

Membership Report - August 2026

Following a remarkably quick recovery from the challenges of the Covid years, the membership of The Arts Society Oundle has remained remarkably robust and healthy at around 250-270 members. Each year a modest number of members have left, usually for understandable reasons related to health, mobility, moving home, or just finding they are too busy to attend, and sadly there have been the occasional deaths. However, the losses have tended to be replaced by a similar number of new recruits.

At the of the 2025-2026 membership year there were 273 members of The Society and, although 13 had been lost for reasons outlined above, the numbers had been sustained and increased by 24 new members joining The Society. At the time of this report the membership total for the start of the 2026-2027 season stands at 257 with several members having not yet responded to the renewal notices and who will be presumed to have resigned.

The average attendance at the monthly lectures has been around 140 including a few guests at most meetings, several of whom have subsequently joined The Society. In addition, broadcasting the talks via Zoom during the winter months of November to March attracted an average of 24 extra viewers.

The new bar code system for membership identity is now well bedded in and working efficiently. While somewhat time-consuming to set up each year, it does make checking in at lectures much quicker and permits more accurate attendance statistics to be collected.

The website continues to provide a comprehensive overview of The Arts Society Oundle, its programme of activities, the committee members, subgroups and local events of interest. It also has membership forms available for download for those individuals wishing to join.

I have now completed eight years as membership secretary and am entering my ninth, by the end of which I shall be 80 years of age. I do not intend to carry on in the role beyond June 2027 but would be happy to familiarise my replacement with the tasks and procedures involved in this interesting and rewarding post.

Tony Batchelor
Membership Secretary