual fee is payable by all Exhibiting Artists, except for the Steering Group and any Honorary Members agreed by the Membership.
3. Existing Members are invited to renew annually.
4. Existing Members are permitted not to renew in any given year and to miss one Open Studios event at a time, but if they take a 'sabbatical' in two successive years, they are deemed to have resigned. If they wish subsequently to re-join, they will be required to pay 50% of the normal joining fee. The Chair with the Steering Group will adjudicate on instances of a 'grey area', such as poor health.
5. Any Member who has not paid their membership fee for the year or notified the Steering Group of their intention to take a sabbatical by the due renewal date, is deemed to have resigned and may not participate in 'Open Studios'. Their page on the Artists At Home website will be hidden, and then deleted after a year.
6. New Members may be admitted if there is capacity within an overall cap on Exhibiting Artists of about 100.
7. New Members are required to pay the annual subscription, plus a one-off non-refundable joining fee.

#### **5. Membership benefits**

1. Participation in the annual Open Studios event with no commission payable to Artists At Home. Artists at Home plays no role in any sales agreements and any sales agreed are between Exhibiting Artist and their buyer.

2. An artist may host up to two other Exhibiting Artists during Open Studios.
3. A page on the Artists At Home website with up to 51 images and a video.
4. Inclusion in the social media promotion of Exhibiting Artists' work.
5. Inclusion in the printed guide promoting Open Studios .
6. A sign board outside their venue during Open Studios if allowed by regulations.
7. Collective promotion in online and offline media and via public relations.
8. Opportunity to participate in the online charity auction.
9. Opportunity to participate in the annual exhibition at The Hogarth Club.
10. Invitation to the annual social event and the AGM.

## **6. Membership responsibilities**

1. All Members must populate their webpage with good quality images of their work, and give useful information for visitors, include a headshot, biography, and links to social media and website.
2. Online-only participation is not permitted.
3. Members have to participate in the annual Open Studios whenever possible.
4. Members contribute to the mutually beneficial promotion of Artists At Home and Open Studios via their social media, website, and e-mail shots.
5. Members and Exhibiting Artists may not exhibit non-member's work on their webpage or at Open Studios.
6. Exhibiting Artists may not exhibit any work made in collaboration with non-members either on their artist page or at their open studio. Exhibiting Artists may collaborate with other AAH Exhibiting Artists.
7. Exhibiting Artists must make sure they are open for the publicised times. Visitors come to see the artist and their work, and it reflects badly on the event if the Exhibiting Artist is not there to welcome them. There may be occasions when the Exhibiting Artist needs to go out, but someone else must be present so visitors don't have a wasted journey.
8. Exhibiting Artists must have public liability insurance.
9. Exhibiting Artists must provide a high-resolution image for the studio guide.
10. Exhibiting Artists must participate in the annual distribution of Open Studio guides in their local area. This includes delivery via residential letterboxes and placement at retailers as agreed with their Zone Leader.
11. Exhibiting Artists participate in the annual placement and removal of posters in their area, as agreed with their Zone Leader.
12. Exhibiting Artists located in a cluster can refer visitors to each other – some do so via a flyer.
13. Artists At Home and its members do not discriminate on the grounds of sex, race (including colour, ethnic or national origin), sexual orientation, disability, gender reassignment, religious or political belief, pregnancy or maternity, marital status, or age.

## **7. The Steering Group**

1. The business of the association is carried out by volunteers on the Steering Group whose Members are ratified at the Annual General Meeting. The Steering Group meets as necessary to deliver the Aims, and not less than twice a year.
2. The Steering Group consists of not less than five Members and not more than ten. From time to time the Chair, may invite a Member to take on responsibility for more than one role, as they may do themselves.

