

# Annual Report & Statement of Accounts

Year to 31 March 2025



Friends of the  
F.E. McWILLIAM  
Gallery & Studio

NIC106019



Friends of the F.E. McWilliam Gallery & Studio  
Annual Report  
Year to 31 March 2025

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## Friends of the F.E. McWilliam Gallery & Studio

### Chair's Introduction

It is with great pleasure that I present the Friends of the F.E. McWilliam Gallery & Studio Annual Report for 2024-25. It has been another successful year for the gallery and for the Friends' charity as we look back at what was a busy calendar of events.

Highlights for this year include the evening tour of the fabulous *Hilary Heron Retrospective* sculpture exhibition. It was a pleasure to play a very small part in helping reinstate this artist's deserved place in Ireland's history of art. The joint curation by Dr Riann Coulter of the F.E. McWilliam Gallery and Sean Kissane from the Irish Museum of Modern Art, produced an outstanding show which the Friends took real enjoyment in helping promote.

Other highlights include a Friends' visit to the Tyrone Guthrie Arts Centre. This centre has been hosting our annual bursary recipients for many years, so it was a real treat to finally be able to accept an outstanding invitation to visit this special place.

Towards the end of the year, Friends had the unexpected pleasure of being able to use the charity's acquisition fund to purchase an early F.E. McWilliam painting. *Landscape at Var* has now joined the collection.

We are pleased to learn that activity has now started on the plans for the extension to the gallery and look forward to supporting all those involved in this exciting development.

### The Purpose of the Charity

The purpose of the Friends of the F.E. McWilliam Gallery & Studio charity is to "stimulate and promote an understanding and appreciation of art, in particular the work of Banbridge-born and internationally renowned sculptor Frederick Edward McWilliam (1909-1992), and thereby to enhance the lives of people of all ages locally, nationally and internationally".

The charity's beneficiary is the general public.

### Public Benefit

The direct benefits flowing from our purpose are: an increased accessibility to and improved understanding and appreciation of culture, heritage, and the arts, including the work of sculptor Frederick Edward McWilliam (F.E. McWilliam 1909-1992)

To achieve this purpose from April 2024 to March 2025 we:

1. Organised private tours of exhibitions taking place at the F.E. McWilliam Gallery & Studio
2. Organised a tour of the private art collection at the Merrion Hotel in Dublin.
3. Visited QSS (Queen Street Studios), Belfast, to join in celebrations for their 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary.
4. Arranged talks by specialist speakers: National Trust conservator Claire Magill; archivist Deirdre Quail; freelance art historian Carmel Coyle; gallery officer and art historian Jason Diamond and; visual artist Kevin Killen.
5. Provided a bursary for local artist Susan Mannion, to attend the Tyrone Guthrie Arts Centre in Monaghan
6. Visited the Tyrone Guthrie Arts Centre in Monaghan
7. Attended tours of Montaito Gardens in Ballynahinch and the National Trust's Argory, in Dungannon.

8. Funded the F.E. McWilliam prize through the Belfast School of Art - awarded to Elizabeth McGourty in June 2024.
9. Provided transportation funding to the gallery for seven schools from across the broad Council area.
10. Purchased from auction an early painting by F.E. McWilliam, to add to the gallery's collection – 'Landscape in Var.'

### **Activities and Achievements**

#### **1. Organised private tours of exhibitions at the F.E. McWilliam Gallery & Studio**

With the help of Curator Dr Riann Coulter, and the staff of the gallery, Friends' members were invited to preview tours of the following exhibitions taking place at the gallery in 2024-25:

On 7 June 2024, Director of the Fleming Collection, James Knox, gave Friends a tour of *Scottish Women Artists*, a fantastic exhibition of Scottish artists from this private collection. The exhibition complemented the 2019 show *Scottish Colourists* and as always, James was both knowledgeable and entertaining.

