

# **Friends of The Wilson, Cheltenham Art Gallery and Museum**

## **Minutes of the Trustees' Committee meeting held on 11 March 2026**

### **1. Wilson and Trust Updates**

Lisa Edgar(LE) confirmed that the Arts and Crafts gallery would be closed temporarily from 1 June to allow for much needed care and conservation of the collection and to repair the floor. There was already a statement on the Wilson website about this and it was agreed that a similar paragraph would appear in the Friends' Newsletter. Some key objects from the collection would be displayed around the building. It was planned to mount a major arts and crafts exhibition in 2027, possibly in conjunction with other galleries and to rethink the ways in which the Arts and Crafts movement should be explained and celebrated. Interest in the movement was not confined to the UK so the global impact would also be featured. The Victorian wing would reopen in the autumn and several events would be planned around that.

LE summarised how the Friends had contributed over the last year to the family events, Material World, BMP, Paula Rego, the new website and the audio guides. The Cheltenham Trust will cover some of the cost of the Friends' gallery refurbishment. Various ways of restructuring the gallery are being considered, including exhibiting a wider range of art work and including architecture, nature and people. Future funds from the Friends could support the aforementioned arts and crafts gallery refurbishment, the exhibition programme, digital media development and the Summer Play event.

The annual summer exhibition would have a Pangolin exhibition and a theme of making arts and crafts items.

## **2. Welcome and apologies**

Present: Judie Hodsdon (JH), Michael Bourne (MB), Irene Finlayson (IF), Emma Ferry (EF), Freddie Gick (FG).

JH welcomed everyone. Apologies had been received from Cristina Hall, Andy D'Souza, Kat Hoerath, Rachel Roberts and Steven Sasanov.

## **3. Approval of the Minutes of the meeting held on 14 January 2026.**

The Minutes were approved and there were no matters arising that did not appear elsewhere on the agenda.

## **4. Chair Update**

Much of this had been covered by LE but JH confirmed that LE was happy with the idea of the Friends having a table in the Wilson at appropriate times to promote membership. She had also discussed the MoU with LE and it was agreed that this be extended for two years and then be reviewed in depth. LE had written a piece on volunteering which would appear in the newsletter

## **5. Review of Strategy Day and donations to Wilson**

This had been another useful exercise and Notes on the day had been circulated. The extension of the MoU has already been noted. Curators were now receiving the Friends' Newsletter. Current Trustees were satisfied with their responsibilities but it was evident that a requirement still existed for someone to concentrate on the website. The issue of a few people not receiving the Newsletter had been resolved. A plea would be made

at meetings for Friends to ensure they had provided up-to-date email addresses

## **6. Events**

As KH was not in attendance, EF reported that talks had been planned for the rest of the year. MB confirmed that there were still five tickets available for the wine and art evening at the Grape Escape.

## **7. Finance and Fundraising**

AD had circulated the most recent report. The legacy which the Friends had been notified of was now progressing but was likely to be less than first thought. We were ahead of the £12K budgeted for the year, mainly a result of the recent silent auction and the success of other events, especially the study tour to Lincoln. The donation from PJ's Christmas sale had now been banked. It was noted that the funding requests from LE totalling £28K had already been agreed by the Trustees. It was agreed that the extra £5K for the Summer Play event is affordable this year, though with the risk that it will impact on what can be donated next year.

## **8. Membership**

It was reported that five new Friends had joined in the last two months. MB had sent out a reminder to people about altering standing orders where the correct membership fee had not been in place.

## **9. Communications/Marketing**

MB reported that he would send out a Newsletter shortly. JH thanked him for the content and quality of recent editions.

David Hewitt had agreed to make the design changes to the website which had been discussed previously and ideas sought for a new front page. He had intimated that he needed a better quality image of the lettering and it was suggested that MB check with LE about using the Wilson's images. New photos were also required and it was agreed that two or three photos of the new galleries would be appropriate. MB would communicate with LE.

**Action: MB**

### **10. Any other business**

FG reported that he would be meeting with the appropriate Trustees and Cheltenham Trust about sponsorship.

### **11. Dates of next meetings**

Committee meetings - 6 May 2026, 8 July 2026, 9 September 2026, 11 November 2026 (all at the Wilson at 2pm). AGM - Thursday 25 June at 6pm at the Wilson.