3. The main roles are as follows:

1. Chair: runs and Steering Group, AGM, EGM, and social meetings. With the Secretary is responsible for the taking of minutes and the distribution of papers by e-mail. The Chair is also a co-signatory to the bank account.
2. Former Chair: provides advice to the Chair and Steering Group.
3. Secretary: responsible with the Chair for the organisation of AGM, EGM, Steering Group and social meetings, the distribution of papers by e-mail and taking of minutes and their distribution to members.
4. Membership: responsible for recruitment, retention, and keeping records.
5. Finance: signatory to the bank account, and responsible for the budget.
6. Sponsorship: manages the relationship with the main sponsor.
7. Advertising: responsible for advertising sales to local businesses.
8. Website: responsible for maintenance and development of the website. Liaison with any third parties who may be contracted to this task. Also runs the helpdesk for Members.
9. Social media: responsible for running our Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter accounts to build awareness and encourage visitors to the website and Open Studios. Liaison with any third parties who may be contracted to this task.
10. Publishing & print: responsible for the design and printing of the studio guide, plus banners and posters.
11. Public relations: responsible for the relationships with local media owners to achieve favourable coverage of Exhibiting Members and their work. This responsibility includes paid-for advertising and advertorial.
12. Banners: responsible for the installation and take-down of the large banners used to promote Open Studios. Liaison with any third parties who may be contracted to this task.
13. Zone liaison: responsible for the recruitment and organisation of Zone Leaders to distribute promotional leaflets and posters to members who place them locally and remove them after Open Studios. Liaison with any third parties who may be contracted to this task.

## 8. Meetings

1. An Annual General Meeting (AGM) will be held within fifteen months of the previous one.
2. All Members will be notified by e-mail at least three weeks before the date of the meeting, giving the venue, date, and time.
3. Nominations for the Steering Group may be made to the Chair before the meeting, or at the meeting itself.
4. The quorum for the AGM will be 10% of the membership or ten members, whichever is the greater number.
5. At the AGM:
  - The Steering Group will present a report of the previous year.
  - The Steering Group will present the accounts for the previous year.
  - The Steering Group for the next year will be elected.
  - Any proposals given to the Chair at least 7 days in advance of the meeting will be discussed.
6. Extraordinary General Meetings (EGM).
  - The Chair will call a Special General Meeting at the request of the majority of the Steering Group or at least eight other Members giving an e-mail request to the Chair

stating the reason for their request. The meeting will take place within twenty-one days of the request.

- All Members will be given two weeks' notice by e-mail of such a meeting, giving the venue, date, time, and agenda.
- The quorum for the EGM will be 20% of the Membership or 20 Members, whichever is the greater number.

#### 7. Steering Group Meetings

- Steering Group meetings are called by the Chair and Members must receive notice of meetings at least 7 days before the meeting.
- The quorum for Steering Group meetings is three Members.

#### 8. Rules of procedure for meetings:

- All questions that arise at any meeting will be discussed openly and the meeting will seek to find answers or propose decisions that everyone present can agree to.
- If a consensus cannot be reached a vote will be taken and a decision will be made by a simple majority of Members present. If the number of votes cast on each side is equal, the Chair of the meeting shall have an additional casting vote.

### 9. Finances

1. An online account is maintained at a bank agreed by the Steering Group. Signatories with access to the account will be nominated by the Steering Group (one to be the Chair and the others Finance and Membership). The signatories must not be related nor members of the same household.
2. There is no overdraft facility, credit or debit card, nor cheque book for this bank account. All receipts and payments being made online.
3. The Finance manager operates the Purchase Order system.
  - Any proposed expenditure must be submitted in advance of commitment by the Steering Group member responsible.
  - The proposal for expenditure to be approved by the Chair and Finance.
  - Suppliers must cite their Purchase Order number on their invoice to ensure prompt payment.
4. Records of income and expenditure will be maintained by the Finance manager and a financial statement given at each meeting.
5. All money raised by or on behalf of AAH is only to be used to further the aims of the group, as specified in item 2 of this Constitution.
6. The AAH reserve policy is to maintain a balance of £7,000 in the bank account at year end after all expenditures have been made. This reserve is based upon the requirement to be able to promote 'Open Studios' in the absence of sponsorship and advertising income. It's set and ratified annually at the AGM.

### 10. Amendments to the Constitution

1. Amendments to the constitution may only be made at the AGM or an EGM.
2. Any proposal to amend the constitution must be given to the Chair by e-mail. The proposal must then be circulated with the notice of meeting.
3. Any proposal to amend the Constitution will require a two thirds majority of those present and entitled to vote.

## **11. Dissolution**

1. If a meeting, by simple majority, decides that it is necessary to close the Association it may call an EGM to do so. The sole business of this meeting will be to dissolve the group.
2. If it is agreed to dissolve Artists At Home, all remaining money and other assets, once outstanding debts have been paid, will be reimbursed to the Members equally.

This Constitution replaces any previous version. It was agreed by the Steering Group on 18 October 2023. It will be tabled for formal adoption by AAH members at the AGM on 6 March 2024.

31.10.23