



Phase 1 Report
Findings and Recommendations
May 2013



- 1 Project Headlines 3
- 2 Member Contact..... 4
 - 2.1 BSHAA contact with lapsed members 5
 - 2.2 Feedback from lapsed members not interested in rejoining 6
 - 2.3 BSHAA contact with new joiners 7
 - 2.4 BSHAA contact with longstanding members 8
- 3 Member Feedback 9
 - 3.1 Reasons for joining 9
 - 3.2 Reasons for leaving 10
 - 3.3 BSHAA relevance and recognition 11
 - 3.4 Benefit take up..... 13
 - 3.5 CPD and Professional Development Days 15
 - 3.6 Other membership bodies and sources of information 16
 - 3.7 Additional services..... 17
 - 3.8 Communication 18
 - 3.9 Overall membership experience..... 19
- 4 Membership Processes 20
 - 4.1 Membership Lifetimes 21
 - 4.2 “As Is” Membership Enquiry to Lapse Process 22
 - 4.3 Future Membership Enquiry to Lapse Process 23
 - 4.4 Welcome Calls and Student Conversion 24
 - 4.5 Future Renewal Processes 25
 - 4.6 Future Segmentation Process 26
- 5 Summary of Recommendations 27
- 6 Business Cases 28

1 Project Headlines

- There is opportunity for BSHAA to grow membership but it requires changes to processes and ways of working.
- There is a marked lack of member contact details; BSHAA hold a limited number of email addresses, and very few phone numbers.
- We have therefore used email to a greater extent than usual, but have still produced a very reasonable level of response.
- When we have engaged with members and ex members, they have been receptive and responsive overall.
- Generally speaking, they think quite well of BSHAA, although there is a perception of bias towards the larger organisations.
- In fact some of the ex members didn't realise that they had been lapsed and 4 have reinstated (8 more remain interested in rejoining).
- The project has illustrated that:
 - Positive engagement (much earlier in the cycle) will prevent the loss of members.
 - This can be achieved by streamlining processes and more personalised member contact.
 - Members can be persuaded to renew, and to renew promptly.
 - Lapsed members should not have been allowed to go in the first place and could have been retained.
- An obstacle to reinstating these lapsed members was the lack of a credit card payment facility.
- We could not "capture the moment" and sign them up there and then, with the consequent risk of losing the momentum.
- New joiners can pay online, but members cannot at renewal as BACS and cheque are the only available methods.
- Online renewal is a common feature across the majority of membership bodies and BSHAA do need to revisit their arrangements.
- There are issues amongst some of the independents as expected, but many would still recommend BSHAA membership.
- Some longstanding members have expressed the view that BSHAA needs to "catch up with the times" and offer online training, webinars, and different speakers at events, rather than often having the same ones and in the same location.
- BSHAA is planning a student recruitment drive, as the education committee has links to some Universities and there is opportunity to try to build on these relationships.
- As this evolves, BSHAA will need to develop methods and procedures to convert students from the "incubator" stage into full membership.
- We have compared the feedback gathered during the project with similar responses from other client's members:
 - Reasons for joining are similar – keeping up to date, professional recognition, career development.
 - Reasons for lapsing are also comparable, but more are "unhappy" with BSHAA than we normally see due to the independent's issue.
 - Companies place a relatively high importance on membership which is positive in comparison terms. We do see that elsewhere where there is a company scheme, but members do not normally pay through their salary as with BSHAA.
 - Benefit take up is actually higher than normal, and most members have been to an event on at least one occasion. But, BSHAA suffers the same "complaints" as its contemporaries relating to the cost of events, location and content.
 - Also, members make some use of the BSHAA website, but not the CPD section. This would normally be much higher, however many BSHAA members work for firms who already have CPD programmes in place.
 - The number of members who also belong to another membership body is about average (especially where there is more than one body in the same sector)

2 Member Contact

We have attempted to initiate telephone contact with 126 BSHAA past members who lapsed in 2011 or 2012.

- Two-way contact was achieved with 47 and more detailed conversations were completed with 26 of those.
- 4 have now re-joined on the half year rate
- A further 8 have expressed an interest in re-joining
- 31 have confirmed they will not be re-joining primarily due to retirement, a change in career, or specific concerns with the organisation

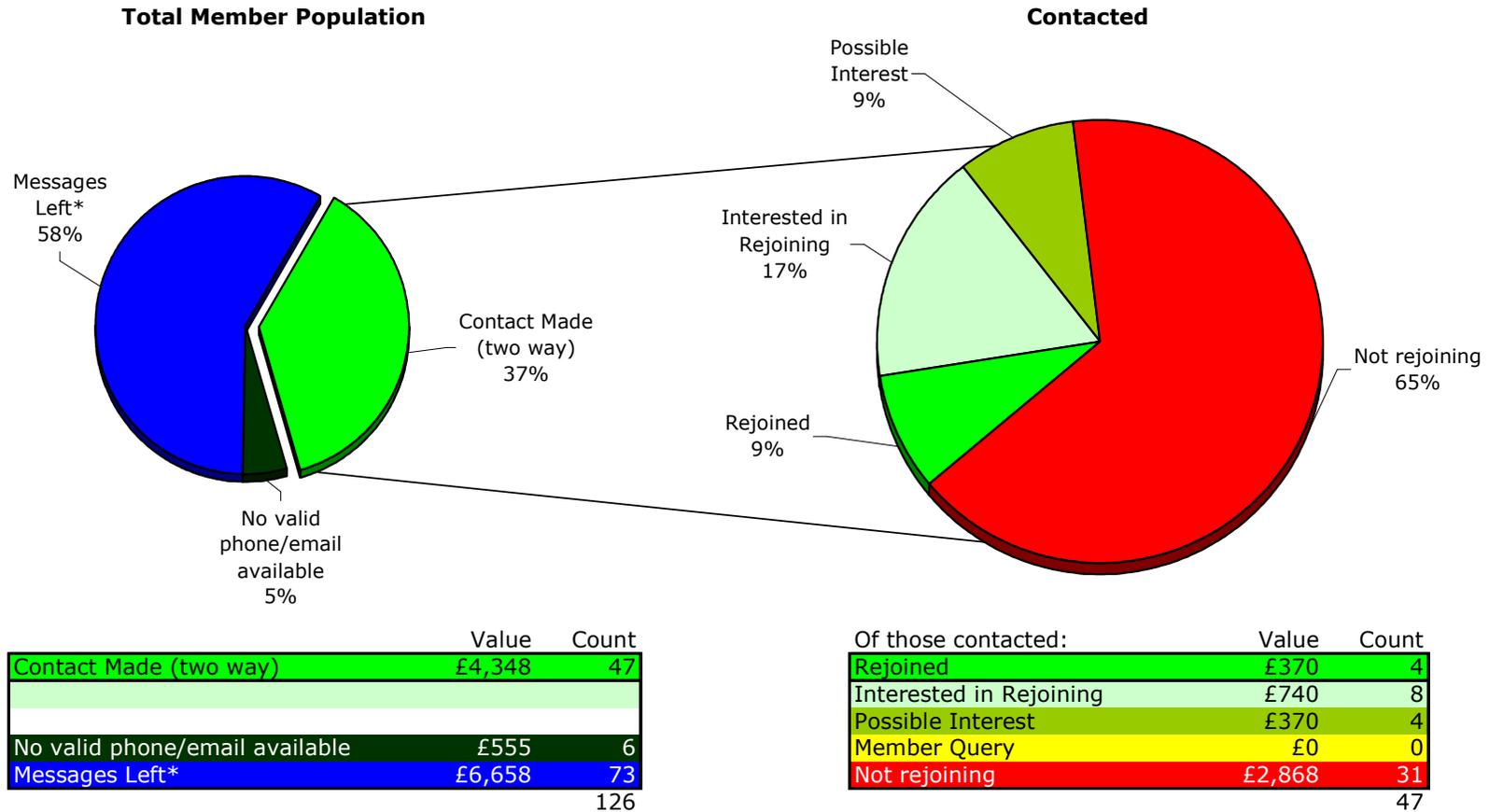
We have also spoken with 10 new joiners as part of the “welcome call” pilot, and 58 longstanding members. Of the latter, 40 joined and paid for their membership personally, and 18 are members through their company scheme. A breakdown of the contact activity is shown on the following pages.

