



MINUTES of the 52nd ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Held at 11:30 GMT on 25 March 2023

Maidenhill School, Stonehouse, GL10 2HA and also via Zoom.

The Chair began by welcoming the Members to the Meeting and then proceeded as per the Agenda.

1. Apologies for Absence

Formal apologies were received from Simon Maltby, Felicity Palmer, David Avery, Sandra Brown, Richard and Jane Bartrop, Brian Hillsdon, David Abrahams, John Puddy, Mike Cole, Sam Leese, David Higgins, Mike Potts, John Richardson, Dave Biss.

Vice President Brian Smith then read out the names of the Members who passed away over the previous 12 months and said a few words on behalf of the SBA in remembrance for those Members. A short silence was held.

2. Minutes of the 51st AGM

The Chair then asked for any corrections or comments on the accuracy of the Minutes of the previous AGM. There being no corrections offered, it was proposed by Roger Powell and seconded by Marguerite Calvert that the Minutes be adopted as a true record. The proposal was approved by the meeting and members voting online with 14 abstentions.

Note: The meeting was informed that online voting had taken place (closing at midnight 24 March) and that the votes had been collated and were being taken into account for each vote taking place in the hall at the meeting.

3. Matters Arising from the Minutes not elsewhere on the Agenda

Christine Monkhouse, our scrutineer for the 2021 and 2022 accounts, pointed out that, although the report had been given in good faith, her opinion was that there was an error in the Chairman's report from the 2022 AGM in that it referred to the repayments to overseas members who were unable to attend as being an element of the loss made whereas the overseas members who were repaid were repaid only the sum that they had paid in.

4. Chair's Address

The Chair, John Jewsbury, expressed a warm welcome to the SBA's 52nd AGM and thanked everyone for attending, especially those who had a big journey. John then provided the following report:

"I start my report by offering a huge thank you to all those who so freely give their time to help run this very special club. Sometimes what goes on in the background is not seen or appreciated for its true worth so - **a huge thank you to our many volunteers**. This last year has been an extremely busy one and I am pleased to confirm that your club has achieved a great deal for members in the last 12 months.

The first thing is the Membership Survey

Membership Survey (1)

We have just completed our first ever Members Online Survey. The results are in and are published on the website for all to see.

Several things stand out:

Firstly, the extent of member participation... so far we have a response rate of well over 30% of our members which is truly exceptional for a survey

Secondly, over 80% of respondents are perfectly happy with the club exactly as it is! Now, I realise this means some 20% would like changes so I am also pleased that most of that 20% offered constructive positive suggestions for how things can be improved.

I promise we are listening and will be working hard to make the SBA even better!

Membership Survey (2)

Additionally, the survey revealed a large number of good folk offering their services as event organisers, committee members or volunteers. As we intentionally made the survey confidential, we are unable to identify these members from the survey data. So, if you were one of those volunteering, please let us know – contact me or the Secretary Gillie, or Roger our Membership Sec by email, phone, scrap of paper or whatever. All our details are on the website. We will also be sending invitations to all in an effort to specifically identify those who want to step forward.

Subscriptions

Our Subs increase was achieved successfully – securing the future and stability of your club. The additional cost for UK membership of the World's Best Steam Boat Club increased (for most) by just over £1 per month - all that was required to bring the long overdue correction needed.

Meanwhile your committee has remained focused on ensuring the SBA gets value for every pound spent and I believe our Treasurer's report illustrates the point.

As a result of some forward thinking, and despite the crazy inflation we are all suffering right now, I am pleased to report your club is now well placed to safely evolve and offer stability to members.

Thank you all!

SBA Website and "online-ness"

There have been huge improvements to the SBA website and background computer systems that help us operate. Thanks to our very hard-working IT Team of Roger Calvert, Ian Davies and Malcolm Duckett A lot of background general housekeeping has gone on here to streamline performance.

We are also running a sequence of training classes on Zoom to help our Administrators, Area reps and Event organisers better use our systems and to make life easier and the club better.

If you haven't visited the site recently – do take a look

The “Social Side” of the SBA

The social aspect of your club is, of course, fundamentally important.

