

BFA Membership Secretary Report for April 2024 AGM

At the time of the Membership Secretary Report for the last BFA AGM in April 2023, we had around 100 members (approximate number due to renewals/memberships in process).

We have gained 15 new members and two who have re-joined.

We welcome: Julian Crotti, Hilary Thorn, Marion Winslow, Sonia Galucci, Lindsay Gibson, Renne La Roi, Freda Blob, Farrukh Akhtar, Kirsty Pakes, Claire Schenk, Kathleen Kingsley, Danielle McShine, Fiona O'Meara, Naomi Silverly and Bethany Rivers.

And we welcome back Alex Maunder and Luke Farren.

Our current membership is around 118* 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

The Membership Secretary role is assisted greatly by the joining, renewal and payment system being much automated. Much of the role is now welcoming new members and communicating with them as well as dealing with queries and problems.

A reminder that it is still only possible to renew manually for those who live or have overseas bank accounts – when you get your reminder and you send your payment through, please let the Membership Secretary know so they can update your profile and ensure it stays live.

I am stepping down from being Membership Secretary after this AGM after what will have been 4.5 years roughly 'in post'. Thanks to all those who have helped me get to grips with the role in the first place or answered annoying questions during the time: Elizabeth, Kay, the Sofa past and present, Greg Ceri and Ildiko. Thanks also to Sarah Paul for volunteering to take on this role, I know that it will be in good hands!

As the processes have changed quite a bit since it was all done manually I have tried this year to write procedures and detail processes. It has felt like I have been disorganised more than I enjoy during the time I've had this role and there are various niggly tasks and projects I have not had time to attend to and which Sarah can decide if they are important enough to attend to. We will have a slow handover.

Buddy system

The buddy system also seems to be working well, so that each time a new member joins they can have a phone call with a buddy where they can gain some info and ask any questions they may have.

Thank you to those who are currently acting as BFA Buddies: David Garlovsky, Susan Jordan and Ruth Freidman. Fiona Parr is understandably stepping back from being a Buddy as she has a lot on her plate with the Sofa role. But Paula Charnley and Harriet Brown will be joining the buddy pool shortly. If there is anyone else who would like to join the Buddy team get in touch as we may need more people going forward.