As we knew from the initial data, many of the current and past members on the BSHAA database do not have any phone numbers listed. A large number do not have an email address either, and for those who do, these are often generic addresses such as info@ or enquiry@ at their companies. For the purposes of this project, we extracted samples of members from the population who had at least one phone number or email address available. In the majority of cases this was only an email address, and a lot of the two way dialogue that has taken place was the result of email exchanges to establish a telephone number and a convenient time to call. Below is a summary of all the BSHAA data for past and current members:

	Lapsed	Current	Grand Total
No phone or email	669	329	998
Email No, Phone Yes	4	15	19
Email Yes, Phone No	248	616	864
Yes phone and email	52	350	402
Total	973	1310	2283

Considering the above, speaking to around 20-30% of the sample populations is a very good result. If we just look at those who have a phone number, then we have achieved two way dialogue with 40-50% of the samples.

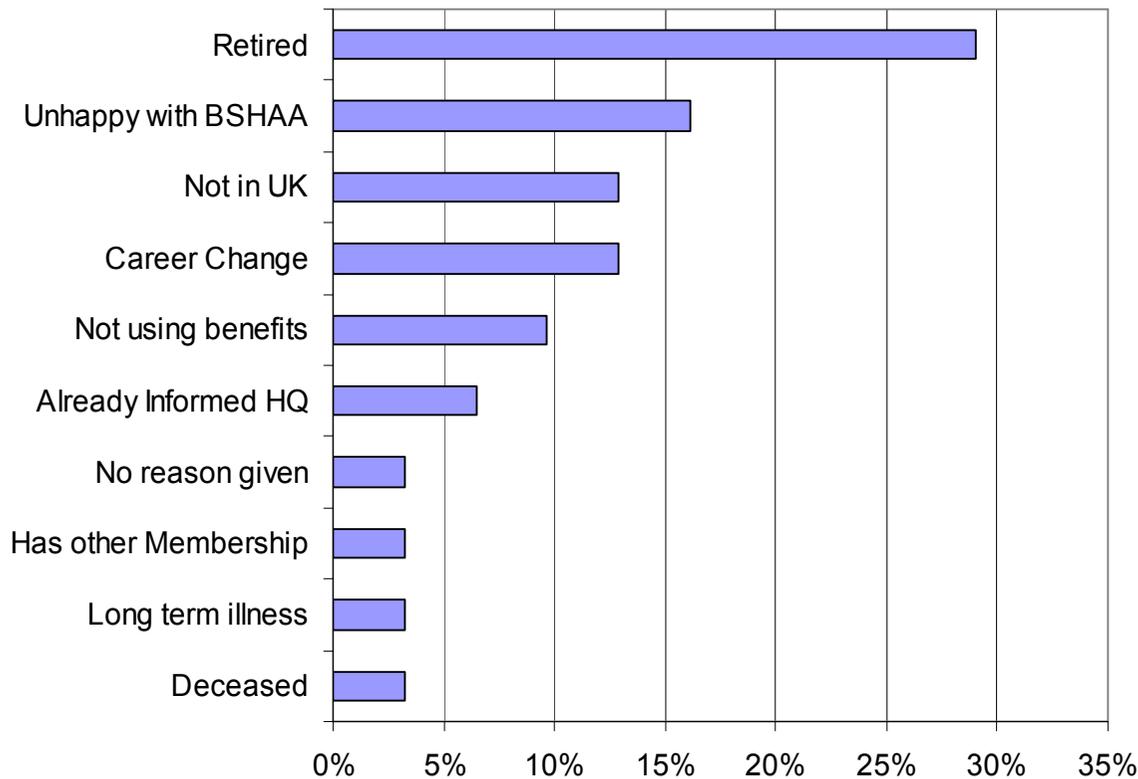
2.1 BSHAA contact with lapsed members



* 31 only have email addresses

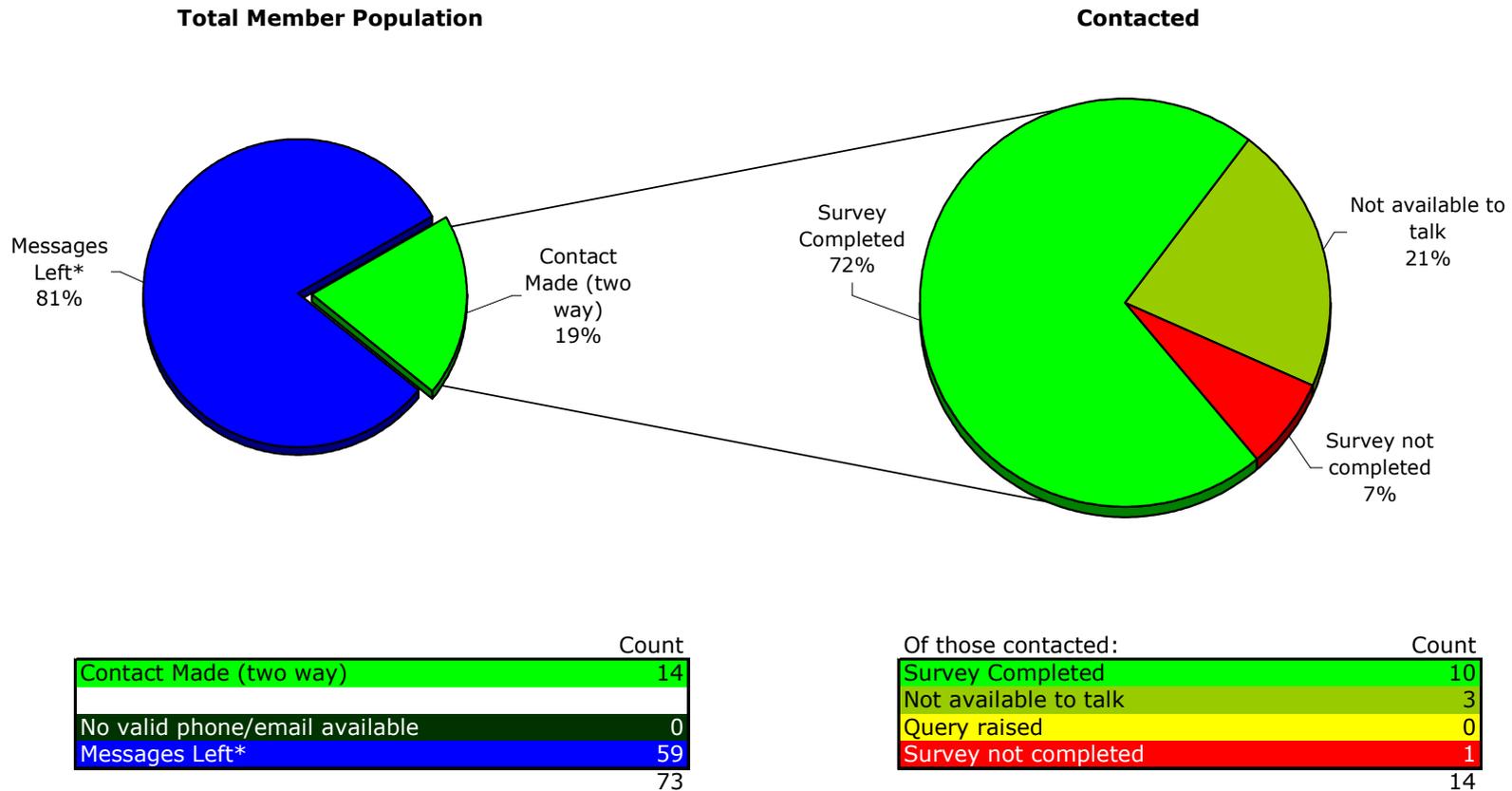
2.2 Feedback from lapsed members not interested in rejoining

Many of the previously lapsed members confirmed that they had now retired and were not interested in re-joining BSHAA. Those who said they were “unhappy with BSHAA” were mainly concerned by what they perceived as unequal focus on larger organisations.



