

AGM 2026 – Chair's Report

The first thing is to remind you that we are referring to the year 2025 January 1st to December 31st, that being the RPS year.

Our DI programme of high calibre Saturday webinars, a wide variety of workshops, two rounds of TalkWalkTalk and several competitions, have continued and proven very popular with many members. However, what is evident is that we have a happy band of regulars who fully engage with pretty much everything we do and then there are those from whom we hear and see little. These silent members obviously feel they get something out of their DI membership, but it is difficult to determine why they don't engage more.

The LRPS Support Group is evidence of this. When we first announced it in Autumn 2024 we were overwhelmed with members registering. So a committee volunteer built us a splendid forum to support members engaging with one another as they worked towards their Licentiateship. However, many never appeared again following that initial sign up. Not that the group hasn't been a success for those who did engage and have gone on to achieve their LRPS, with some still on that journey. But what happened to the others we wonder?

Our publications continue, with *DIGIT* being produced quarterly; *DI Online* was monthly for the early part of 2025 but moved to alternate months in the autumn. *Accolade* comes out as and when there are sufficient Distinction successes to celebrate. *DI Pulse* was introduced, which comes out monthly with direct links to booking sites for our events, plus some ads from other groups.

The peer to peer online groups, or eCircles as we call them, have had some changes, with one or two groups dissolving and other newer ones flourishing. The Print Circle continues but with a change of administrator. We thank Andrew Brochwicz-Lewinski who stood down after very many years, with David Woodhead kindly taking over.

We have dabbled in the world of AI creations a little this year. This may not be popular with some, but it is here to stay so, as we are a digital imaging group, who better to take this up than us? It doesn't replace producing images from light, it is simply a new form of creating images via prompts.

We do still have one remaining DI Centre that operates in Ringwood, Hampshire. Apart from some face-to-face meetings they run, they are also involved in the Schools Exhibition there, which DI sponsors in partnership with others. A really worthwhile sponsorship as, after all, these young people are the future of photography.

Our membership figures every month are more or less 'win some, lose some' but overall there is a slight decline mainly due to members resigning their RPS Memberships.

RPS systems still continue to cause us some challenges, whether that is the website or the booking system. We live in hope of the staff team resolving this in 2026. If and when that happens, we will retire the use of Billetto and return to the main RPS system if it provides the flexibility that we need.

Finally the DI committee members have been pretty steady throughout the year and all have worked tirelessly to deliver the various programmes for our members. I thank all of them, some of whom resigned over the year, and I welcome some new volunteers also. Thank you to the team.

Janet Haines