

NAFAS Profile	Summary of replies	Chat
<p>When Nicky became chair in October last year, she made a comment to the effect of people haven't heard of NAFAS. What strategy do the Board have to rectify this?</p>	<p>We have an ongoing commitment to raise the profile of NAFAS in many different ways. Our website and social media will be key, and we have recently had a stall at the Interflora World Cup and at the Harrogate Show. The Flower Arranger magazine always carries a full-page advert on the Association, but there will be no quick fix on this, we have to continue to find opportunities to meet with the general public.</p>	
<p>As the number of clubs closing across the country continues to rise, does the NAFAS Board now have plans in place for a Board led communications strategy? Sunday Supplements, trade magazines and the whole host of women's magazines on the market (hard copy and digital) generally welcome offers from charitable organisations, to give a profile-raising update on their work, the way they operate nationally (and internationally) plus a few bios of Board Members and local club members. It would cost NAFAS nothing but time to make enquiries, pull together some text, photographs and hints and tips. Local clubs advertise locally and cheaply – what is needed is a clear introduction to NAFAS at a much higher level. Without this high-level publicity intervention closures will continue at pace – and how that benefits NAFAS is impossible to imagine. Will the Board take up this issue?</p>	<p>Our staff levels at Head Office include just two full time employees and any additional work will require more resources.</p> <p>Enquiries made to a well-known Sunday newspaper magazine found that a full-page advert would cost in the region of £50K. If we could guarantee that an ad of this kind would generate new members then we would not hesitate in advertising in this way.</p>	

<p>As a club we are very concerned about declining membership and we are doing all we can within our limited monetary resources to address the issue. Does NAFAS centrally have any plans to promote flower arranging nationally – e.g. by association with RHS, supermarkets, magazines, or TV?</p>	<p>We do have an affiliation with the RHS and are working with them on a new talent competition which some, but not all of our Areas are getting involved. The winner of this competition will be representing NAFAS at Chelsea in 2025.</p>	
<p>Club support & challenges facing membership retention: What plans are in place to better support individual clubs?</p> <p>Nationwide marketing: What plans are in place for a nationwide marketing promotion to promote clubs to the wider community of garden and plant enthusiasts, especially the younger generations? (i.e. digital outreach, TV & media campaigns, Gardner's World and similar TV programs and magazines, Festivals and shows?)</p>	<p>Clubs are autonomous. They are best placed to find ways to increase their membership. We do hear from clubs that have been successful with recruitment and we will create a new page on our website to share those ideas.</p> <p>A team is being formed including Trustees, Area Chairmen and members to work on a nationwide promotion for National Flower Arranging Day 2025 working cohesively will promote NAFAS fully.</p>	<p>Surrey has just put together a paper on promoting membership. We will put it on our website soon.</p>
<p>Membership is fundamental to the success of NAFAS, what are your proposals to reverse the national decline in numbers?</p> <p>Perhaps the Trustees should address the precarious state of their grass roots, the Floral Art Clubs, whose numbers are declining, their expense increasing, which ultimately will lead to a decrease in Affiliation Fees and the consequences of this to the organisation. What help is NAFAS giving to the Floral Art Clubs?</p>	<p>One of the problems we face at Head Office is that we don't know who our membership is. Affiliation Fees are paid to the club who then pass on to the Area, who then pass the sum on to Head Office. The returns form shows the name of the club and the number of members, but we do not know who you are, what your club offers, the financial position of the club, how much you charge your members.</p> <p>Without the basic information, how do you expect NAFAS to support 960 clubs?</p>	<p>In Mercia and North Wales, we are trying to encourage sharing of best practice by introducing a Buddy Scheme with clubs and the Area team similar to the National Buddy Scheme. It is slow to get going but I am going to keep going and hopefully it will prove to help bridging the gap between National, Area and Clubs.</p>

