



Election 2026 Candidate Prospectus

In this Candidate Prospectus, candidates are listed alphabetically by surname



A message from the President

Simon Hill CPhot HonFRPS
President & Chair of Trustees

The Royal Photographic Society has undergone considerable change during my Presidency. Much of that change has been necessary: to strengthen our governance, improve the way we operate, place the Society on a more sustainable financial footing, and ensure that an organisation founded in 1853 remains relevant to photography and photographers in a very different and rapidly evolving world.

Photography itself continues to change at extraordinary speed. Smartphones have transformed who makes photographs and how they are shared; digital platforms have fundamentally altered the way photography is published and experienced; and generative artificial intelligence has presented us with profound questions about authenticity and authorship of a photograph.

Our Society is a registered charity representing photography for everyone *and* we are also a membership organisation. The environment in which membership organisations operate has become increasingly challenging and competitive. Expectations of what membership should offer continue to change, traditional sources of income are under pressure, and organisations such as ours must compete for people's time, attention and engagement.

Navigating that environment requires difficult choices, clear strategic direction and sound governance. Against that background, the responsibility carried by the Trustees of the RPS should not be underestimated.

Trustees are not simply representatives of our membership, nor is membership of the Board an honorary position. Collectively, the Trustees - whether elected or appointed - are responsible for the governance of the Society, for safeguarding its charitable purposes and resources, and for ensuring that the decisions we make today protect an organisation that has existed for more than 170 years for those who will inherit it from us. That requires judgement, resilience, independence of thought and, above all, a willingness to accept the responsibilities that accompany trusteeship.

During recent years we have made substantial changes to the Society. We have strengthened our leadership and professional expertise; reviewed many of our administrative, regulatory and governance processes; developed new ways of delivering our charitable objects; and taken difficult decisions where those decisions have been necessary to protect the future of the RPS.

Not every decision has been easy and not every change has been universally welcomed. That is the nature of responsible governance. The test must always be whether our decisions serve the long-term interests and charitable purposes of the Society.

In 2026, members are being asked to **elect one Trustee** to fill a vacancy that arose earlier this year. One vacancy might appear a relatively modest matter, but every Trustee contributes to the collective effectiveness of the Board. The person elected will join the Society at an important point in its development, as we move from a period characterised by considerable change towards one in which we must consolidate that work, strengthen our operating model and continue building a Society that is financially sustainable, relevant and ambitious.

We therefore need a Trustee who understands that good governance sometimes requires difficult decisions; who can contribute constructively and independently to Board discussion; who respects collective responsibility; and who is prepared to commit the time, energy and resilience necessary to see that responsibility through. Diversity of experience, expertise and perspective remains essential to an effective Board, but so too are integrity, collegiate working and the will to act in the best interests of the Society.

There is also an important matter concerning the future leadership of the RPS. **Joanne Segars** OBE LRPS has been proposed by the Board as President Elect, to take office as President from the close of the Annual General Meeting in 2027. In accordance with the Society's requirements, that election must be ratified by the membership.

This is separate from the election of a Trustee described in this Prospectus and will therefore be put before members as a Motion at the 2026 Annual General Meeting. That distinction is important. The Trustee election enables members to choose who should fill the present vacancy on the Board; the AGM Motion concerns the future Presidency and the orderly succession of leadership within the Society.

As I approach the final year of my Presidency, I am increasingly conscious that our responsibility is not simply to manage the RPS we inherited, but to leave behind a Society capable of flourishing long after our own involvement has ended. Institutions such as ours endure because successive generations are prepared both to value their history and to accept responsibility for their future.

The RPS needs Trustees who understand both.

I therefore encourage every member to read the candidate information in this Prospectus carefully, to consider the qualities and experience necessary for effective charitable trusteeship, and, above all, to exercise your vote.

The strength of the Royal Photographic Society has never rested with any single President, Trustee, member of staff or generation of photographers. It rests in our collective willingness to care for the Society, to challenge it when necessary, to change it when necessary, and ultimately to pass it on stronger than we found it.

Simon Hill CPhot HonFRPS





A message from the Chair of the Nominations Committee

Alastair Taylor ARPS

Chair of RPS Nominations Committee

The election of a Trustee is an important responsibility for the membership of the Royal Photographic Society. Trustees carry significant legal and fiduciary responsibilities and, collectively, are responsible for ensuring that the Society is well governed, financially sustainable and able to fulfil its charitable purposes. It is therefore important that members can have confidence that those candidates recommended for election have been considered through a fair, consistent and robust process.

In accordance with **RPS By-Law 2025:16.2(f)**, the Nominations Committee has undertaken a detailed review of the applications received for the current Trustee vacancy. This process included consideration of each candidate's written application, relevant professional and voluntary experience, and a structured interview conducted by members of the Committee.

