



# THE FIRE BRIGADE SOCIETY

[www.thefirebrigadesociety.co.uk](http://www.thefirebrigadesociety.co.uk)

*The organisation for fire and rescue service enthusiasts*

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## **MEMBERSHIP UPDATE No. 1 – MAY 2022**

### **ISSUED ON BEHALF OF THE INTERIM MANAGEMENT TEAM (IMT)**

Dear members,

The Treasurer wrote to you in February 2022 outlining the financial predicament the FBS finds itself in, highlighting the lack of volunteers willing to take on positions and introducing the interim management team. This update will bring you up to speed with developments and advise you what the IMT have been doing and their proposals for an achievable rescue plan.

The main income for the society comes from membership subscriptions. The operational plan published in early 2022 by the former Executive Supervisory Board (ESB) was clearly not fit for purpose, was not achievable and you the members were not given the full facts regarding the state of the society before you were asked to vote to accept or reject the plan.

Membership fees were increased, and this has not helped either as 98 members have not renewed as of 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2022. Reminders have been sent and members of the IMT are chasing lapsed members. We have been incredibly lucky to receive some substantial donations towards the running costs of the society and we thank those members most sincerely for their generosity. It is also worth noting that 11 former members have re-joined the society since the beginning of March.

***It is very clear that if the FBS is going to survive, we must cut costs and the IMT have been investigating ways this can be achieved.***

The largest expense for the FBS is Fire Cover. With the current membership number totalling 350 we cannot afford to produce and distribute four Fire Covers in the 2022 - 2023 membership year. Following negotiations with our printers, we are proposing to produce a maximum of three **full colour** Fire Covers during this membership year. The number of, size of and the frequency of each edition of Fire Cover will very much depend on material for use in it being provided by you the membership.

The Editorial Team headed up by Simon Adamson has next to nothing to work with so we appeal to you all to get writing and submit articles, photos, or any snippets of information that the membership may find of interest. If you have previously submitted material and you have not seen it published, please resubmit it. The editors ask that as much information as possible should be submitted in electronic format, photographs sent as colour jpegs and sent to the email at the top of this update.

We do not under any circumstances want to increase subscription rates, certainly not in the 2023 - 2024 membership year. Therefore, future financial planning now and a slightly reduced service to you, the member, will help prevent this and allow us to rebuild our reserves that have been dwindled away under previous management teams.

***The decision to reduce the numbers of Fire Covers produced has not been taken lightly, but we have no option but to do so if the FBS is going to have a fighting chance of survival.***

The proposed changes to the number of Fire Cover per membership year may also affect our ability to operate entirely within the constraints of the Constitution. You may or may not be familiar with this document, however it details certain timescales that the managing team must abide by when informing members of important events such as the AGM. This document should have been updated when the ESB was introduced, sadly it was not and operating within its constraints may be difficult although naturally we will do our best. We thank you for your understanding in this matter.

As mentioned in the Treasurers letter, he highlighted the lack of volunteers who have come forward to help run the FBS. We are pleased to announce that this request has had some success and the members listed have applied for and been appointed to the following positions -

Member	Position	Member	Position
Colin Carter	Central Administrator	Marion Carter	Membership Secretary
Simon Adamson	Fire Cover Lead Editor	Paul Measday	Fire Cover Editor
Andy Daley	Fire Cover Editor	Andrew Fenton	Events Manager
Steve Udall	Webmaster / Fire Cover Editor	Gavin Stewart	Distribution Manager

These appointments are an immense help and give the FBS a solid foundation on which to rebuild and move forward. However, there are still many vacancies that need filling, and **we once again urge members to come forward and volunteer their services**. Positions that still need filling on a permanent basis are additional Fire Cover Editors, Proof readers and last but no means least Area Correspondents and Administrators. **Without you the society cannot operate and will not survive**. Any member interested in joining the team please contact the Central Administrator at the address at the top of this update.

We are also pleased to announce that Surrey Fire and Rescue Service have kindly agreed to host our AGM on the weekend of the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> September 2022. A full itinerary is being planned and this will be available towards the end of June. Any member interested in attending this event and requires further information should register their interest by emailing the Central Administrator.

Continuing the good news, work is ongoing by the IMT to arrange some visits during the year. Sadly, the pandemic prevented any visits being arranged during 2020 - 2021 and we really hope fire and rescue services will be happy to accommodate us during the year. Our initial plans are to hold visits in Avon, Hertfordshire, Lancashire, North Yorkshire, Scotland, and Staffordshire. Please keep an eye on the FBS website for more details regarding visits.

Over 200 members have kindly agreed to accept communications from the FBS in electronic format. We are incredibly grateful to those who have agreed to this. However, there is still a high number that have indicated they require hard copy communications. This is a plea to any member who has indicated a preference to receive hard copy and who has an email address to reconsider accepting communications electronically (this excludes Fire Cover). If we can get as many members as possible to adopt electronic mail, our postage costs will be significantly reduced, thus allowing more funding for Fire Cover publication.

To avoid additional postage costs, those members who have opted for electronic communications will receive their membership cards with the next edition of Fire Cover. Those members receiving this update by post will have their card enclosed, except for Scottish Area members whose cards are with Andrew Fenton for distribution.

You will be aware that the Sales Unit used to operate and generate a substantial income for the society. Unfortunately for one reason or another the unit has not been operating as it should have for several years. The IMT have decided that until further notice the Sales Unit will be mothballed. The main reasons for this are we do not have the available finances to invest in new stock and competing with the likes of Amazon is near impossible. We would like to take this opportunity to thank Eddie Mills who has been looking after the unit recently for his valued assistance.

We are aware that some members expressed interest in purchasing some old editions of Fire Cover and some second-hand books from the Sales Unit and these have not been delivered. If you sent cheques or requests that have not been actioned, please let the Central Administrator know as soon as possible.

In the next edition of Fire Cover we plan to advertise the current Sales Unit stock at significantly reduced prices.

In 2023 the FBS will celebrate its sixtieth anniversary. We are determined it will still be operating to celebrate this milestone; however, we cannot do it alone, we have a steep hill to climb and at this stage it is not certain that we will reach the top.

**PLEASE** consider everything in this update. If you can help, make contact; if you can write an article, submit it; if you can take a photo, take it, and submit it. But above all, please support the IMT who are doing their very best to save the Fire Brigade Society.

On behalf of the IMT, thanks for reading this update. If you have any questions, queries, concerns, or ideas please contact the Central Administrator, contact details at the top of this update.