	<p>We do support clubs with guidance on policies, insurance, governance etc. Club Chairman can contact Head Office and speak to the team at any time.</p>	
<p>Could the Board provide some suggestions for our club to gain more members. Our current membership consists of women over 65 years old, so we are aiming to target this gender and age group. (We have feedback indicating that younger women are generally working or involved with childcare and if they have spare time, they are inclined to pursue more active past-times).</p> <p>Our current advertising activities: 20 locations with posters, within 5 miles of the Club's venue. 7 publications, either with information about our forthcoming meetings or we have written articles about the members' workshops and the other activities. A couple of inserts on-line (our feedback also indicates that older women are less inclined to look on-line for hobbies or past times). We usually attend a community event in the summer and one pre-Christmas to advertise our club and sell flower-related items. We encourage members' word of mouth advertising. All these activities have not significantly influenced new member recruitment, but they have negatively impacted upon our time, energy, and finances. I daresay, other clubs would also like some suggestions about membership recruitment.</p>	<p>Our suggestion is that you target the generations below, the 40's -50's this is where clubs are having most success.</p> <p>As mentioned before, we will create a page on the website for clubs to share their ideas, initiatives, and successes.</p> <p>As we grow our database, we will have a better idea of the membership and will be able to promote local activity to members who ask to be kept informed of events.</p>	<p>Personally, I feel this will happen gradually once the database is made available. We still have members for who we only have postal addresses. People will move gradually to the digital database but the tool needs to be available first.</p> <p>It's because we need to promote & support our own club events and not NAFAS National events.</p> <p>Would be good to start with a National database of all JDSE personnel.</p> <p>A database is a powerful tool when seeking sponsorship and partnerships.</p> <p>It should be about adding value rather than offering discounts.</p> <p>Are the objections of a few holding back the majority.</p> <p>It would be great to know who our members are at Area level as well as nationally BUT some members are scared of being on a database.</p>

EDUCATION / OFQUAL	Summary of replies	Chat
<p>Increased pressure from competitors: How do you see floral art emerging? What influence will Ofqual recognition have?</p> <p>Training: Will you continue to support training for all disciplines (i.e. demonstrators, speakers, judges, education)</p>	<p>We think the Ofqual will open new doors for us and attract news members to our clubs.</p> <p>We will continue to support training for all our disciplines at national level.</p>	
<p>I'm currently undertaking a floristry course and have also become involved in an ecofriendly project whereby we collect floral tributes from the local crematoriums to try to recycle the plastic to reduce land fill. The waste of oasis and flowers is mind blowing and the plastic the same. I would ask. What is NAFAS doing to educate demonstrators to work with more ecofriendly materials to support land fill please?</p>	<p>Beryl Cotton, Chairman, National Demonstrators Committee was asked to reply to this question, her reply can be found on the NAFAS website.</p>	
<p>I would like to ask "whether NAFAS will consider establishing a system to allow clubs to provide feedback on quality and performance demonstrations?" This could be anonymised and would be with the intention of being constructive and ensuring consistency in the standards that training and qualifications provides.</p> <p>Thank you for considering this question.</p>	<p>This is an interesting idea; we will take it to the Standing Committees for consideration.</p>	
	<p>NAFAS already subsidises the training of National disciplines, we have never got involved at Area level.</p>	<p>As an Area we would have put demonstrator training on before now but we only have 5 candidates and cannot afford the training unless we have 10 candidates. I would like to enquire could there be a bursary for some of the training with all the disciplines.</p>