Once we have fully analysed the results of the Members' Survey, Dot Bullough will be planning new initiatives tailored to dovetail sweetly with members' wishes.

Dot also now heads up our **Publicity activities** and, again, we intend looking at what members have asked for. We can then finalise plans on how best to move the SBA forward for you all.

Area Reps and Area Forums

Area reps are being encouraged to step up the contact with their flock. A big thank you to the members who have volunteered to become Reps for regions who had lost their shepherd.

Also a big thank you to the team who have updated and improved the Website areas for our regions.

So, now all regions have Area Forums where folk will be able to find out, and contribute to, what's going on locally to them.

We are also hoping for more talks and seminars appearing as events unfold.

Ask questions on your local forum and participate with answers too – they should work really well once they start to get widely used.

Events for New Steamboaters

Last year, in addition to regular rallies, we held two **Get your Feet Wet/Keep your Feet Dry** type days. They were very successful and a brilliant initiative designed to introduce new folk to the mysteries of steam boating.

We need volunteers to roll this out over more of the country, please, and one in the Anglian region would be especially good. If you want to know how to run one then speak to Ian Bucknall who was involved in running both – or indeed Mark Rudall or Dot Bullough.

Mark Rudall and Nigel Thomson also ran the “Water, Fire and Steam” event which was described as “a convivial day with a focus on boilers and boiler making for your steam launch. If you operate, or want to operate, a steam launch or are thinking of building one, then often the biggest challenge is the boiler”.

Events

We have had many excellent events over the last year covering the whole of the country from Scotland to Cornwall. They included the Thames Rally, West Country Fal Rally, Bristol Harbour Festival, President's Rally, Windermere rally and Puffing-a-Wey.

Great work by all.

This year all these lovely events will be repeated plus we hope to add a couple of new ones for you too including the Evesham Festival and the Coronation Event on Windermere.

Watch the website for the latest details.

Safety

We now have a new official **Club Safety Policy** together with a new, easy to use, Risk Assessment form for hesitant event organisers.

Thank you, Ian Bucknall and Gillie, who have spent so many hours on these important documents - nowadays essential for any club or association.

Publications

The **50@50** publication was published on time, on budget and has been widely praised – it makes fascinating reading for all. If you missed it then please note only limited stocks are left now for sale.

To close

I have no doubt that every single SBA member is a steam enthusiast and looks to the good of the club. Be assured your committee has the same outlook. That is why we are here to serve. We are listening and doing our very best for you. If you feel we are missing something or indeed that you have ideas you would like to see adopted, step forward and let us know!

Thank you for your support.

And now – our Honorary Membership Secretary Roger Powell. A man on your committee who has had a very busy year and worked so hard to make terrific progress in ensuring correct subs are received from all our members.”

5. Membership Report

The Hon. Membership Secretary, Roger Powell, gave the following report to the meeting:

Current membership status

The total membership list shows a membership of 781 but this figure includes various test fields and complimentary members; the net figure reported is 756.

Split as follows:

Honorary Members: 7

UK Members (STO): 112

UK Members (DD): 417

UK Members (other): 44

Worldwide Members (STO): 8

Worldwide Members (DD): 2

Worldwide Members (other): 166

Out of those 756 members at the time of this report 604 were active 152 were lapsed.

152 members in a lapsed state is not unusual for this time in the year, the reason being either non or under payment of subscriptions.

Actions taken to collect unpaid or the balance of underpaid subscriptions include a statement from the Membership Secretary in the Spring issue of Funnel whereby each member’s status was shown on the address page that accompanied Funnel and an email to all lapsed members with an active email address asking them to pay. We have also written to those members with no active email address. In all cases we have offered several alternative payment methods.

To date we have had response from 32 members. 4 members have cancelled their memberships; 25 members have paid their subscription and are now active members. So at this stage we could, potentially, lose 123 members at the end of March, subject to the Committee approving this position.

Payment Methods

The SBA preferred method of payment remains the Direct Debit and this is the only option offered to new UK members.

For Worldwide members, PayPal is the preferred method. I am pleased to report that, other than a few problems, this route has worked well.

