

### ***OGA Membership Secretary Report January 2023***

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).

| <b>Area</b>               | <b>28<sup>th</sup> October 2022</b> | <b>31<sup>st</sup> March 2023</b> | <b>31<sup>st</sup> October 2023</b> |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Bristol Channel           | 51                                  | 48(58)                            | 49(60)                              |
| Dublin Bay                | 119                                 | 114(117)                          | 118(122)                            |
| East Coast                | 301                                 | 299(375)                          | 315(391)                            |
| Northeast                 | 15                                  | 17(23)                            | 17(22)                              |
| North Wales               | 35                                  | 36(44)                            | 37(45)                              |
| Northwest                 | 29                                  | 27(30)                            | 34(40)                              |
| Scotland                  | 33                                  | 35(44)                            | 35(44)                              |
| Solent                    | 263                                 | 253(325)                          | 267(346)                            |
| Southwest                 | 150                                 | 142(181)                          | 160(205)                            |
| Overseas (not in an area) | 19                                  | 15(16)                            | 19(20)                              |
| <b>Total memberships</b>  | <b>1015 (1249)</b>                  | <b>989(1217)</b>                  | <b>1050(1295)</b>                   |

Of the latest figures, 298 of these memberships have expressed an interest in Small Boats. (I am unclear how many of these members are actually trailer sailors).

Some Overseas members choose a UK Area to be part of, but, of those who do not, there are 7 memberships in Continental Europe, 8 in The Americas, and 3 in the Rest of the World.

New members are still coming along at a healthy rate, and there was a definite surge early in the summer, thanks in large part to the Round Britain Challenge and OGA 60, but we do have a sizeable proportion of older members, so inevitably our losses continue. Cost issues are an increasingly obvious problem, and inevitably, the increase in subs will have exacerbated that. Both the March and the October figures are slightly higher than the year before; we shall have to see what happens next year.

Having GoCardless available to set up Direct Debits online has been very popular. The main problem is that far more members cancel it by accident, which causes me more work! I think this is probably because it is listed on Members' bank statements as "GoCardless" (to have it listed as Old Gaffers Association would cost considerably more, though the bank reference – but who looks at that? – does, I think, start with OGA). I hope the uploading process will be easier this year (thank you, Tony).

Some other issues: There have been a number of officer changes in the Areas recently. Please can I remind you all that it is VERY IMPORTANT for any deaths that you learn of to be notified to me (or my successor) as soon as possible. It's fine to tell members to notify me themselves of changes of address etc, but they can't tell me they have died, and the family or bank are often slow to do so.

Thanks to Julian Cable's hard work, there are new features in the members area on the website. As many of you will know, there is a Log in on the Boat Register, which enables the user to access the ownership of boats on the register, and it has also, for a little while now, enabled access to the online version of the Yearbook ("Members List", in the Members' Area

on the website). The "My Details" section of the Members Area will (if someone is logged in) show them the details which either are shown on them for the Members List, or which would be shown if they had consented to being included in the Yearbook. At the bottom of the "My Details" page is a button "Contact the Membership Secretary", which will show the user what details are held on them, including some - like secondary areas, and Younger Gaffers (which is NOT the same as Junior membership!) - which are not on the joining form yet. Any changes the member wants to make can be made here, and will arrive in the Membership Secretary's inbox for me to action.

The members list section can now be sorted by proximity to the member's home address. It sorts by postcode without giving peoples addresses away. And the members boats section can also be sorted by proximity of the boat's home port to a location you can choose from in a dropdown. There will be one quite near for UK & Ireland members. (But this can only be as accurate as the information we have from owners – boats do move, after all!!)

There are other, related, online developments – skipper and crewing profiles, for example – but Julian will talk about this in his "Online Crewing System" talk this evening.

And finally, I should be resigning now, but I decided to defer it by a year, as it will be easier in future for me to have time to induct and provide support for a new Membership Secretary. I am willing therefore to continue as Membership Secretary for a further year (if you want me to!) but I am going to need help to locate the right person! (I did announce it in the last Gaffers Log, but I have not been overwhelmed by interested members!) I have told the GMC that I am willing to continue to administer the Barclays Payflow Direct Debits for the foreseeable future, to make things easier for the prospective candidate (these cannot all be changed to GoCardless yet, as there are still 57 members who pay this way for whom we have no email address – and GoCardless is impossible without an email.) But I hope that the next Membership Secretary is already looking around for something they can do to support the OGA!!