

Secretary's Report 2024

Membership

	2019	2021	2022	2023
Primary members	501	505	519	546
Associates	557	584	645	650
Total	1058	1089	1164	1196

Of our current total of 1196, 1007 receive the weekly email – currently Gavin's Guff. This is a vital connection with members and promotes involvement and a sense of belonging. We are proud to be one of rather few branches that have a weekly newsletter. The proportion of the membership receiving this has risen slightly from 83.76% at the end of 2022 to 84.20%. An encouraging sign.

Turning to our ability to retain members, as at 31 December 2023 we had 546 Primary members and 650 Associates. Of these, 111 Primary and 133 Associates joined in 2023 meaning that 84 Primary (16.18% of the total) and 128 Associate members (9.84% of the total at the end of 2022) left or changed status in 2023 for whatever reason.

As we emerge further into the world post lockdown, we are more and more conscious of changes. Increasingly, park authorities etc. are requesting a fee if we wish to take challenge events over their property and sometimes they impose restrictions. Hall fees have increased more than expected. Members are making it clear that they appreciate the safety net of announced possible exit points before the end of our social walks.

As ever, it is difficult to recruit members to committee posts. Much thanks is due to those who do put in such good service and also to other individuals who regularly make generous contributions of time and knowledge.

I am stepping down this year after an interesting and stimulating time as Secretary. Lonica Vanclay and Gordon Parker are taking on the role and I am confident that I am leaving the post in good hands.