For existing members we still offer the option to continue to pay via STO, Cheque / Postal Order or directly into our SBA account. But I point out to any UK lapsed members that, should the Committee decide to end their membership for underpayment of subscriptions and they wish to re-join, their only option will be by setting up a direct debit.

6. Financial Report and adoption of Accounts

The Hon. Treasurer, Nigel Thomson, gave the following report to the meeting:

“First, some thanks. First of all I must thank Christine Monkhouse for her help with preparing the accounts. Christine was my predecessor as Association Treasurer and she has been a member for many years. I am sure she will wish to say a few words after my presentation.

Events & Subsidies

The Association's income has increased this year, all the events held generated a profit (There is a small additional income for the Windermere Christmas social which will appear in the 2023 accounts).

It is surely correct that event organisers should aim to break even, and this is a principle that I think the Committee now embraces. However, we also know that the AGM does represent a net cost the Association, but it is the price of democracy.

The loss-making at Windermere 2021 caused the Committee to discuss and consider its position in respect of subsidising events. I believe that we now recognise that it is probably our more affluent members that are able to attend an event with their boat (there were only 56 boats that attended Rallies in the UK in 2022), and asking the rest of the membership to subsidise these members' hobby is unacceptable.

Moreover, if the Association was to choose to subsidise one event each year (such as Windermere), one could expect other event organisers to think it appropriate for members to subsidise their events too. (e.g. Thames / Loch Lomond / Coventry canal etc.), and this would be difficult to resist while maintaining a level of fairness.

Steam Boat Association of Great Britain

Events Income & Expenditure y.e. 31.12.2022

Events 2022	2022			2021
	Receipts	Payments	Surplus / deficit	
Windermere	4,684	4,350	334	(7,853)
Thames	2,225	1,804	421	
Windermere Social	350	359	(9)	
Bourton Social				84
Puff a Wey / Feet Wet	140	50	90	50
Calstock				192
Keeping Feet Dry	298	0	298	
	<u>7,697</u>	<u>6,563</u>	<u>1,134</u>	<u>(7,527)</u>
Surplus / (Deficit) on Events				
AGM 2022	1,584	1,805	(221)	0
	<u>1,584</u>	<u>1,805</u>	<u>(221)</u>	<u>0</u>
Surplus / (Deficit) on all	£9,281	£8,368	£913	(7,527)
	=====	=====	=====	=====

Income and Expenditure

Income

2022 Subscription income is up, due largely to the effect of increased subscription rates for 2023. This appears in the 2022 accounts because of the income derived from members who pay early via by PayPal . This year that early payment was approximately £1,200.

Funnel advertising is up to its traditional level thanks to Richard Havard's efforts.

Expenditure

The basic cost of running the Association has been £18,500 for 2022 and this is a very similar amount to that which it has cost for all of my tenure as treasurer.

The adoption of new technologies (like Zoom for Committee meetings) counteracts increasing costs (largely postal).

In the recent member survey 33% of responders expressed an interest in receiving Funnel in a digital format (a pdf file); this should allow a future committee, interested in promoting the hobby, to offer "digital membership" at less than £10 a year.

There have been two exceptional (one-time) outgoings this year:

1. The 50@50 publication at a cost of £3,260; and
2. The writing off of 1/3rd of the book value of the shop's stock (£1,505). I feel that the Association will definitely be able to realise the £3,010 that our stock is now valued at, particularly with the sales promotion currently in process.

Summarising this page of the accounts, we can see that after the two exceptional costs above the Association still made a trading profit this year of approximately £2,500.

