

## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT AGM 2025

It has been my privilege to hold the post of chairman for our Society in the past year.

I'd like to thank the committee for their continued hard work to ensure we are able to enjoy the lectures we attended last year.

More than that, the members have been able to enjoy a warm and welcoming atmosphere so often commented on by lecturers and visitors. The move to Great Hale Village Hall a couple of years ago has meant that we have the space to enjoy pre-lecture lunches and to socialise after the lectures thanks to the team of members who serve our tea and biscuits afterwards.

There have been great, and often unsettling, changes at Head Office over the last year. A new Board of Trustees is in place with a new Chairman, and a CEO has been appointed after the resignation of the last holder of that post. The Society's finances have been outsourced to ensure continuity and accountability. Consultations on a new constitution are underway, and plans are in place to include members in working parties. The main purpose of the planning is to increase membership. The Board of Trustees are seeking members who would wish to be part of this project.

Members of our society attend Area Meetings where we are able to hear from other Societies within the East Midlands area. This year, a new Chair has been appointed, Sue Hampden Smith from Harborough Society. She approaches this work with vigour and enthusiasm. She will be visiting our Society at our Christmas meeting in 2025 so members will be able to meet her.

We were pleased that one of the Trustees, Lesley Jones, has been able to attend an Area meeting for the second time. She has provided an overview of developments at Head Office and answered questions from society representatives honestly and in full.

Through all this change the Arts Society, Holland and Kesteven has continued with its core purpose – that of bringing our members together in a welcoming atmosphere to hear from highly-qualified lecturers on a wide range of topics associated with the Arts in its widest sense.