On 21 September local artist Susan Connolly, gave the Friends a tour of her colourful exhibition *GROUND [100 + one]*. Her exhibition of 100 geometric and abstract paintings was uplifting and dazzling.

On 24 November Jason Diamond, gallery officer and art historian, gave an entertaining tour of the fabulous *Hilary Heron Retrospective*. This sculpture exhibition curated by Riann Coulter and Sean Kissane from the Irish Museum of Modern Art, was a resounding success and drew many visitors. Part of a series that seeks to reinstate the place of women artists in the canon of Irish art history, this was a treat of an exhibition and a great night of learning and enjoyment for all who attended.

On 13 March artist Kevin Killen, known for his unique light installations (including the one at the entrance of the F.E. McWilliam Gallery & Studio), gave a talk to the Friends about his art practice and recent commission at the York Street train station in Belfast. Despite some challenges with the sound, Friends appreciated meeting Kevin and hearing directly from this talented craftsman.

#### **2. Tour of Merrion Hotel Private Art Collection**

On 19 February Friends were treated to afternoon tea and a self-guided tour of the Merrion Hotel's private art collection. This impressive Georgian-style hotel in Dublin holds an outstanding collection of art primarily by renowned Irish artists. Friends were amazed at the number and variety of paintings and sculptures and were delighted with the art-themed selection of delicacies in the afternoon tea. This was the second visit by Friends to see this fantastic collection.

#### **3. Visited QSS (Queen Street Studios & Gallery) to celebrate their 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary**

On 29 September Friends visited QSS in Belfast as part of their anniversary celebrations. QSS is Belfast's longest running artist studios and exhibition space. To mark their 40<sup>th</sup>

anniversary they were running a series of public tours. Visual artist Jennifer Trouton, took Friends on a tour of this impressive venue which houses 47 self-contained independent studios. On the visit we had the chance to meet artists such as Ian Cumberland, Clement McAleer, Hannah Clegg and Sharon Kelly, at work. This was a real treat for many members who previously were unaware of this unique place.

#### **4. Organised talks by specialist speakers**

On 11 April National Trust conservator Claire Magill, and gallery archivist Deirdre Quail, gave a fascinating talk on conserving and archiving F.E. McWilliam artefacts – ‘Discover Hidden Treasures and the Art of Restoration’ - to an appreciative audience. Conservation skills and the importance of archiving were new and fascinating areas of interest for members who thoroughly enjoyed the evening.

On 31 October freelance art historian and guide from the National Gallery, Dublin, Carmel Coyle, gave a talk - ‘An Irish Artist Abroad’ - about a lesser-known local artist Helen Mabel Trevor (1831-1900). Born in Loughbrickland, Helen was a talented Irish landscape and genre painter who went on to live and work in Paris. Many of her paintings are now held in the National Gallery of Ireland and the Ulster Museum.

By way of Christmas celebration, gallery officer and art historian Jason Diamond, took Friends on a tour of the wonderful *Hilary Heron Retrospective* sculpture exhibition. Members enjoyed a glass of wine and canapes whilst Jason provided a great evening of education and entertainment to the assembled crowd.

In March we were delighted to be able to fulfil our ambition of inviting artist Kevin Killen to the gallery to give a talk about his art practice and career success. Despite some technical hitches on the night, the audience was pleased to be able to meet Kevin in person and hear about his plans for future work.

#### **5. Provided a bursary for an artist to attend a centre for creative arts**

The opportunity to apply for a two-week bursary at the Tyrone Guthrie Arts Centre in Monaghan is open to any visual artists born in, or resident in Northern Ireland. Funded by the Friends, the Maurna Crozier bursary also includes £200 towards costs. In 2024/25 we received seven applications. A selection panel of committee members awarded the bursary to visual artist and ceramicist Susan Mannion.