Income & Expenditure Account y.e. 31.12.2022

	2022	2021
Sales	769	1,169
Stock bfwd	4,745	5,000
Purchases	539	931
	<u>5,284</u>	<u>5,931</u>
less written off	1,505	
less closing stock	<u>3,010</u>	<u>4,745</u>
	<u>769</u>	<u>1,186</u>
Surplus / (Deficit) on Sales	0	(17)
 Events 2022		
Surplus / (loss) on events	913	(7,527)
 Income		
Subscriptions	19,874	18,332
Advertising	825	
Donations	70	150
	<u>20,769</u>	<u>18,482</u>
 Expenditure		
Funnel	13,431	15,553
50 @ 50 booklet	3,260	
Telephone and postage	188	362
Stationery and Printing	151	14
Insurance	536	510
Committee expenses	1,203	718
Development costs	256	142
Website	2,170	1,684
PayPal charges	486	605
Stock written off	1,505	
Subscriptions	140	205
Sundry		79
	<u>23,326</u>	<u>19,871</u>
Surplus / (Deficit) for the year	<u>£(1,644)</u>	<u>£(8,933)</u>

Balance Sheet

Moving on to the Balance Sheet; cash in the bank was £15,316 at the end of the year, rather more than I predicted at the last AGM.

My prediction for the end of this year (2023) is £21,000.

Your committee has decided that they do not expect the SBAS to repay the £1,500 loan the SBA provided to the SBAS (to cover their short-term losses caused by the reduction in boiler testing resulting from Covid) for up to 10 years.

And, on that subject, the SBAS (which is an "arm's length" limited company) is intending to have a table top display of its new range of castings at this year's AGM. They plan to offer further castings including the Phil Moore's twin simple (I built one of these 15yrs ago which now pushes my launch Anna Jayne very well). Moreover, John King very generously has given the SBAS the IP (Intellectual Property) to his range of water tube boilers. These activities should also create an income stream so I think there is a very good chance of the SBAS having a viable and valuable future.

It is clear from these accounts that it is likely that the Association will be amassing significant surpluses in the future and, at the moment, we have no indication of how the Association intends to spend

them. The Committee has voted that in future a binding and agreed budget is prepared each year, to ensure we have a clear view of future expenditure.

**Steam Boat Association of Great Britain
Balance Sheet as at 31.12.2022**

	2022	2021
Current assets		
Stock	3,010	4,745
	Banks Santander 3,687	9,812
	Lloyds 1,398	4,468
	PayPal 10,231	2,804
	<u>15,316</u>	<u>17,084</u>
Debtors and Prepayments		
Loan SBAS	1,500	1,500
AGM 2022 Payments in advance		200
Total Current Assets	<u>19,826</u>	<u>23,529</u>
Current liabilities		
Subscriptions in advance	4,082	3,276
AGM 2023 receipts in advance	810	111
Accrual – Funnel		<u>3,564</u>
Current Liabilities	<u>4,892</u>	<u>6,951</u>
Assets less Liabilities	<u>14,934</u>	<u>£16,578</u>
	=====	=====
Represented by:		
Reserves Bfwd 1.1.2022	16,578	25,511
Deficit for year	(1,644)	(8,933)
Reserves Cfwd 31.12.2022	<u>£14,934</u>	<u>£16,578</u>
	=====	=====

Looking to the future

I think it is important that the next time we hold an election for chairperson the candidates present a costed manifesto which I hope will include a digital membership at less than £10 and a full traditional UK membership for less than £30.

At the last AGM I expressed my desire to give up the role of Treasurer and requested a volunteer to take over. Mark Leadeham put his name forward and has been helping during the year to understand the roll, and I am pleased to nominate him, and think he will be an excellent Treasurer.

It is a hard fact that the Treasurer has an important and difficult role, a significant part of which is to take the punch bowl away when the party gets out of hand!!

On a personal level, I like to cover the costs of my own pleasures and have therefore donated £100 to the Association to cover my part of the over expenditure on the 50th Anniversary Windermere event and encourage others to do likewise – please contact new Treasurer for payment details.

Comments from our 2022 Scrutineer

The Scrutineer for the 2022 Accounts, Christine Monkhouse, then made the following report to the meeting:

“There are a lot of members here who are new to me, and I expect I am new to a lot of you, so I’d like to start with my credentials. I have been a member for 43 years. My son Pete bicycled from Lowestoft to Windermere to join in with the 1980 Rally when he was fifteen, then the next year we organised a Rally on the Broads at Horning before we even had a boat. We made some innovations – hired a marquee, hired the Wherry Olive to accompany the fleet and provide some accommodation, prepared an on-site Friday meal and barbecue on Saturday, showed The African Queen film in the evening, and made a cine film of the event. I think at the time this was quite unusual.