- “The organisation is becoming the replacement for HAC, and the big companies are buying themselves a place on the board and very few independents have a look in. Events are held on weekends and this encroaches on my personal time”
- “The organisation has done nothing in recent years to help the independent dispenser, it’s been high-jacked by the nationals, things have got to change before I will consider rejoining”
- “Do not agree with the fundamental decision with AQP it was the wrong road for the independent dispenser we had no choice in the matter. Many members are complacent with this view, would have been better to have a referendum”
- “I work for boots who encourage staff to join but it’s not compulsory. I just didn’t have the time to attend the education days or conferences and boots have their own training academy”
- “98% of my work is with the NHS and I am a member of BAA, which is the equivalent membership”

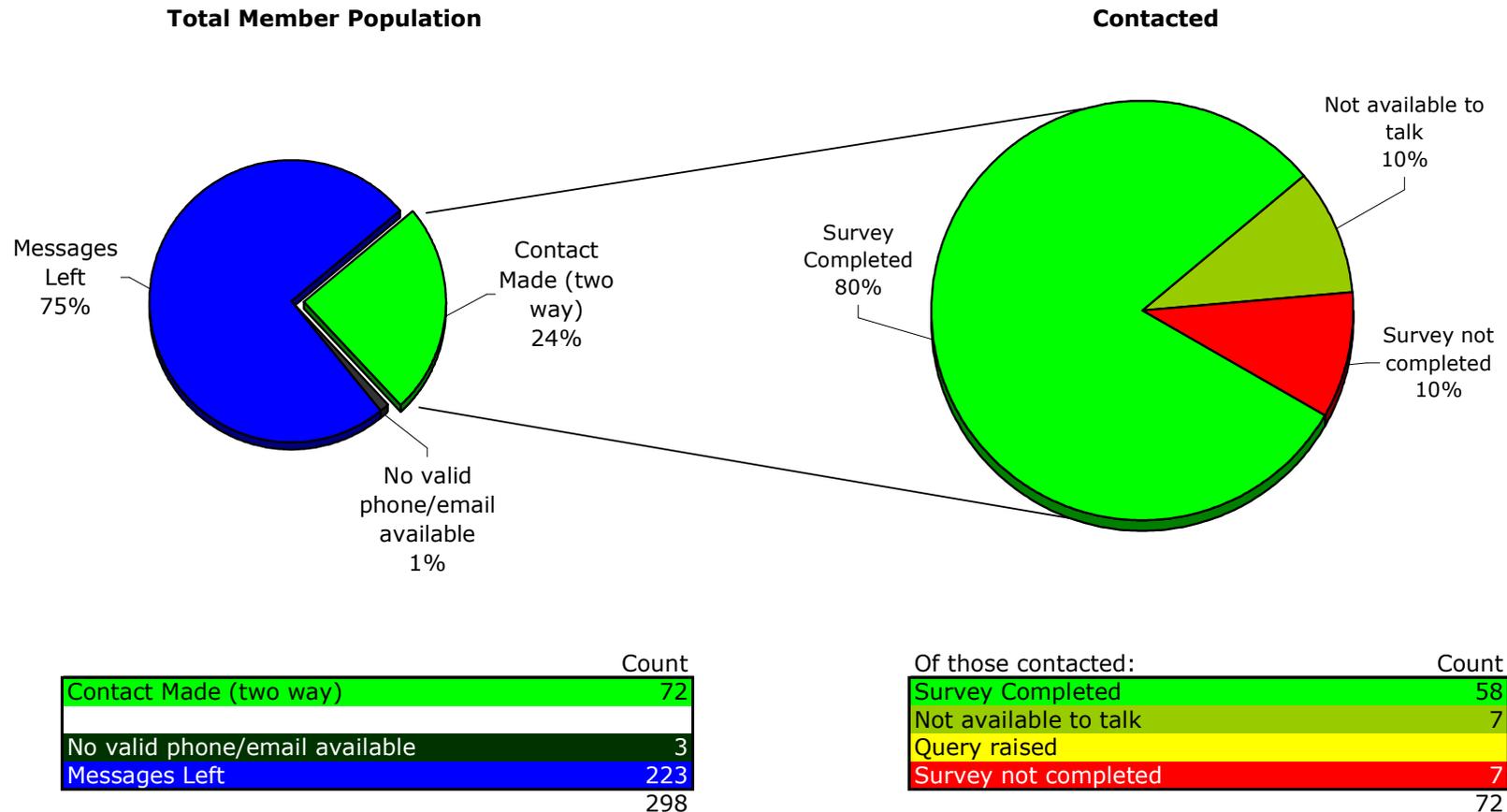
2.3 BSHAA contact with new joiners



* 42 only have email addresses

If you remove those 42, the contact made (two way) is 45%

2.4 BSHAA contact with longstanding members



* 139 only have email addresses

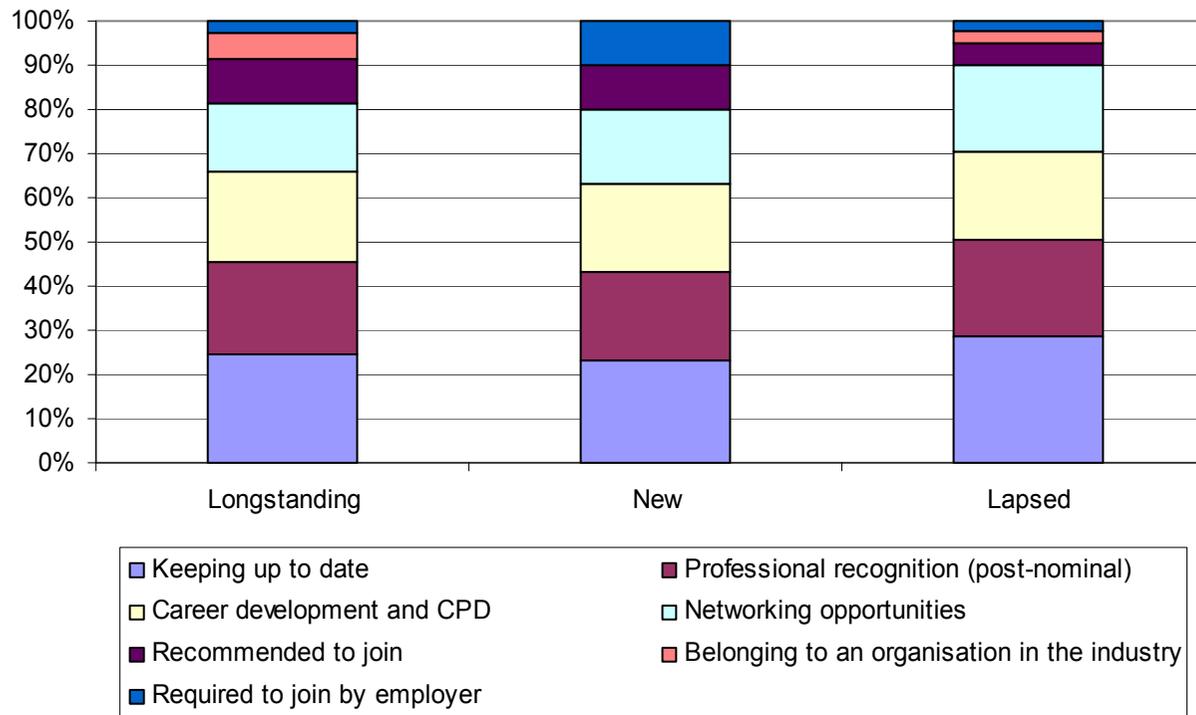
If you remove those 139, the contact made (two way) is 45%

3 Member Feedback

Full details of all member feedback and verbatim comments, are available in the separate “Feedback Results” spreadsheets.