	<p>All those taking tests are likely to go on and earn money from their expertise. This is their investment into their future. NAFAS cannot afford to pay for all testing when those involved are paying just £7.50 Affiliation Fee.</p> <p>This has been raised before and is a very valid point. Nicky has regular meetings with Standing Committee Chairmen and will raise this at the next meeting.</p> <p>On the subject of reviews of demonstrators and speakers, this is something that Nicky will discuss with the Standing Committee Chairmen.</p>	<p>BB&O have 6 trainees from our own Area with 4 from other areas taking part.</p> <p>NAFAS sets the fees for testing judges, speakers, demonstrators etc why can't NAFAS actually pay for testing.</p> <p>You had to pay for City & Guilds exams.</p> <p>I do not know of any professional body that does not charge for the qualification.</p> <p>Can we look at a cheaper way of continuous development for our disciplines. At the moment they cost over £300 for each one (because they include accommodation) which I feel is expensive, especially if you are in more than one discipline. Wouldn't a day workshop be a better option.</p> <p>I like a weekend away though as it's great for talking with others.</p> <p>Cheshire Area is working to address this within the Area.</p> <p>Maybe we could use the smiley emojis as they do in airports rather than use the written word as that is open to abuse.</p> <p>I don't think it should be assumed that the feedback would be negative.</p> <p>BB&O have online feedback forms on their website for all disciplines.</p>
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FINANCE	Summary of replies	Chat
<p>Financial deficit. What plans are in place to manage the deficit and what is the latest balance?</p> <p>Operational cost relating to the events organised: How and what network connections are being leveraged for sponsorship and / or partnerships?</p>	<p>We have in place a rolling three-year Business Plan which aims to reduce the deficit over a period of time. To do this we must control our expenditure and grow our income. Easier said than done but we will record a reduced deficit this to year end March 2024, helped by the success of the National Show.</p> <p>We do look at sponsorship partners when we can, but corporate sponsorship is particularly difficult since the pandemic.</p>	
<p>Since the Trustees are responsible for the financial management of NAFAS, how do they envisage the future of this organisation when their finances are precarious, running at a deficit, such that their continued existence is dependent on the interest from the money made from the sale of Osborne House and maybe the use of the lump sum.</p>	<p>We don't think our finances are precarious. We have benefitted from the sale of Osborne House and have plans in place to reduce the deficit and invest into the Associations future. The Trustees are showing caution with the investment.</p> <p>The Finance Team oversee all event budgets and the main NAFAS budget and make recommendations to the Board.</p>	
<p>I was wondering whether the Board has any plans for dealing with the NAFAS deficit.</p>	<p>Covered in previous replies.</p>	

AFFILIATION FEES	Summary of replies	Chat
<p>Future increases in fees and flower allowances: How will you address increases in future. Clubs need to be better supported and consulted in good time. Price increases also need to be fully justified so that clubs can better understand their justification and correctly pass on the information to their members.</p>	<p>Affiliation Fees have increased by £1.90 since 2017 and were held at £6.10 for 5 years over the pandemic period. The current rate is £7.50, with no increase this year, and all future increases will be linked to the cost-of-living index.</p>	

<p>Why if our members want to join more than one club are they forced to pay an Affiliation Fee in each club - they only get one lot of 'Benefits'?</p>	<p>This relates to the issue of membership data. We cannot introduce a multi membership offer as we do not know who our members are.</p>	
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MEMBER BENEFITS	Summary of replies	Chat
<p>I do not have an issue with the NAFAS Affiliation Fee of £7.50 that I pay for each of the three clubs I attend. What I struggle with is explaining to members what value we get from these payments as the majority of benefits are from the Area not NAFAS. What do I say to members when they question their NAFAS Affiliation Fee?</p>	<p>NAFAS has for 64 years provided and continues to provide the infrastructure behind the four main disciplines of flower arranging, Judging, Demonstrators, Speakers, and Education. The benefits expand to include training and moderation for the disciplines, reduced subscription rate of The Flower Arranger magazine, competition at the National Show and other benefits.</p> <p>All this for £7.50</p>	<p>I appreciate that you do not have a database of members, however as a member of 3 flower clubs I pay the Affiliation Fee 3 times. The true figure of membership is probably much lower than is thought.</p> <p>Try comparing annual Affiliation Fee with a cup of Costa coffee - then it seems cheap.</p> <p>Can I say that not all members and clubs think that the Affiliation Fee is excessive.</p> <p>I wasn't saying that it is excessive, I was just pointing out a fact.</p> <p>But if you belong to 3 clubs you do get 3 times as many benefits because you go to more meetings.</p> <p>I am a member of 2 clubs and am happy to pay the subs at both clubs. I do not worry about what money is going where.</p> <p>You are getting the benefits across 3 clubs, it is your choice to do so, why should members of single clubs subsidise multiple members.</p> <p>I pay several Affiliation Fees as I'm in 4 clubs. I don't think it would be fair for me to only pay 1 Affiliation Fee because other people who only belong to 1 club would have to subsidise me.</p>

		Clubs will soon find out what the affiliation gives them if they disaffiliate. Demonstrators will disappear, also Area benefits covering things like insurance.
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OFFICE	Summary of replies	Chat
Why in an age of Teams and Zoom are NAFAS renting an office in London?	The office also acts as a warehouse for our trading operations. All online sales are handled from Head Office, this cannot be done from staff homes.	