Thereafter we took our sixteen footer Phaeton to half a dozen rallies every year, including the full length of the Thames twice, sleeping on board, and half a dozen cruises in France on the northern rivers and canals. We also went to Brest Maritime 2000, where she was the only boat in steam.

We organised at least 6 East Anglian Rallies – possibly many more – I haven’t kept count

Along the way, Laurence became Membership Secretary, then later Treasurer, and Chairman, and was a Vice President until his death in 2008. I was unpaid assistant for his financial jobs – actually I was the Treasurer in all but name! In 2007 I became Treasurer for 6 years.

I learnt to be a Treasurer at a preschool Playgroups meeting when I was pressured into doing it, I was given two cardboard boxes of stuff, and told the previous Treasurer was in Saudi Arabia and could not be contacted.

I have also worked as Treasurer for the Excelsior Trust, a historic fishing smack, the International Boat Building Centre, and the Lydia Eva Trust, amongst other charities and non-profit groups. For the Lydia Eva I obtained and managed a National Lottery Grant of over £1 million, to their satisfaction – and boy! do they take some satisfying!

So I do have a history with accounts!

The 2022 accounts.

These look to me to be in good shape, and with £15,000 in the banks at the year end, the Committee will need to come up with some ideas for approval at next year’s AGM on using the increased income from the subscriptions. I believe sorting out which financial year the various prepayments and liabilities for Windermere and Funnel, were in, and also the expectation of paying £3,000 for the 50 @ 50 book, led to a pessimistic view of the SBA’s net worth, and led to the knee-jerk reaction of a 63% increase in subscriptions. And I would like to congratulate Nigel on his generous donation towards the costs of Windermere 2021.

Moving on

On Tuesday this week, I received an email from the Chairman asking why I wanted to speak after the Treasurer’s report, so that the Committee could consider my request.

I think this is the point to remind those gathered here that the Reporting Accountant is appointed by the members at the AGM. I am responsible to the members, not to the Committee, and not to the Chairman. Therefore, I can give an independent and unbiased view.

On Wednesday, I received what I can only describe as a gagging email from the Chairman, effectively restricting me to the 2022 accounts only, and not the other matters in my report.

Now, the 2022 accounts do not spring to life like Botticelli's Venus. They are linked to the finances that have gone before. And as Reporting Accountant, I had some concerns after the previous year's problems.

These were about Paypal and the difficulty in tracing invoices and payments through the accounts. I raised this matter with an email to every member of the committee in March last year but had no response until Wednesday, twelve months later. I am now satisfied that Malcolm Duckett has beaten Paypal and Wild Apricot into submission, and those problems will not arise in the future.

This will also serve to safeguard our volunteers with protection against any suggestions of impropriety. Let me make clear – I am NOT suggesting this happened – but it would have been very hard to demonstrate otherwise at that time.”

It was proposed to the meeting that members approve the financial statements for 2022. The meeting voted to approve the financial statements with 11 abstentions.

It was also proposed that Nigel Thomson be approved to review the financial statements of the SBA for 2023. This was proposed by Mark Leadeham and seconded by Mike Bell. The meeting voted to approve Nigel Thomson as the reviewer for the 2023 financial statements with 6 abstentions.

7. Election of Officers and Committee

At this point the Chair, John Jewsbury, stepped down and our President, Michael Forsyth, took over proceedings.

Chair:

Our President praised the Association as hugely valuable and emphasised the need to attract new and younger members to ensure that steam boating and the heritage associated with it continue to thrive.

Our President then announced that there was one nomination for Chair – John Jewsbury. The nomination of John Jewsbury was proposed by Ian Lindsay and seconded by Roger Powell. The nomination was put to the vote and approved with 5 abstentions and 4 votes against and it was confirmed that John Jewsbury was duly elected as Chair for 2023-2024.

John Jewsbury then turned to the task of electing the Officers and then the Committee Members.

Officers:

Mark Leadeham was the sole nominee for Treasurer. His nomination was proposed by Nigel Thomson and seconded by John Jewsbury. The nomination was approved by the meeting with 4 abstentions.