3.1 Reasons for joining

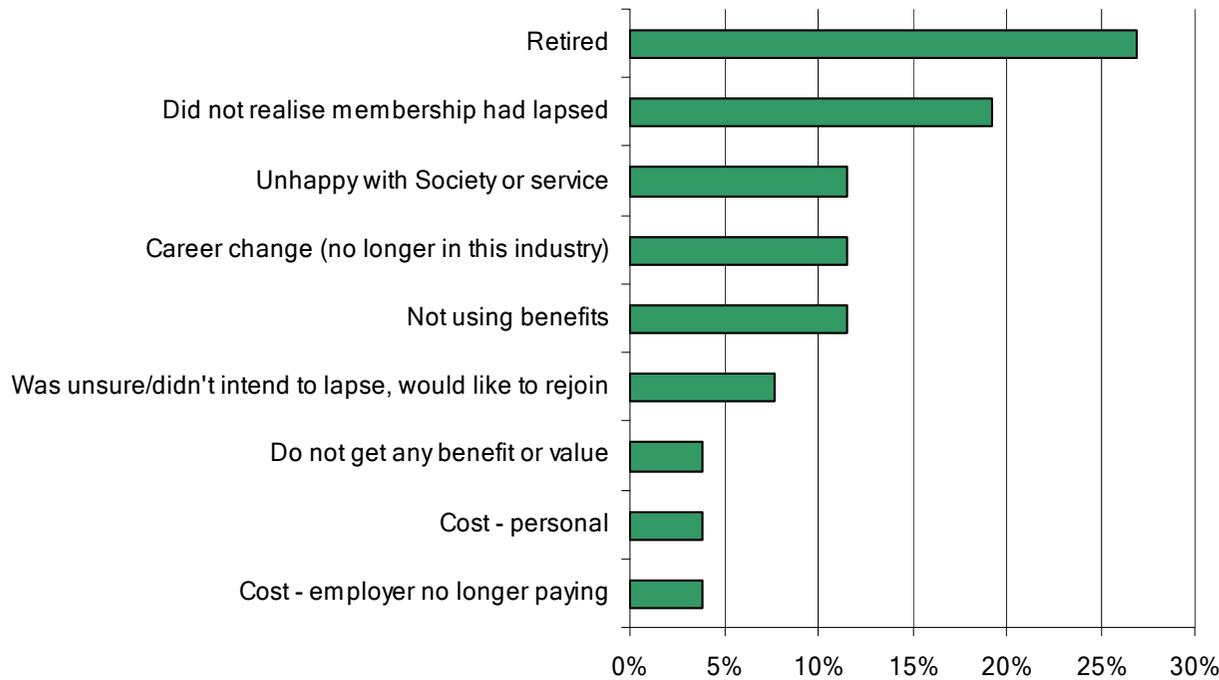
The reasons for joining are quite evenly split between the three groupings, with most suggesting they became a member of BSHAA to keep up to date, for career development, and for the professional recognition associated with membership. For the longstanding members, over 60% confirmed that these were still the same reasons for maintaining their membership. Others said their reasons had now changed but this is mainly due to where they are in their careers, i.e. now working for different companies, needing to maintain their CPD status, or just using BSHAA for networking as nearing retirement.



- “To be part of an organisation that is looking out for its members, to fight their corner and have a voice on policy”
- “The company encouraged us to join because of the membership’s official status, professional recognition and support”
- “It was the thing to do at the time to get recognised training and CPD”
- “At the time every independent dispenser was joining to get a qualification and professional recognition”
- “I wanted to learn more about the profession and have access to further training from a professional body”
- “Recommended by my company to join as its useful for keeping up to date and offers the means to increase your knowledge and work ethic”

3.2 Reasons for leaving

In line with the reasons for not rejoining, most of the past members lapsed because they had retired. However, many also said they were unaware that their membership had lapsed or had not intended to. 4 of these members have now rejoined.



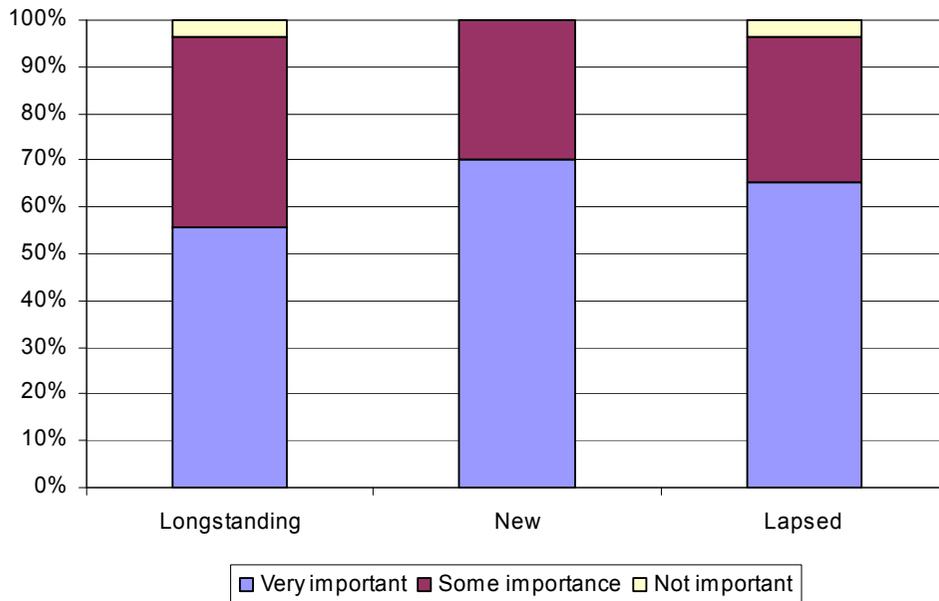
- "There was no adverse reason for not renewing. MD encouraged me to renew but left it up to me, my work load did not allow time for me to take advantage of the benefits so I took the decision not to renew but regretted it ever since. Glad of the call and being offered a simple and cost effective way of renewing again"
- "I moved job and home, and did not receive the renewal notice. I would not have lapsed otherwise"
- "Once I had sorted my new company time passed and I missed the deadline, I was not contacted again and forgot"
- "I didn't feel I got much benefit as Boots have their own training academy and CPD system. I didn't have time to attend the education days or the congress, and we get all our information from the manufacturers"
- "I am also a member of BAA which is more relevant to the NHS. I was not getting anything from membership that I couldn't get else where and the NHS have their own agenda"

3.3 BSHAA relevance and recognition

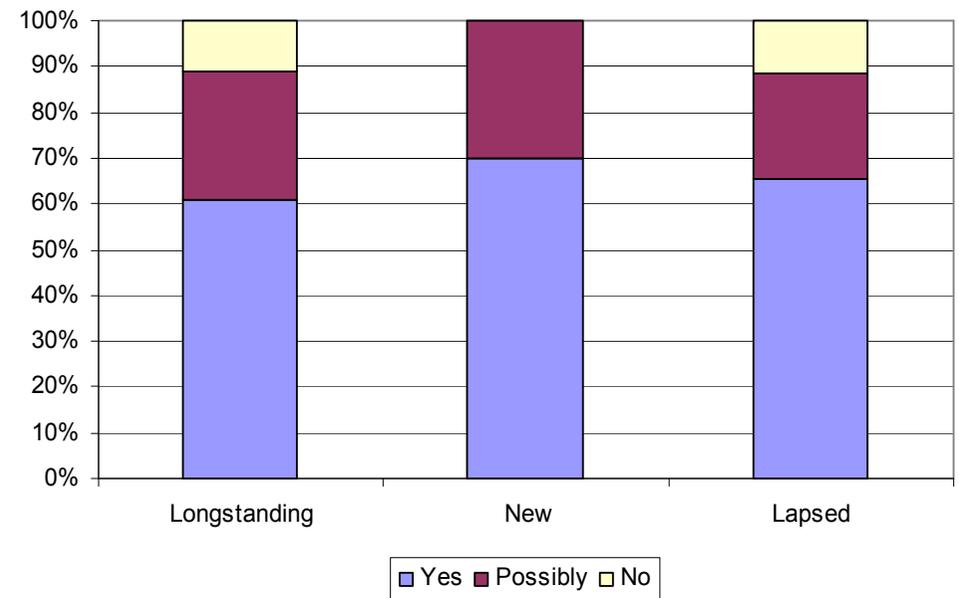
The majority of all respondents felt that BSHAA membership was or is important to their job role, and that others do recognise the value of membership. Those few who did not, again commented on the perceived lack of support for the independents.

- “It is the place for support, advice and training and most of all to keep up to date”
- “It is the first port of call to find out about changes in the industry, and is the mark of a professional having the letters after your name”
- “I am still a student, but the membership will become more relevant and important as I go through my career. If I left the company I would still maintain my membership for my own personal development”
- “As an organisation it is thought of highly, but there is not enough new information coming through quickly. In the back of my mind there is an uncertainty of how supporting the organisation actually is”

How important is BSHAA membership to your own role?



Do you think others recognise the value of being part of BSHAA?



Although several confirmed they were or are self employed, many suggested that BSHAA membership was either a requirement of their employer or was viewed very highly by the company.

What level of importance does your employer place upon BSHAA membership?