Candidates were considered consistently against the requirements of trusteeship and, importantly, against the particular skills and experience that the Committee believes the Board requires at this stage in the Society's development.

Before undertaking the assessment, the Nominations Committee identified five areas of knowledge and experience of particular relevance to the present and future needs of the RPS:

- photographic education
- fundraising and income diversification
- membership organisations and engagement
- exhibitions and events
- legal and commercial skills

These criteria reflect both the charitable purposes of the Society and the practical challenges and opportunities it now faces. They were not regarded simply as a checklist against which an individual candidate was expected to demonstrate expertise in every area. Rather, they provided a framework through which the Committee could consider what each candidate might contribute to the collective skills, experience and effectiveness of the Board.

The interview process also allowed the Committee to explore matters that cannot readily be assessed from a written application alone.

These included candidates' understanding of the responsibilities of charitable trusteeship; their ability to think strategically and independently; their approach to collective decision-making and constructive challenge; and their willingness and capacity to devote the necessary time and commitment to the work of the Board.

Following this process, the Committee carefully considered the evidence presented by each candidate and reached its recommendations collectively.

Those candidates presented to members as recommended candidates are those whom the Nominations Committee considers, following application review and interview, to be the most suitable to contribute effectively to the governance of the RPS and to the particular needs of the Board at this time.

The Committee's role is not, however, to make the final appointment. That responsibility properly rests with the membership. Our task is to undertake appropriate due diligence, assess candidates objectively and provide members with an informed recommendation on which they may base their own judgement.

The candidates recommended by Nominations Committee (in alphabetical order of surname) are:

- Michael Kingston
- Angela Nicholson
- Bruno Vinel

I therefore encourage members to read the candidate profiles carefully, to consider both the individual qualities of those standing for election and the skills required by the Society, and to exercise their vote.

On behalf of the Nominations Committee, I should also like to thank every candidate who put themselves forward. Offering to serve as a Trustee represents a considerable commitment of time, expertise and personal responsibility. Irrespective of the outcome of the election, the willingness of members to offer that service to the RPS is greatly appreciated.

Alastair Taylor ARPS



Election 2026

Candidate Profiles



Martin Keene



For twenty-five years, my job was to get photographers into the right place at the right moment - whether that meant negotiating with the Cabinet Office and the Royal Household for major state occasions, or deploying a team of more than thirty photographers across the UK to cover the day's biggest news and sporting events.

I led the picture desk at PA Media, the UK's national news agency, with full operational and financial responsibility. In 2007 I was awarded an MVO for services to the Royal Household, and when I retired the Guild of Picture Editors gave me a Lifetime Achievement Award. I've written books on press photography. I started as a photographer, travelled the world photographing the Royal Family but I have never lost my love of making pictures, even as my career moved into picture editing and leadership.

I know the Society from the inside. I volunteer with the Digital Imaging Group and sit on the Creative Industries Qualifications Panel. I've used Society data to ask why some HQ-led activities are declining while similar activities, run by SIGs and Regions, are growing. These questions - and understanding why members leave - are the kind trustees should be asking, and acting on.

The RPS faces well-understood challenges: declining membership, an ageing profile and the need to stay relevant as photography becomes more accessible. Financial sustainability will come through membership growth: the marginal cost of serving more members is modest, and the infrastructure is there.

Photography belongs to everyone. I still stop to chat to people taking pictures when I'm out walking my dogs. Whether your interest is mobile photography, wildlife, landscapes, documentary work, distinctions or simply learning alongside others, the RPS should be where that enthusiasm is encouraged and supported.

We have been too quiet on the biggest issues facing photography today. The RPS should be leading the national conversation, championing photographers' interests in debates around AI and copyright, and taking a more visible role in initiatives such as World Photography Day. My media background means I understand how to build that profile.

The Society's reputation needs to work harder for us. We should explore partnerships that provide real benefits for members while generating additional income for the Society. I want to see regular Meet the Trustees events, giving trustees the chance to learn from members what's working, what isn't and what needs to change. Success is outcomes, not process.

When difficult decisions have to be made, members deserve clear communication and honest explanations. They are more than customers of a service: they are the Society.

As Director of a local community charity, I understand governance, the relationship between trustees and executive, and the importance of staying focused on objectives when resources are under pressure.

The RPS holds something precious: the trust of photographers at every level, from the person taking their first creative smartphone images to the experienced professional with decades behind them. I spent a career earning and keeping exactly that kind of trust. I hope to earn yours too.