#### **6. Visited the Tyrone Guthrie Arts Centre in Monaghan**

We were delighted that instead of following tradition and speaking at the forthcoming AGM, bursary recipient Susan Mannion, instead, invited members to visit her whilst she was resident at the Tyrone Guthrie Centre. Susan kindly took a small group who visited on 30 January, on a tour of the centre followed by a light lunch. She also took the visitors to see a small exhibition of her work and her studio on the premises. The visitors welcomed the opportunity to see this impressive venue and how bursary recipients typically spend their time whilst in residence.

#### **7. Attended tours of Montalto Gardens and the Argory**

In May members attended a guided tour of Montalto Gardens and estate in Ballynahinch, and in June toured the National Trust’s Argory in Dungannon. Garden visits to notable

estates are always popular and the Argory visit offered the opportunity to see and hear about Irish art in its historical context. Both visits were well attended and very enjoyable.

#### **8. Funded an arts prize via the Belfast School of Art**

The Friends were pleased to be able to fund the Belfast School of Art prize again in 2024. Elizabeth McGourty was selected by a panel of committee members as the winner of the *F.E. McWilliam Prize* for the best end-of-year show by a student in June 2024. The Friends' Committee view the award not only as an opportunity to support the development of young talent, but as a form of positive PR for the charity.

#### **9. Provided transportation funding for schools**

The Committee agreed to continue funding schools to visit the gallery. The Treasurer wrote to the gallery's database of schools two years ago and again in 2024. This year seven schools from across the Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon Council area took up the offer and visited the gallery. The children from these schools benefit both from seeing the art on show and getting "hands on" with activities such as clay sculpting, painting etc.

#### **10. Purchased an early painting by F.E. McWilliam**

We were delighted that good friend and art specialist Dickon Hall, alerted the gallery and Friends that a small early painting by F.E. McWilliam was about to come up for auction. The Friends took the opportunity and succeeded in bidding for this interesting landscape titled 'Landscape in Var'. We were pleased to be able to share the news of this addition to the collection at a gallery tour in April 2025.

#### **Impact**

The benefit of the charity's work can be demonstrated through the wider dissemination of knowledge about the artist F.E. McWilliam, the gallery and art in general, in the following ways:

1. The exhibition tours, artists' talks and lectures by specialist speakers (most of which took place at the gallery), increased members' and guests' knowledge and appreciation not only of art, but its place in the history of arts in Ireland. Talks are advertised directly to members via mailchimp email, on Facebook and on Instagram so that the public can also attend. Members are encouraged to bring guests to events.
2. The art tour of the Merrion Hotel in Dublin (first run two years ago) directly increased art appreciation, along with the tour of the National Trust's Argory, increased understanding of the historical context of art and culture in Ireland.
3. Feedback about the schools' visits through the subsidised transportation costs, running now for the third year, continues to be excellent. The opportunity for young people to see exhibitions, take part in workshops and events, and visit the gallery space itself is, we believe, key to increasing art appreciation. The earlier this takes place in life, the better.
4. A condition of receiving the Maurna Crozier bursary is for the artist to share with the charity's membership their experience of the residency at the Tyrone Guthrie Centre. This involves describing their work and artistic practice, thus increasing the audience's learning and appreciation of art. We were delighted that this year's recipient Susan Mannion, offered members the opportunity to visit the Tyrone Guthrie for a tour and to see her at work in her studio at the centre. It was a real treat for those who managed the journey to this unique venue in Monaghan.

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5. Funding the Belfast School of Art / F.E. McWilliam art prize helps to increase awareness of the artist F.E McWilliam and the gallery, as well as helping support the development of young talented artists.
6. This year members visited a number of artists at work at Queen Street Studios Belfast. This was a fantastic opportunity to see artists directly at work and to speak to them in person about their practice.

### Private Benefit

Fees of £150 are paid to lecturers and invited speakers such as Carmel Coyle art historian and Claire Magill, conservator. These payments are considered a justified expenditure and are often mitigated by ticket sales which generally range from £5 for members of the Friends and students, to £12 for non-members, depending on the nature of the event.

