



Laura Ford, President's speech

This year has marked a significant step forward in the visibility and reputation of the Royal Society of Sculptors. The continued success and popularity of exhibitions at Dora House, along with the strengthening of relationships with galleries and institutions, have brought sculpture to a wider and more engaged audience than ever before. These connections have not only expanded our reach but have also attracted a new and diverse audience to Dora House.

We've also seen a welcome increase in our membership broadening the scope of practice and actively participating in dynamic conversations about sculpture, enriching the collective voice and presence of the Society.

One of the most transformative undertakings this year has been the *Creating A Home For Sculptors* project. It has required immense dedication, and I would like to extend heartfelt thanks to the Building Committee for their outstanding work in supporting Caroline and pushing this project forward with such commitment and vision.

A special thank you must go to Caroline, whose leadership has been nothing short of exceptional. Managing a building project of this scale is a huge task in itself, made all the more challenging in a difficult fundraising climate. Her ability to carry this forward while also managing the day-to-day responsibilities as Director of the Society is deeply appreciated and should not be underestimated.

The building project is not only vital in ensuring Dora House is upgraded and structurally sound, but it also promises to deliver long-term benefits. The creation of dedicated space for residencies, educational programmes, and an archive will open up new opportunities for members and foster deeper engagement with the broader community.

Thanks to Maria, Lorraine and Andrea for keeping everything running smoothly and supporting Caroline but also for their enthusiasm and sense of fun – and their brilliant Christmas jumpers !

Finally, I would like to thank the sculptor members of our Board. Their contributions go far beyond the standard expectations of board membership. From running Zoom groups and judging opportunities to selecting new members twice a year, their generosity of time and expertise plays a critical role in the Society's continued growth and success.

Laura Ford, President May 2025