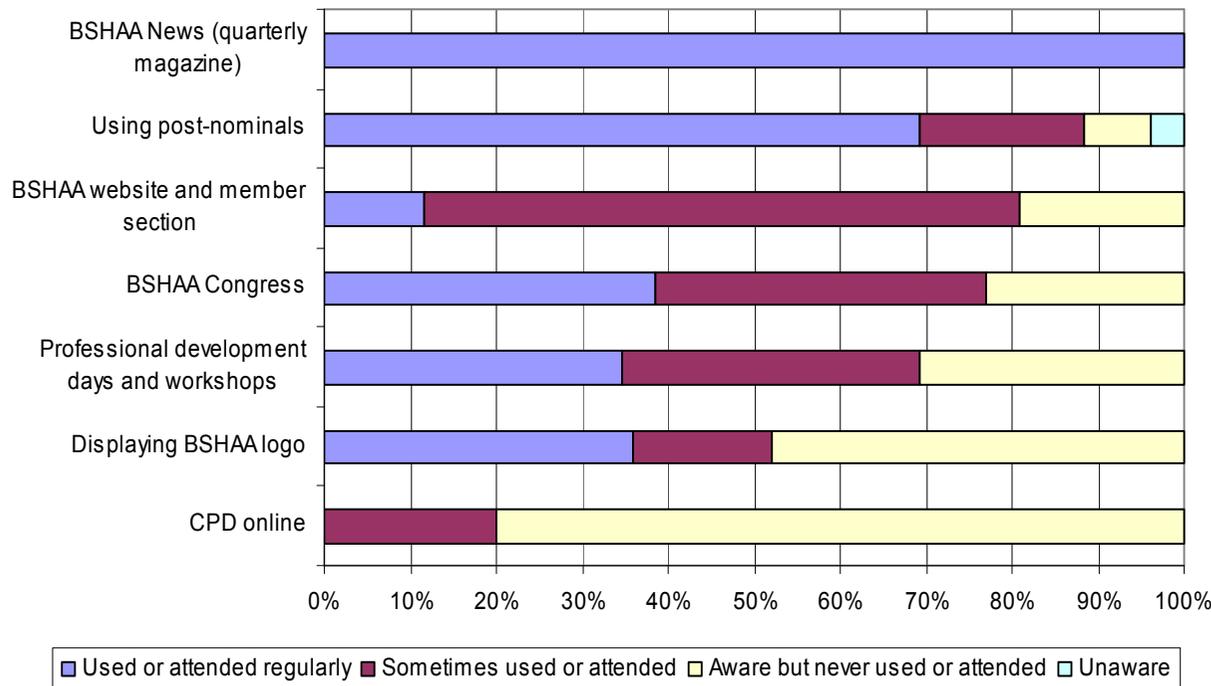


- “Was a requirement with Specsavers, but my new company does not pay membership with a group scheme. They do support my CPD and continued professional conduct as a member though”
- “When he was working with the NHS for both private and NHS clients, it gave them a place and the opportunity to find out if I was a qualified audiologist”
- “It gives the company added professional recognition being associated with a recognised organisation, and because we have someone on the board, it gives us a voice on the future of dispensing”
- “They use the logo in their advertising as a mark of professionalism, and gives us as employees a place to train and network and improve at giving the right information and service to clients”
- “It was my choice to join for my own career development”

3.4 Benefit take up

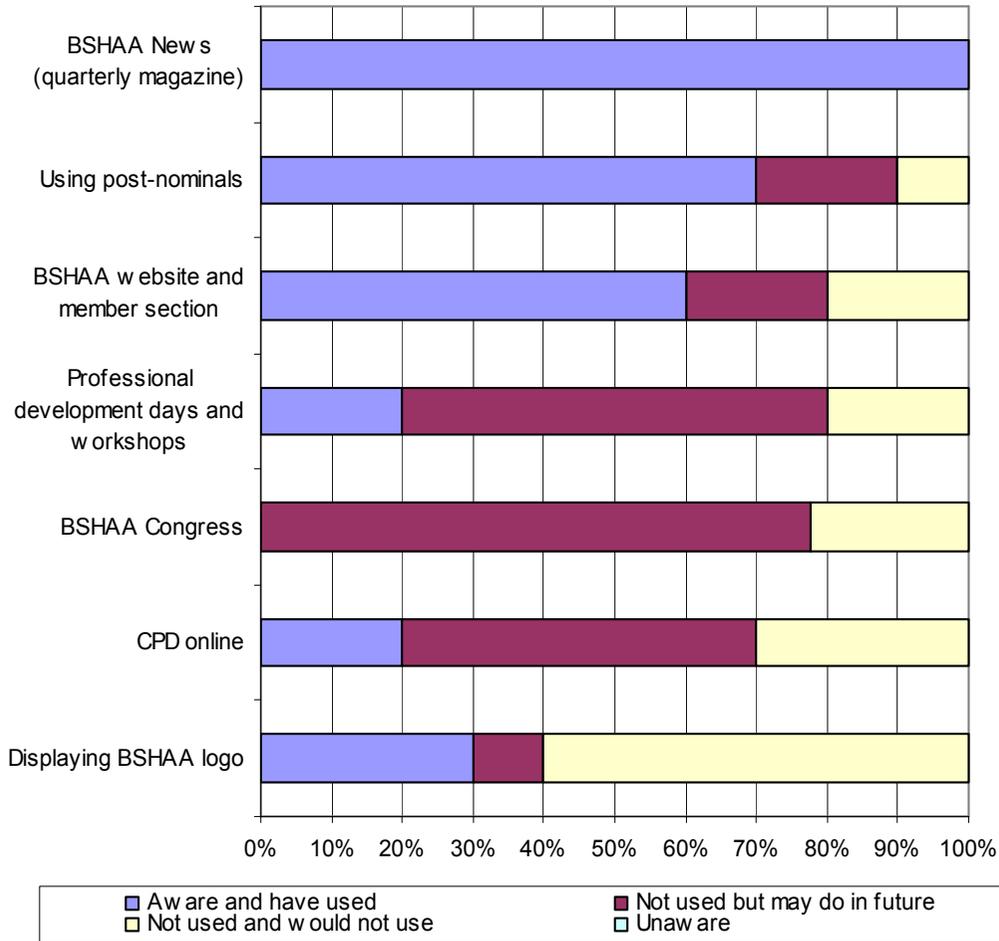
Many of the past members had used the quarterly magazine and the post-nominals, and had attended the BSHAA Congress or a Professional Development Day at least once. However, very few had made use of the CPD online. This was also a fairly similar picture for the current members, although slightly more had or would utilise the CPD services and BSHAA logo.

