

OGA Membership Secretary Report January 2021

Joiners and leavers

I have continued to record the membership in October and April. Membership numbers are lowest in early January, and still in a state of flux between January and March anyway, so current figures are frankly not of much use. Of course, there are always a few members who do not remember to pay their subscriptions till their boat is in the water, and last year, sometimes even later! You will not be surprised to learn that numbers overall have fallen further over the last year – but it could have been much worse. I have to say that, with Covid, I expected more leavers and fewer joiners that we have had – despite the restricted opportunities to get on the water, and the cancellation of most activities, many sailing folk seem to be hoping that we will be able to get back afloat in the foreseeable future.

Area	16 th October 2019	8 th April 2020	31 st October 2020
Bristol Channel	51	56	57
Dublin Bay	69	68	70
East Coast	338	308	318
Northeast	20	16	17
North Wales	52	43	45
Northwest	22	21	29
Northern Ireland	42	37	36
Overseas	12	14	16
Scotland	32	30	35
Solent	315	284	287
Southwest	139	131	139
Total memberships	1092	1008	1049
Total members (including family members, where we have names)			1306

Interested in Small Boats

(suitable for a trailer) events 134 151

More members are expressing an interest in Small Boats events, though I am not sure how accurately that reflects their ownership of a trailerable boat – but of course I do not necessarily know how many boats people have, or can borrow!

We have managed to produce a Yearbook compliant with GDPR this year, and its very production has increased the number of consents to be in it. Various people have asked why we have not included emails – basically, the answer is that more members expressed a reluctance to include them than phone numbers. (And to change that now, would involve a whole new round of obtaining consents, and might well lead to a fall in numbers.) Interest in other people's boats is the usual reason to want to get in touch with another member, of course. If a member wishes to contact another member and the phone number is not present in the Yearbook (this is true for a few members) then please contact membership@oga.org.uk, and I will do my best to put you in touch.

Finally, and this is mainly for Area secretaries and other officers: now that other officers regularly access GOLD (the membership database) I have caused some alarm by the change implemented every December, when all Paid Up members are converted to Not Paid. THIS DOES NOT MEAN THAT SOMEONE IS IN ARREARS! It only means that someone has not as yet paid the subscription for the coming year, and makes it possible for me to see where we are up to. Members have up to the end of March to pay for the coming year (though fortunately, most members pay up well before then!) At the end of March, all remaining Not Paid memberships become lapsed, and are recorded as Left OGA. I hope this makes things clearer for other GOLD users, and my apologies that I failed to anticipate this misunderstanding. Please contact me with any other queries.

Mary Gibbs
Membership Secretary