Gillie Slater agreed to continue as Hon Secretary and was proposed by John Jewsbury and seconded by Adrian Greco. The nomination was approved by the meeting with 3 abstentions and 2 votes against.

Roger Powell agreed to continue as Hon Membership Secretary and was proposed by Les Gordon and seconded by Adrian Greco. The nomination was approved by the meeting with 1 abstention.

Committee Members:

John Winn, Andy Hopper, Mark Leadeham and Malcolm Duckett agreed to continue as Committee members and were proposed by Ian Lindsay and seconded by Roger Powell. All nominations were approved by the meeting. There were 2 abstentions for Andy Hopper, 7 abstentions for Mark Leadeham and 1 abstention for Malcolm Duckett.

Dot Bullough was proposed as a new committee member by John Jewsbury and the nomination was seconded by Helen Steeple. The nomination was approved by the meeting with 1 abstention and 2 votes against.

Kevin Slater was proposed as a new committee member by Nigel Cooper and the nomination was seconded by Clive Lee. The nomination was approved by the meeting with 6 abstentions and 2 votes against.

Richard Cooksley was proposed as a new committee member by Alan Davis and the nomination was seconded by Nigel Cooper. The nomination was approved by the meeting with 7 abstentions.

8. Publications Report

Our editor of Funnel, Kevin Slater, gave the following report to the meeting:

“As the relative new boy (only five issues under my belt) I am still finding my feet as the editor of Funnel. As I said when I was press ganged, er, sorry, volunteered to take on the editorship; any changes will be evolutionary rather than revolutionary.

I don't think there will be many of you here that don't know that Funnel is by far the costliest element of running our Association and, as the editor of it, I am conscious that I am spending a lot of your money! I am working hard to make sure that you receive value for that money.

The only major change that I have made is the software that I use to put the magazine together (Adobe InDesign in case you are interested) and, whilst it was (is!) a steep learning curve, I am happy to report that it is a fantastic piece of software and I haven't yet found anything that it won't do – many things that I don't know how to make it do, but that is just more learning for me. There is a reason why it is the industry standard and used by Hobbs, our printers. It also costs less than the previous software and comes with lots of added Adobe 'bells and whistles'.

The recent survey that the Committee instigated showed a very positive response to Funnel with 25% of respondents voting it as their top reason for being members and 63% not wanting to save money by going electronic. I will restate now that there are certainly no plans for Funnel to go purely electronic.

Another 'fact' that I took from the survey was that 80% are happy with the way the organisation is run – something that I hope the Committee takes on board.

I must reiterate that this is YOUR magazine and I really, really need your help to make it a success. I can't write all the copy myself (and it would probably be very dull and technical if I did) so please contribute – stories about your boat activities, articles about your boat building activities, engineering articles (especially engineering articles!) or just drop me a line for the letters section. Do NOT worry about your writing/spelling/punctuation – I can make those mistakes for you!

To conclude, I would like to thank my regular contributors, especially Andy Hopper, and my proof-readers Rob Van Es and my dad John. Gillie usually sticks her oar in as well and is invaluable at providing 'facts' that I have forgotten – so a big thank you to them.”

9. SBA Services Report

Malcolm Duckett, Secretary and Treasurer of SBA Services Limited (SBAS), gave the following report for the last year on behalf of Julian Garratt (Chair) and the directors of SBAS:

“Background & Trading Position

The SBAS was set up in 1991 to provide low-cost services to steam-boaters. It is a separate (not-for-profit) trading company. It is not owned by the SBA (to ensure that liability for our operations cannot fall upon the SBA’s Officers or Members). The Company is run by a Company Management Committee and Directors, all of whom must be SBA Members.

During the year under review, SBAS carried out 62 inspections, despite 72 being booked.

Although this was well below our expected break-even position of 70, we did in fact manage to make a small profit of £400.

Our costs and routes to cheaper inspections

You will have seen our contribution in the latest Funnel, bringing you up to date with all that is happening within SBAS.

Whilst I don’t want to repeat all that we have said there, I would draw your attention to the need to increase the fixed inspection fee to cover our escalating insurance costs. (Which constitute over 50% of our total operating costs).