Lapsed Members

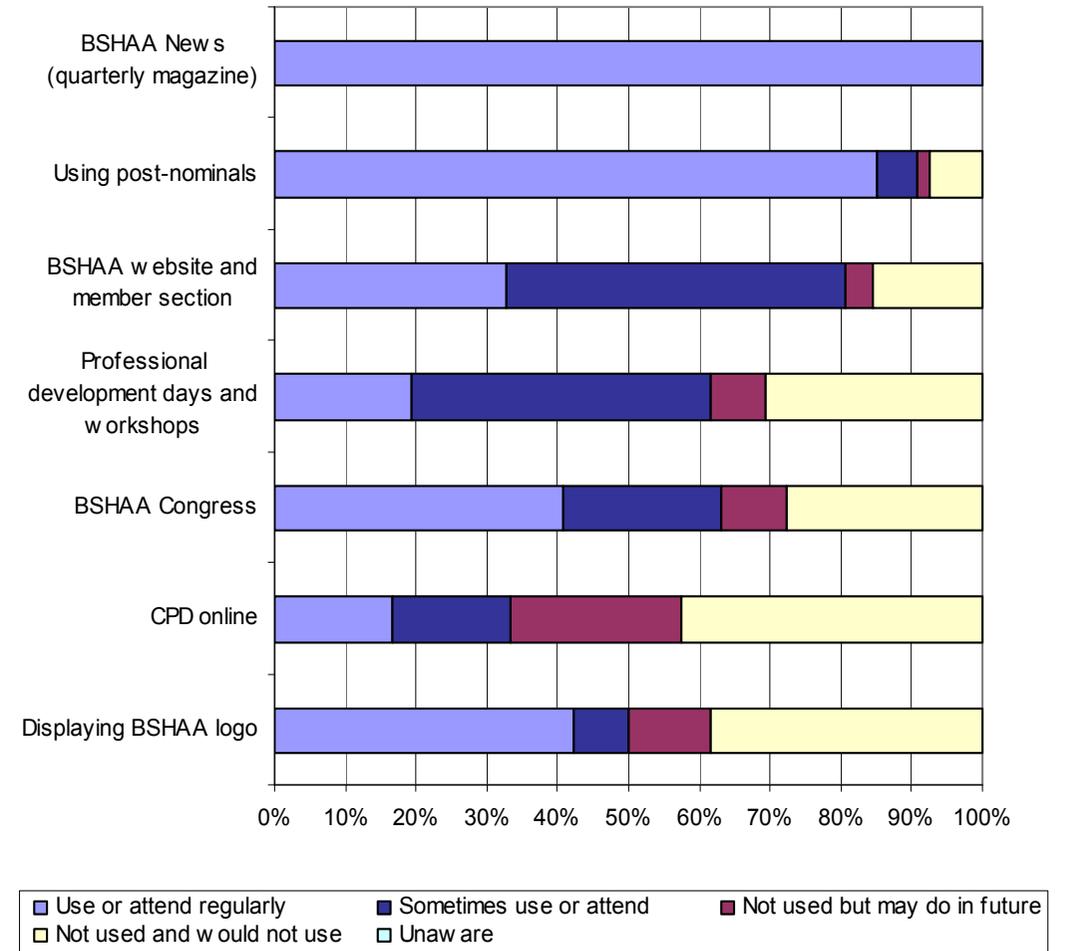


- “The website wouldn't be my first port of call for finding specific information. The congress is very good for meeting up with known members to digress and discuss the industry. CPD online is seen as a duplication of information, and I have other memberships who also offer this facility”
- “It is a bit different for me as a supplier, but I do use the logo when sending out customer care marketing. I would like to attend the workshops but find they clash with other work, the newsletters are very good and prompt you to research information”
- “I was not aware of being able to record my CPD on the website, or if it was compulsory, this year will be very different, I will be able to take advantage of the benefits now”
- “The time factor is the issue at the moment, but I know the benefits are there when I am ready”
- “I search the website for specific information. The events I attend ad hoc and when my company will allow, it depends on the speaker and topics”

New Joiners



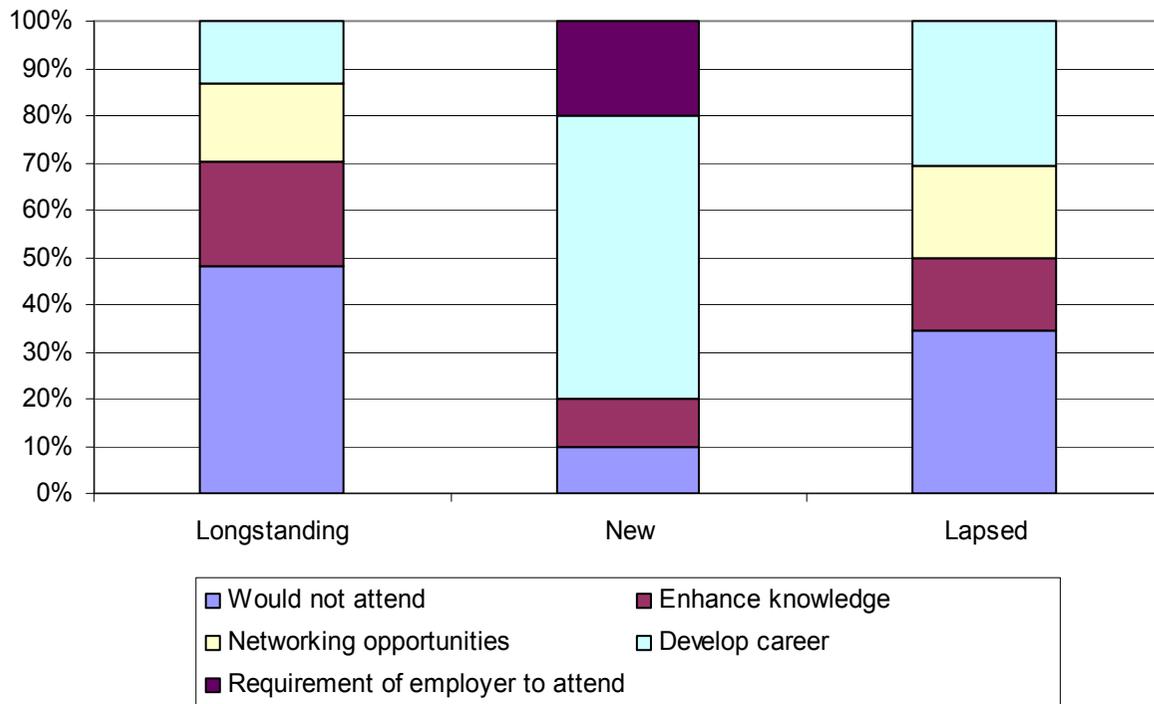
Longstanding Members



3.5 CPD and Professional Development Days

The main reason for the lack of CPD take up is that several members work for companies who already have their own procedures in place. There have also been comments about the ease of using the CPD online, and many were not aware of the guidance booklets.

- “Specsavers have their own agenda with CPD recording and training. Membership is for the professional recognition and news”
- “I find the CPD online a bit cumbersome as it does not give you details of what CPD points are allotted to which CPD event, training etc”
- “I do not use the online CPD as I feel it is difficult and time consuming, would like a guidance booklet”
- “I did not know there was a guide, I have been using the BAA CPD programme. I looked at the BSHAA one and found it lacked the scale of what CPD was allotted”



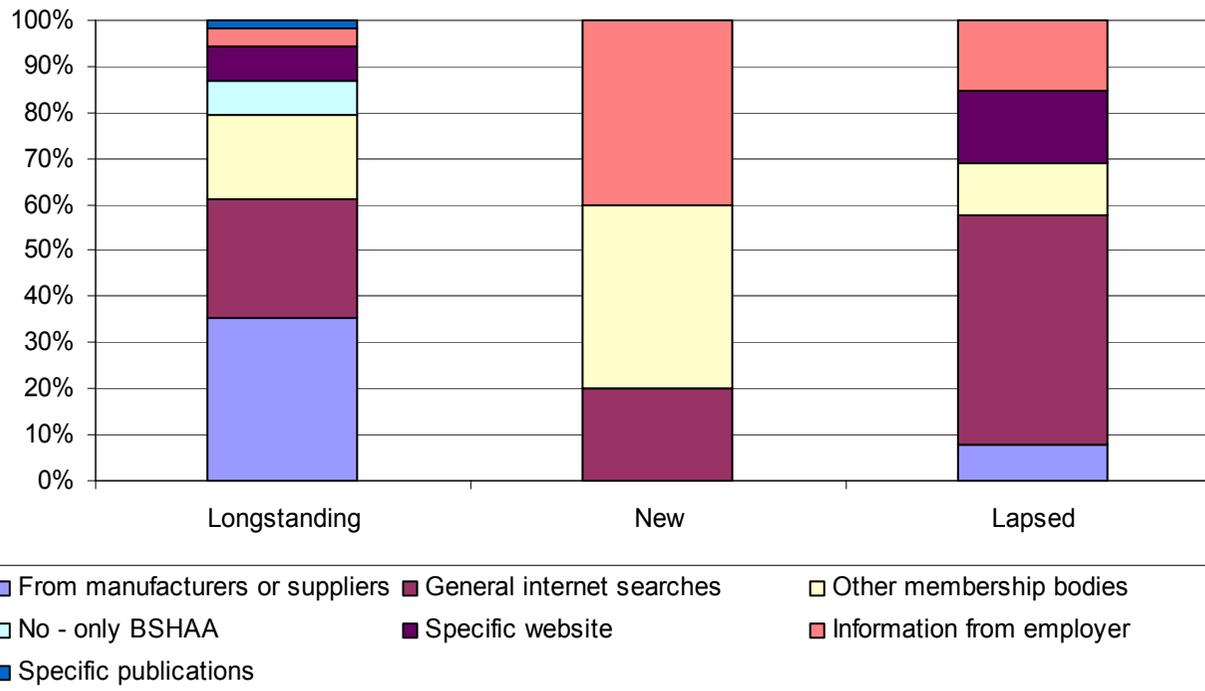
When asked what has or would make them attend professional development days and events, more said it was for developing their careers rather than networking. Some of the longstanding and lapsed members felt they would not attend because of the expense, location, or in-house training already in place.