The charity pays for other miscellaneous services provided, such as refreshments at events and considers such payments necessary, although some private benefit may be gained.

Payments totalling £1,938.97 were made to four Trustees in reimbursement of charity expenses they paid relating to hospitality, postage and stationery, and the purchase of a small painting by F.E. McWilliam. There were no other payments made to Trustees, their close relations, or businesses in 2024-25 or to third parties on their behalf.

	Recipient	Cheque	Amount £	Purpose
13.11.24	J Boyce	223	18.75	Hospitality
24.03.25	J Boyce	Bank transfer	508.00	Auction purchase
26.06.24	L McFadden	218 & 220	154.00	Admission fees Argory
19.10.23	L McFadden	219	117.00	Postage & donation of £100 to Queens Street studios
24.10.24	D Hutchinson	221	150.00	Cash for speaker's fee
11.12.24	D Hutchinson	225	120.00	Cash for music at evening event
14.03.25	H. Blane	Bank transfer	871.22	Art tour Merrion Hotel
Total			1,938.97	

### Statement of Compliance

In setting our objectives and planning our activities for the year, the Trustees considered the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland's guidance on public benefit. The guidance is designed to ensure that objectives and planned activities provide benefit to the intended audiences. We believe the events that took place in 2024-25, did so.

### Financial Review 2024-25

We started the year with £8,633 cash funds (£5,439 unrestricted and £3,194 restricted)

The **restricted fund** is money very generously donated by Banbridge art club following their dissolution a few years ago. We have been making good use of it in the promotion of the arts among our local schools both at primary and secondary level.

We spent a total of £1,564 in full reimbursement of transport costs to facilitate visits to the gallery for a total of 7 schools from across the Armagh, Craigavon and Banbridge council

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area. The children from these schools benefit from both seeing the art on show and getting "hands on" with activities such as clay sculpting, painting activity etc.

The **donation box** generated £149 from visitors but required repairs due to wear and tear costing £163. In addition, this year, we received **gift aid** reimbursement from HMRC of £125 following a donation of £500 given during the previous tax year.

**Membership** numbers continue to rise and currently stand at 134. An increase in new paying members increased our **membership income** from £2,340 for 23/24 to £2,560 for 24/25.

**Event ticket sales** were down (£884 for the year 24/25 compared to £1,443 in 23/24).

"**Gallery projects**" encompasses several schemes that we feel should be supported by our charity. The previously mentioned school transport funding is one.

The annual F.E. McWilliam Gallery & Studio prize (£500) is awarded to a promising young artist graduating from the Belfast School of Art – won by Elizabeth McGourty in June 2024.

We also provided funding for the Maura Crozier bursary for established artists to attend the Tyrone Guthrie Centre for two weeks – attended this year by Susan Mannion. The funding spend in 24/25 was a total of £690.

Also, under "gallery projects" was a spend of £508 following the acquisition of an early F.E. McWilliam painting which came up for auction in March 2025. The successful bid of £400 was made by our Chair Jane Boyce, on behalf of the Friends of F.E. McWilliam Gallery & Studio. Commission payable to the auction house brought the total to £508

**Lecture fees** totalling £600 were paid to a total of 4 speakers during the year. Payment was increased to £150 without additional gifts – as agreed previously.

**Hospitality** covers the cost of food and drink at events such as new exhibitions.

**Fees for admission** to visits to other arts events etc around the country came to £1,434

The other listed costs such as **public liability insurance, accountancy fees, bank fees, postage & stationery** are all much the same this past year.

Our year-end cash figure is £5,923 (£4,293 unrestricted - including £10 petty cash and £1,630 restricted).

**£1,145 is owed to Friends of the F.E. McWilliam Gallery & Studio** by the Armagh, Banbridge & Craigavon council for ticket sales and membership fees paid into the gallery during the first quarter.

