

OGA Membership Secretary Report January 2022

Joiners and leavers

I have continued to record memberships at the end of March and of October, as before. The table below shows total memberships by Area and Total memberships (the figures in brackets are total members including Family members).

Area	31st October 2020	31st March 2021	28th October 2021
Bristol Channel	57	46(58)	48
Dublin Bay	70	86(87)	89
East Coast	318	297(377)	307
Northeast	17	13(16)	16
North Wales	45	39(49)	39
Northwest	29	30(34)	31
Northern Ireland	36	31(34)	32
Scotland	35	31(39)	33
Solent	287	268(346)	285
Southwest	139	131(169)	148
Overseas (not in an area)	16	12(13)	19
Total memberships	1049(1306)		1047(1304)

Members who are interested in Small Boats (suitable for a trailer) events - 247 (I am unclear how many of these members are actually trailer sailors).

I was asked about new members, and I did a count of new members between 1st October 2020 and 15th December 2021, not counting anyone rejoining who kept their old number (a tiny handful). In this time period, there were 109 new memberships, (131 total new members). There are clearly a lot of factors in why new members join, but I note that the biggest increases as a proportion of existing members were in North West, Dublin Bay and South West areas – so well done those areas! I have also used up all the Yearbooks allocated to me for new members this year, which has never happened before (the Log editor has located a few more for me) which must mean something. It is also important to note that - though the membership figures are in a continual state of flux - the numbers have tended to drop slowly each year (as is common in organisations like ours these days) by around 50 or so per year. But the drop this year is only two - I hope that this also means something!!

From the Reasons for joining section (which not all new members complete) it is also clear that the website, as well as OGA's facebook/instagram presence, is beginning to have the greatest effect on membership numbers. In fact, any increase in awareness of our existence (boat shows, event publicity, personal recommendation and magazine articles) seems to help – so go on spreading the word! (And thanks to all those whose hard work in these areas is reflected in these numbers.)

A new way to pay

One big change (especially for me!) is the option to set up a Direct debit on-line, via GoCardless – I am still learning, but the Membership Secretary workload involved in setting up Direct debits this way is a fraction of that required before. I am still learning about the ongoing tasks involved.

We are trying to get as many members as possible to pay by Direct debit, as it requires less effort all round. About 75% of members do already pay this way, but the previous method of setting up Direct debits was considerably more cumbersome, both for the members and me. We are used now to being able to do things at the click of a mouse – so I am sure that being able to do this on-line will help our membership numbers too. (No worries for prospective members who do not have an on-line presence – we have not removed any payment options, and joining by paper form is also still perfectly possible.)