- “I do not attend very often because of the distance I have to travel to events, would be good if they had regional events. As an independent I need to take off as little time as possible from my practice”
- “I did apply to attend two education days last year but they were cancelled because of a lack of interest. I attend more AIHHP events because they are local, I would like more events in SE London”
- “To keep learning is the key, I went to an event in Birmingham, they had an excellent speaker from the Royal Institute for Deaf and Blind Children, she gave a good account of how to approach and advise the parents”

3.6 Other membership bodies and sources of information

Most of the respondents confirmed that they do source information from different providers, mainly manufacturers, other membership bodies or their employers. Some also said they find research using general internet searches and websites.

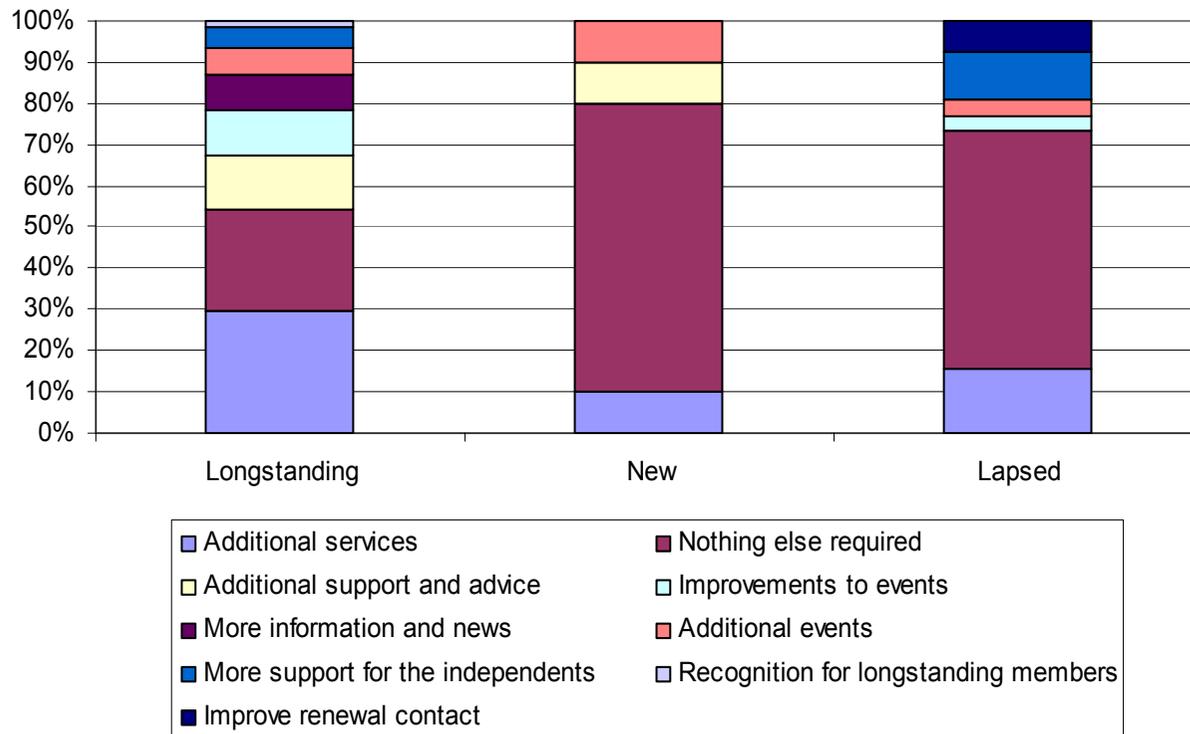
Roughly 40% of the lapsed and new joiners, and 60% of the longstanding members belong to other membership organisations. In the main these are BSA (British Society of Audiology), BAA (British Academy of Audiology), ISHAA (Irish), and AIHHP (Association of Independent Healthcare Professionals).



- “Mainly from manufacturers for new products and technology, I will use Google for medical help and information on treating a client, e.g. new research on ear cleaning and best practices. Also BSA and BAA to get a bigger picture of the industry”
- “Mainly from suppliers, but I do keep an eye on the USA Society of Audiology, they have training sessions online and have different information to that in the UK on public medication”
- “My company have their own extra short courses for employees to take”
- “Linked in - you can access what’s being talked about and new technologies around the world”
- “I attend any course that is relevant, and get information and training straight from manufacturers”
- “BSA for research, AIHHP for the conference and keeping up to date”

3.7 Additional services

When asked if BSHAA should provide any additional benefits or services, most new or lapsed members did not feel that there was a need for anything, mainly because they had only recently joined or because they no longer required membership. However, many suggested there should be online training and webinars, more regional events, and guides on CPD or best practice. Others also said they would like to see different speakers at the events.

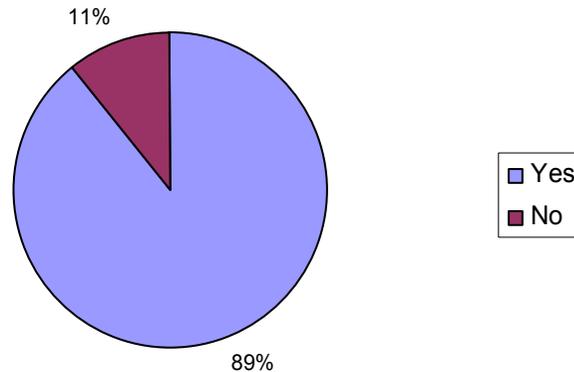


- "Online training and webinars, recording of congress and events, civil advice line, explain the rules of HAPC 'what is acceptable and what is not', what rules apply"
- "I want to see more independent representatives on the council"
- "More regional events and for the congress to move round the country each year so more accessible to all members. The congress has also got a bit stale with the same speakers, "recommend a speaker" would be good idea"
- "BSHAA is moving in the right direction, but needs to come up with the times with online training and other resources on line, which will make it easier for the member to acquire the CPD points needed with less cost and time needed."
- "Online training, webinars, nominate a speaker, have at least one event in Ireland"
- "Better speakers, more talks on actual hearing problems, new ideas and practices, gather real patience experiences, what works etc. Online congress at a fee so people can interact virtually"
- "I would like a booklet with guidance on the online CPD, and assistance on what's new in advertising, giving professional advice on what works and ways of promoting you business"

3.8 Communication

Nearly 90% of all the members felt that BSHAA communicated effectively with them in terms of frequency and content. Others said that they would like to receive information more frequently with perhaps a weekly newsletter.

Do we communicate effectively with you?



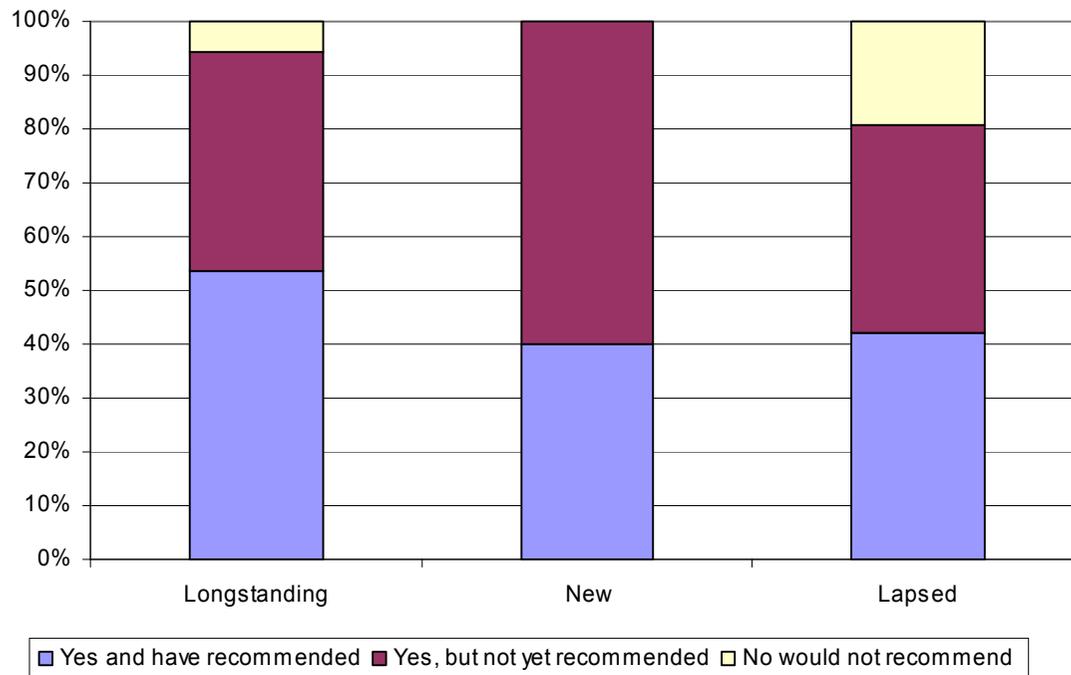
- "I would like more emails on Professional Development Days"
- "I get quite a few new letters from BAA keeping me up to date with up to the minute information. It's a long time between quarterly journals from BSHAA"
- "I am well informed of what's going on, but the journal comes out quarterly so any news in between does not get reported until the next edition"
- "I would like one a week to keep up to date with up to the minute news and information"
- "It is down to us to follow up any newsletters, the onus must be put on the member and they must record so many CPD hours per year, it's not just for the Fellow members. Many are just members for the letters after their name. Also if there has been an event, the minutes should be available to those not able to attend, with a forum for discussion"