Payments totalling £1,938.97 were made to four Trustees in reimbursement of charity expenses they paid relating to Friends of F.E. McWilliam Gallery activities

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### **Reference and Administrative Details**

#### **Charity Name**

The Friends of the F.E. McWilliam Gallery & Studio

#### **Charity Number**

Registered Charity in Northern Ireland NIC 106019

#### **Address**

Friends of the F.E. McWilliam Gallery & Studio  
F.E. McWilliam Gallery & Studio  
200 Newry Road  
Banbridge  
BT32 3NB

#### **Charity Trustees during the year**

Mrs Jane Boyce - Chair

Miss Lynda Fyffe-McFadden – Secretary (acting)

Mr Dermott Hutchinson - Treasurer

Mrs Della McKinney

Mrs Helen Blane

Mrs Emily Neill-Dalzell

Miss Patricia McAteer

Ms Miriam Dudley

Mr Colin Mathews

Mr Horace de Courcy-Wheeler (appointed 2024)

Mr Brian Jardine (appointed 2024)

Mrs Anne Davidson (to April 2024)

Mrs Brigitte Boland (to April 2024)

**Ex officios** Dr Riann Coulter – Gallery Curator/Manager and Mr Jason Diamond

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### **Governance and Constitution**

The charity is an unincorporated charitable association governed under Northern Ireland law by a constitution adopted on Friday the 23rd of September 2016. The charity operates within the Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon Council area of Northern Ireland.

Its purpose is to stimulate and promote an understanding and appreciation of art, in particular the work of Banbridge-born and internationally renowned sculptor Frederick Edward McWilliam (1909 to 1992), thereby enhancing the lives of people of all ages locally, nationally and internationally.

The charity is run by a committee of Trustees appointed at an annual general meeting, who pay an annual subscription. The charity has three officers: Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. Officers may serve for seven consecutive years but may be re-elected after two years. As of 31 March 2025, there are 11 Trustees plus the Curator of the gallery and one other gallery representative.

The charity has a membership who pay annual fees of £25 for an individual member, £40 for two from the same household and £18 for students and under 18 years of age.

The committee meets typically once per month except for July and August. In the year to the 31 March 2025 the committee met on nine occasions since the May 2024 AGM. At each meeting the Treasurer presents the latest accounts, and these are reviewed against budgets and forecast. Spending is discussed and approved. Officers may authorise some spending between meetings but must ensure that spending is reported at the next meeting. The meetings offer a forum to review activities within the annual programme of events and to plan forthcoming events. Further ad-hoc meetings are called if required, for example, to plan and manage special events or projects. The annual report and statement of accounts are approved by the Trustees and then presented to the members at the annual general meeting.

### **Carrying out the charitable purpose**

To carry out the charitable purpose the Trustees have the power to:

- (1) provide money by receipt of subscriptions, grants, and donations to pay the costs of running the charity and furthering its purpose
- (2) organise and promote exhibitions, lectures, recitals, and other social activities that encourage the appreciation of art including the collection of sculptor F.E McWilliam
- (3) provide grants for artists and/or commissioned art works
- (4) establish strategic relationships with educators to promote visits to the F.E. McWilliam Gallery & Studio for learning
- (5) support other charities with similar charitable purposes
- (6) do anything that is lawful and necessary to achieve the charity's purpose.

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**Related organisations**

The charity is a member of the Federation of Ulster Local Studies (FULS) providing value for money membership insurance.

**Approved on behalf of the Committee and signed by:**



**Mrs Jane Boyce, Chairperson**

Date 17.9.25

## Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Friends of the F.E. McWilliam Gallery & Studio

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2025 which are set out on pages 13 to 15.

### **Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner**

As the charity's trustees you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 65 of the Charities Act;
- follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland under section 65(9)(b) of the Charities Act; and
- state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

### **Basis of independent examiner's report**

I have examined your charity accounts as required under section 65 of the Charities Act and my examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland under section 65(9)(b) of the Charities Act.