Martin Elliott Keene MVO ASICI FRPS



Recommended by RPS Nominations Committee



Michael Kingston

A keen amateur since, when aged 12, my grandmother gifted me an Agfa Sillette Vario she won in a lottery, I learned early on that photography can be a solitary pursuit. That is why I have fully appreciated the sense of community, equality and learning engendered by my longstanding membership of the RPS.

Photography has been a welcome escape from the demands of my career offering that mix, known to all amateur photographers, of excitement and pleasure on the one hand and frustration and exasperation on the other. I have an eclectic curiosity in all things photographic from alternative processing techniques to “traditional” film to all things digital across subjects as diverse as portraits, landscapes, travel, documentary and macro. I am dual resident in Paris and London and so the RPS vision of encouraging photographic education and recognition among the UK and wider international communities strongly connects with me and which I would very much like to help to extend across generations, cultures and borders.

To achieve this longstanding objective, the RPS will need to secure its financial position and revenue diversification, extend its membership base, increase its public profile and inspire and educate our younger generations. This places a significant responsibility on the RPS trustees to use their wide-ranging individual and collective experience to work productively with each other and the management and staff for the benefit of the members, present and future.

With close to forty years of extensive experience as a corporate and commercial solicitor with leading international law firms and based in London, Paris, Hong Kong and Singapore, I have advised at board and senior management levels on corporate governance, strategic and business development initiatives and financings. In this time, I have learned the importance of understanding cultural differences and backgrounds, developing ideas whilst listening to others, creating consensus and compromise, collaboration rather than confrontation and team building, education and career development. I have helped restructure businesses and deliver corporate objectives for clients ranging from leading international brands listed on the London and other international stock markets to small and medium-sized enterprises.

I have also applied these elements, both during my career and in retirement, to pro-bono activities helping charitable and other not-for-profit organisations with marketing and fundraising, education and governance issues. These include membership of the development board of the English National Ballet, acting as chair of the young solicitors committee of the City of London Solicitors Livery Company and organising fundraising events for Save The

Children and Refuge among others. I have also worked with the international charity OnPurpose advising and mentoring young professionals making a career change from investment banking, finance and other corporate and commercial institutions into the not-for-profit and charities sectors.

I very much hope that, with the support of the RPS membership, its trustees and management, I will be able to use my experience and commitment to make a worthwhile contribution to the RPS in the development of its vision and objectives.

Michael Ian Kingston LRPS



Recommended by RPS Nominations Committee



Angela Nicholson

I am applying to become an RPS Trustee because I believe in the Society's charitable purpose and its ability to inspire, educate and connect photographers. I would bring evidence-based judgement, strategic and commercial experience, and knowledge of the photographic sector developed over more than two decades.

My sector knowledge spans camera and lens technology, equipment testing, publishing, education, exhibitions, competitions, manufacturers, distributors, retailers and membership communities. At Amateur Photographer and Future Publishing, I led technical content production and testing across print and online titles, interpreted laboratory and real-world data, commissioned reviewers and maintained industry relationships. I continue this work as a freelance writer and community leader, giving me insight into audiences, technological and commercial developments, and the changing ways photographers learn, create and connect.

I am an experienced writer and editor with a talent for explaining complex or technical subjects in accessible language. I have coached writers and delivered talks, webinars, workshops and multimedia content. Although much of my professional photography involves creating images to test cameras, lenses and accessories, I also value photography as a creative pursuit. I particularly enjoy long exposures and using a camera's colour and aspect-ratio controls to visualise the finished image at the point of capture. I lead on these approaches during SheClicks workshops, helping participants use their equipment more consciously to realise their ideas.

As a member of the RPS Education Committee, I understand the importance of education to the Society's charitable role. Learning now encompasses Higher and Further Education, online and peer learning, podcasts, webinars, workshops and practical experiences. Through SheClicks, I know that many photographers value the development and validation offered by RPS distinctions, but some find the process intimidating. I would support clearer, more welcoming pathways that widen participation while preserving the standards that give distinctions their value.

I founded SheClicks in 2018 and have grown it into a community of over 15,000 women photographers. Women remain under-represented across many areas of photography, but SheClicks gives direct insight into their ambitions, experiences and barriers. I use surveys, focus groups and beta testing to understand members' priorities and translate feedback into action. I also develop sponsorship proposals, build industry partnerships and create paid learning opportunities, giving me experience of income diversification and balancing commercial relationships with community interests. Through SheClicks exhibitions, I have gained experience of curation, presentation, installation, venue collaboration and public engagement.

As a director of Squeezy Media Ltd, I manage client relationships, commissions, confidentiality and commercial responsibilities. At the Environment Agency, I contributed to regulatory work and prosecutions, helped prepare tender documents, evaluate submissions and manage contracts worth more than £400,000, seeking effectiveness and best value for money rather than the lowest price.