We are not just accepting these increases but are looking at all possibilities to cap or even reduce them. Three of us recently held a Zoom meeting with our insurance broker to examine each policy in detail and to see what options there are for us.

Clearly an increase in the number of inspections or other sources of income (see below) will enable this charge to be held or even reduced over time.

On that subject the recent membership survey revealed that of those responding, 70 used an inspection service other than SBAS. We realise that some of those will be overseas members, but it does indicate that there is potential for us to increase the number of inspections, and this is the route to reducing our charges for inspections.

We would like to hear from any of those people as to what it is that we need to do to enable them to use SBAS.

Organisational Changes

Bill Hall has been our Company Secretary and Treasurer for at least 14 years and last year he indicated to us that he wished to step down. He has done a wonderful job for us guiding us through some difficult waters, and deserves your thanks. Luckily for us Malcolm Duckett was prepared to come on board, and we are grateful to him for taking on this challenge.

When Malcolm approached Santander (our Bank) to change the authorised signatories, he was told that we had too many directors for such a small business and that they could not accept our business unless we reduced the number. To meet this ultimatum, we have reduced the number of directors to three. The chairperson, Secretary/treasurer, and the scheme administrator. The other four directors have agreed to become “Technical Members” of the Company and will sit on the Company Management Committee together with the remaining Directors. This is important as four of the members of the management committee are, or have been, professional boiler inspectors and ensure that we keep our feet firmly on the floor. Essentially, nothing will change but hopefully the bank is satisfied.

Boiler Inspectors

The good news is that we have been able to recruit three new boiler inspectors covering two of the areas that we have had difficulty in covering, namely East Anglia and The South West.

We are still on the lookout for new inspectors particularly in areas that are geographically still difficult for us to cover.

The recent membership survey indicated that several members were interested in becoming inspectors. If a person has a suitable skill set, we are able to provide mentoring by an experienced inspector. Please do get in touch with any of the committee of SBAS.

Please also be aware that in some regions we already have a number of inspectors in place, and appointing more in the same region will mean that the inspectors in that area will have fewer inspections to undertake, and (like the boilers) we don't want them getting rusty!

We have also taken on a new Design Assessor, whose role is to undertake a mechanical engineering assessment of any new, or proposed boiler design, to ensure it is safe and acceptable for inclusion in the Boiler Inspection Scheme or in the Boiler Design Library.

Design Library

As you are aware, the SBAS has available for sale a number of certified boiler designs. The Boiler Library's net contribution for the year was £251, as against last year's figure of £414.

There was a significant reduction in purchases of actual designs. This may be a lock down effect as the previous two years saw sales of designs up. At our recent meeting it was agreed to increase our prices both for the design library and actual designs to reflect commercial rates for such designs. This is important as increasing revenue from the sale of designs is another route to reducing the cost of Boiler Inspections.

As mentioned in the Funnel, we are very fortunate and grateful that John King has donated his popular water-tube designs to us to include in the library. Hopefully, this will prove to be another tool in offsetting our costs and reducing charges.

Patterns and Castings – a new service

A new initiative we have decided to undertake this year is to extend our design service to include patterns for castings and also some hull drawings. This has been made possible by the estate of Glynn Lancaster-Jones bequeathing his hull designs to the SBAS and the generosity of a number of members (very notably Ian Cross) in donating a large number of patterns for castings to the SBAS too.

After some consideration, we have decided that, rather than loaning the patterns to members, some of which would cost hundreds of pounds to replace, we will offer non-ferrous and iron castings to members. To that end, and to assess which castings members are most interested in, John Maltby (who has taken the lead in organising and operating this new service) has a table at the AGM to show what is available and we hope to have a preliminary price list too.

Final Words

Those of you who use SBAS to carry out your boiler inspections will know what a great job Chris Davies does as scheme administrator and we are very fortunate to have him. My thanks to the other directors (Ian Coupe, Chris Drake) for all their work and input throughout the year."

The Chair thanked the Members for their attention and, there being no further business, closed the meeting at 13:20.

Approved and signed:

[xx] March 2024

John Jewsbury - Chairman