THE FLOWER ARRANGER	Summary of replies	Chat
<p>It has been rumoured that The Flower Arranger magazine will no longer have the NAFAS News insert. If this is the case, how do you propose to keep NAFAS members in touch with the wider activities of the Association.</p> <p>Currently we receive National news through the newsletter, will this now cover World News, Good Causes, Area & Club News, Anniversary Celebrations and NAFAS Reports?</p> <p>It is difficult to persuade some of our members that they belong to a wider Association and not just their own local flower club, NAFAS News is a valued tool in introducing them to other clubs and trying to stimulate their interest in the wider workings of the Association.</p>	<p>The main reason for this decision is the cost of printing and inserting NAFAS News, which has risen sharply over the past couple of years and is now approaching £10K.</p> <p>The last hard copy of the magazine will be in the Winter 2024 edition of The Flower Arranger magazine. However NAFAS News will continue in a digital format, which will be available on the NAFAS website.</p> <p>News and information will continue to be announced on our monthly newsletter, social media, and website. This first webinar is another example of our determination to be open and transparent.</p>	

	Members order their magazines through the club and onto the AFAO. So, it is the AFAO processes the orders to Head Office and who will be aware of which clubs in their Area have disaffiliated.	Is there a check in place to ensure The Flower Arranger does not give the NAFAS discount to disaffiliated clubs? The discount equals more than half of the Affiliation Fee as I was only telling a disaffiliated club today
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NAFAS WEBSITE	Summary of replies	Chat
<p>What plans are in place to make the NAFAS website user friendly rather than NAFAS HQ centric? Here's a sample scenario to illustrate my point:</p> <p>A member of the public wants to find out what educational opportunities in flower arranging are available.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A web search on 'flower arranging' does not bring up NAFAS. 2. Even if they do find their way to the NAFAS website the Education section does not help them find courses, workshops etc. Lists of names, especially when it is only national teachers in some random order, with no additional information (even which part of the country they live in), is not helpful. 3. So, they decide to search by geographic area, but the order in which the Areas are listed is not helpful (it is only makes sense to those with historical knowledge of how NAFAS was formed). An alphabetical list would look more professional. 	<p>We know the website could be improved, but we have limited resources in the office to do this. We don't advertise the courses and workshops because we are not informed where and when they are being held. If this information is sent to us, we will happily promote them.</p> <p>This is a result of google analytics.</p> <p>We agree with the alphabetical order of the Areas and will change this accordingly.</p> <p>Happy to look at improving the listing of clubs and incorporate a link to each club's website.</p> <p>We can certainly look at this, but please bear in mind we do not have anyone in the office who will be dedicated to updating the website.</p>	<p>Is this partly to do with our name as well? A tag line that includes flowers/flower arranging might help?</p> <p>I wonder if the webpage listing the local clubs could be improved.</p> <p>Would you publish the annual programs for each club on the website for example?</p> <p>Devon & Cornwall do a What's On programme for all our clubs which is on our website and produced in our quarterly newsletter, it has been very well received.</p> <p>BB&O publishes all club programmes on our website.</p> <p>NSC has organised a training day for PowerPoint for all disciplines as part of Continual Professional Development (CPD) had no response but thanks to Head Office for putting it on the website.</p> <p>Links to What's On and club pages on the website would be amazing.</p>

	<p>For a number of reasons. We waited until after the 2023 show to see if it made a profit or loss before deciding whether to hold another show in 2025. By the time we knew it had been a financial success, it was too late to start searching for another venue.</p> <p>The success of the 2023 show was mainly down to the low cost of Gloucester Cathedral compared to previous venues, and they have only increased their cost by 10% for 2025.</p> <p>We are now looking at venues for the 2027 show.</p>	<p>Why was Gloucester Cathedral chosen again for the National Show to be held in 2025?</p>
		<p>Please credit Katherine Kear's wonderful organisational skills with a lot of the success of The National Show @ Gloucester Cathedral</p>