My examination included a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also included consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as charity trustees concerning any such matters.

My role is to state whether any material matters have come to my attention giving me cause to believe:

1. That accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 63 of the Charities Act;
2. That the accounts do not accord with those accounting records;
3. That the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act; and
4. That there is further information needed for a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

### **Independent examiner's statement**

I have completed my examination and have no concerns in respect of the matters (1) to (4) listed above and, in connection with following the Directions of the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland, I have found no matters that require drawing to your attention.

**Grace Taggart FCA**

CG Taggart Accountancy Services

Chartered Accountants and Registered Auditors

17 Cypress Crescent

Donaghadee

Co Down

BT21 0QG

**DATE 7 May 2025**

Friends of the F.E. McWilliam Gallery & Studio  
 Receipts and Payments Account  
 Year to 31 March 2025

	Unrestricted funds 2025	Restricted funds 2025	Total 2025	Total 2024
<b>Receipts</b>	£	£	£	£
Donations	149	-	149	1,913
Event ticket sales	884	-	884	1,443
Membership subscriptions	2,560	-	2,560	2,340
Gift aid	125	-	125	-
<b>Total receipts</b>	<b>3,718</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>3,718</b>	<b>5,696</b>
<b>Payments</b>	£	£	£	£
Gallery projects	1,861	1,564	3,425	2,690
Hospitality and gifts	488	-	488	715
Visits admission fees	1,434	-	1,434	326
FULS public liability insurance	80	-	80	50
Independent examination fee	300	-	300	300
Bank Fees	61	-	61	65
Postage & stationary	40	-	40	39
Sundry expenses	-	-	-	8
Lecture fees	600	-	600	780
<b>Total Payments</b>	<b>4,864</b>	<b>1,564</b>	<b>6,428</b>	<b>4,973</b>
<b>Excess of Payments over Receipts for the year</b>	<b><u>(1,146)</u></b>	<b><u>(1,564)</u></b>	<b><u>(2,710)</u></b>	<b><u>723</u></b>
Opening Bank & Cash balances	5,439	3,194	8,633	7,910
Closing Bank & Cash balances	<u>4,293</u>	<u>1,630</u>	<u>5,923</u>	<u>8,633</u>

Friends of the F.E. McWilliam Gallery & Studio  
 Statement of Assets and Liabilities  
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	Notes	Unrestricted funds 2025	Restricted funds 2025	Total 2025	Total 2024
<b>Bank and Cash</b>		£	£	£	£
Current Account		4,283	1,630	5,913	8,623
Petty cash		10	-	10	10
<b>Total Bank and Cash</b>		<b>4,293</b>	<b>1,630</b>	<b>5,923</b>	<b>8,633</b>
<b>Other monetary assets</b>	<b>Ticket sales &amp; membership fees owed by ABC council 01/01/25 – 31/03/25</b>	<b>1,145</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,145</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>		<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>

Approved on behalf of the Committee on

and signed by:

*E. F. Boyce*

Mrs Jane Boyce

Chairperson

Date of approval 17.9.25

*Mr Dermott Hutchinson*

Mr Dermott Hutchinson

Treasurer

Date of approval 24.9.25

**1. Accounting policies**

Set out below are the principal accounting policies which have been adopted in the compilation of the Receipts and Payments Accounts and the Statement of Assets and Liabilities:

**(a) Receipts and Payments Accounts**

All items of income and expenditure included within the Receipts and Payments Accounts have been accounted for on a cash basis.

**2. Restricted Funds**

	<b>Bank balance at 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024 £</b>	<b>Receipts £</b>	<b>Payments £</b>	<b>Bank balance at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025 £</b>
Banbridge Art Club	3,194	-	1,564	1,630
<b>Total Funds</b>	<b>3,194</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,564</b>	<b>1,630</b>

The purpose of the restricted funds is to provide art education for young people.

