

BFA Membership Secretary Report for April 2023 AGM

At the time of the Membership Secretary Report for the last BFA AGM in April 2022, we had around 97 members approximate due to renewals/memberships in process).

We have gained 10 new members and two who have re-joined.

We welcome: Sarah Paul, Vera R Fryd Lyngmo, Paula Charnley, Amy McCormack, Lucy Hyde, Collete Cameron, Lisa Blaine, Vicky Thomas, Natalia Stevens, Rachel Caddick

And we welcome back Fiona Owen and Halina Rozensztrauch.

Our current membership is around 100* people as some have not renewed and some renewals are in process.

*It seems a little harder to get an accurate picture of membership numbers now as renewals now happen at all different times of the year, added to this there is not a very good way to run a report for listing members and their membership status. As the size of the association grows it will be helpful if we could run a more efficient report on active members vs expired etc. This may be something we can follow up with our web host.

Membership Secretary Role

Automating the renewals process has meant that this aspect of the role is generally a lot less time consuming. A draw back is that it is maybe a little harder to keep track of some things e.g. who is leaving etc. Almost everyone is now using the automated system where your membership renews automatically through your web profile and direct debit. It is still only possible to renew manually for those who live or have overseas bank accounts.

Much of the work of the membership secretary is now about responding to queries or problems with joining and renewing, as well as sending out some initial information to new members and generally trying (!) to be a welcoming presence to them. There is also setting new members up with buddies, although this doesn't necessarily need to be done by the same person.

There may be more potential for things like following up when someone cancels their membership – it has been a bit patchy whether I've got in touch with these people to check why and invite them to re-join in future.

I intend to step down from being Membership Sec after the 2024 AGM (April 2024) after what will have been 4.5 years roughly 'in post' I want to put this out there sooner rather than later so you can think about whether you might want to take on this role. If you want to chat with me about what it involves feel free. As the processes have changed quite a bit since it was all done manually I need to try and put some things in writing, so I will try and sketch out the processes over the next year.

Buddy system

Each time a new member joins they are paired with a Buddy and can have a phone call where they are welcomed to the BFA and have an opportunity to make personal contact with an existing member. The buddy can also serve as a point of contact for future queries, and we hope is helping new members to feel part of BFA.

Thank you to those who are currently acting as or have acted as BFA Buddies: Fiona, Carolann, Saskia, David and Cath. Thanks Susan for agreeing to do this also. If there is anyone else who would like to join the Buddy team get in touch as we may need more people going forward.