As a Trustee, I would advocate clearly while listening generously and enquiring into others' perspectives. I seek common ground, welcome constructive challenge and delegate to those with the most appropriate expertise. I would act collectively, without a personal agenda, keeping the RPS's charitable purpose, members and long-term sustainability at the centre of decisions.

Angela Louise Nicholson ARPS



Recommended by RPS Nominations Committee



Bruno Vinel

I am standing for election as a Trustee because I want the RPS to give its members more of what they joined for: opportunities to make photographs, to learn, and to be part of a sociable, welcoming community of photographers who enjoy each other's company as much as the craft.

As Central Region Organiser since June 2025, I have seen what the Society can deliver when there is vision, structure and commitment behind it. With our committee, we built a rich programme of events, and I have personally given my time to talks, workshops, photo walks and exhibitions.

If elected, I will focus on four things members have told me matter:

Value for membership. A subscription should return something visible - events, learning, recognition and support that members can actually use. That includes regular opportunities to meet and practise photography together, and a genuine feedback loop where members can express their views regularly and the Society listens and responds.

Stronger regions and Special Interest Groups. These are where most members experience the Society. I want to see them thrive - well supported, well resourced, and with real recognition for the volunteers who make them happen - and with much better synergy between regions, SIGs and head office so we work together for members' benefit rather than in silos.

Modernisation that helps members. A website, booking system and communications that are straightforward: a clear way to see what is happening across the Society, your region and your SIGs, and events that are easy and convenient to join.

Financial sustainability and openness. Delivering the 2027-2031 strategy needs stronger income, and the focus would be on broadening it beyond membership subscriptions. Members should also be able to see clearly how the Society's money is raised and spent.

Professionally, I bring 37 years as a CFO and executive, and I now work as an executive and team coach supporting boards and leadership teams through strategy, change and growth. I understand governance, oversight and accountability, and I know how a board works effectively with its members, volunteers and staff rather than at a distance from them.

Photography is a major part of my life - digital and film, travel, street, documentary and portraiture. I am a RPS member first, and that is the perspective I would bring to every decision around the Board table. I would be genuinely excited to join the Board and to work for our members, our volunteers and the future of the Society. Thank you for your support and for your vote.

Bruno Vinel



Relevant extracts from the RPS By-Laws 2025

9. Officers and Composition of the Board of Trustees

9.1 There shall be up to **nine Trustees** who shall constitute the Board of Trustees.

9.2 The Board of Trustees shall comprise:

- a. the **President**, elected by the Members of the Society;
- b. the **Honorary Treasurer** appointed by the Board of Trustees;
- c. up to four **Elected Trustees** elected in accordance with By-Law 16; and
- d. up to three **Appointed Trustees** appointed in accordance with By-Law 16.

10. Powers of the Board of Trustees

10.1 The business of the Society shall be managed by the Board of Trustees, which may exercise all such powers of the Society and do so on behalf of the Society all such acts and things as may be exercised and done by the Society which are not reserved to the Members by the Charter or these By-Laws.

10.2 The members of the Board of Trustees, as **Charity Trustees**, are subject to charity law and must ensure the property and funds of the Society are applied only for the Objects for which the Society is constituted.

16. Elections and Appointments

16.2 A person to be nominated, elected, or appointed as a Trustee:

- a. must be a Subscribing Member, Honorary Member or Honorary Fellow of the Society;
- b. must not be in arrears with their subscriptions;
- c. must be willing to act in accordance with the Trustee Code of Conduct as set out by the Board of Trustees and published in the Regulations;
- d. if they have served as a Member of the Board of Trustees since the last election, must not have vacated office during that period;
- e. if they have previously served on the Board of Trustees must, during their tenure, have attended at least half of its meetings unless otherwise permitted by the Board of Trustees; and
- f. must be reviewed by the Nominations Committee for the purpose of nomination, election or appointment according to the criteria above.

16.3 Every Member of the Society entitled to vote at General Meetings may nominate one candidate for each of the Society's **Elective Posts**, where vacancies are to occur at the end of the next AGM:

- a. the **President**; and
- b. up to four **Elected Trustee** positions

Photo credits

Front cover: (clockwise from top left)

Alex Currie, Imogen Forte, Rachel Nixon, Toni Parnham

Back cover: (clockwise from top left, student photographers)

Pau Hernandez Bejarano, Hattie Needler, Cherie Wong, Michelle Wang

Back cover: (below) Tom Hill ARPS

The portrait of Martin Keene is by Laura Kerr



Patron

HRH The Princess of Wales

President & Chair of Trustees

Simon Hill CPhot HonFRPS

Chief Executive Officer

Victoria Humphries

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