For overall regular communication and industry information, nearly all members preferred to be kept informed by email. Most also said that post was acceptable as well as the use of social media, especially for the new joiners.

3.9 Overall membership experience

Generally members feel quite satisfied with membership, although there have been comments relating to the focus of the organisation. They are happy with the communication received but would prefer to receive information by email. Relating to this, we asked whether they would also prefer to renew and pay online if this option was available, and most who pay personally (rather than via the group company schemes) said they would.

Positively, the majority would recommend membership to others and several suggested they had already done so, including past members. Those who did not had made comments about independents and nationals, or felt they had not got any value from membership.



- “The organisation needs to move with the times and become unbiased, before I would recommend”
- “No benefits for the independent to join, there is no professional exam needed to become a member, so anyone can join who is nominated”
- “I have always recommended as I feel that all independent dispensers should be members, it makes for a stronger organisation and profession, not just multiples of large companies”
- “I don't really know anyone who isn't a member, but I would recommend it”
- “I would recommend to people starting out in the profession as a good source for CPD, information, education and networking”
- “The concept of the organisation is good, just needs to be more dynamic to attract more people”
- “All in all BSHAA is a great professional body, but there are a few things that need to be addressed”

4 Membership Processes

It is fairly easy for a prospective member to join BSHAA and soon there will be the ability to pay online. However, there are barriers to entry in the form of two qualified member sponsors (or one for students). The elapsed time for application to acceptance is around two weeks and is comparable with other organisations, but could be much shorter if applicants were not sent to council for approval. Our main “process” concerns relate to overall member engagement in the early days after joining and throughout the renewal process.

Other than general communication and newsletters, new joiners do not receive any personalised contact such as a “welcome call” or email during their first year. We recommend that this should be implemented 3-6 months after joining as standard practice, particularly in terms of setting positive renewal expectations during the early years of membership.

Also, there is no personalised contact at renewal, and the process is mainly re-active to non payment and entirely postal based. From experience we know that emails are an effective method of communication and are significantly cheaper than posting letters. As there are very few telephone numbers available on the database, a lot of the two dialogue that has taken place for this project was the result of email exchanges. This is also viewed as the preferred method of communication for most.

Our suggested future renewal process utilises email as well as telephone calls, and SMS as appropriate. All available media should be utilised at renewal, and BSHAA should aim to talk to members in the same way that they talk to each other. The process also needs streamlining and a move away from the current “one size fits all” approach. Pre-emptive, early contact with those at risk of late or non renewal will reduce the “member chasing” in the later stages of the renewal cycle. By segmenting BSHAA membership prior to the renewal period, we can determine those at the highest risk of non renewal and personalise communication accordingly.

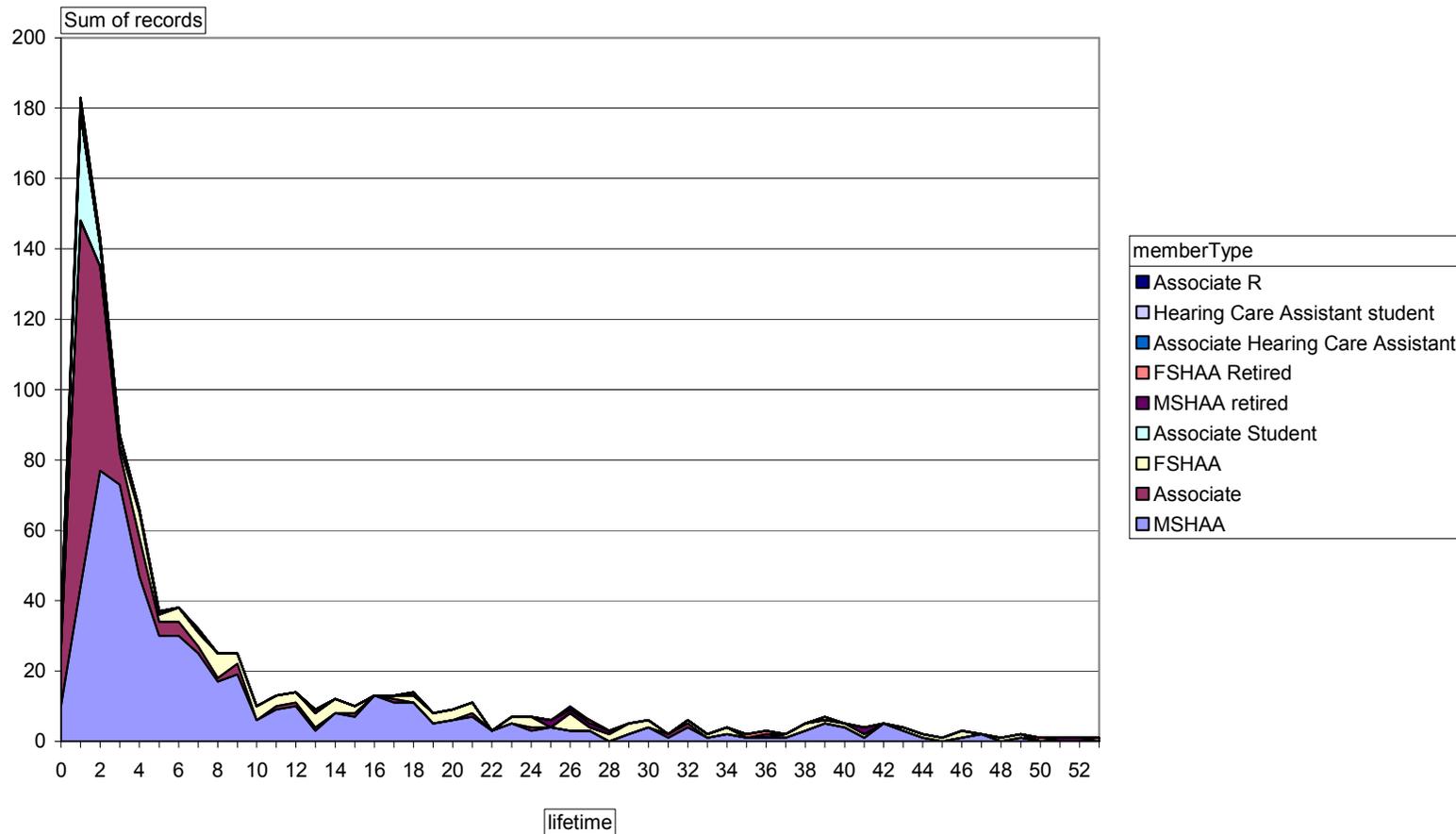
Finally, we would suggest that the renewal deadline and reinstatement fee remain in place as a deterrent for lapsing, and lapsed member campaigns are conducted later in the year. However, re-joiners should only pay half the rate after March in the same way as new members (and not the full annual rate) as there is already a reinstatement fee to be paid.

The proposed process changes also assume that more contact details are collected at joining and renewal.

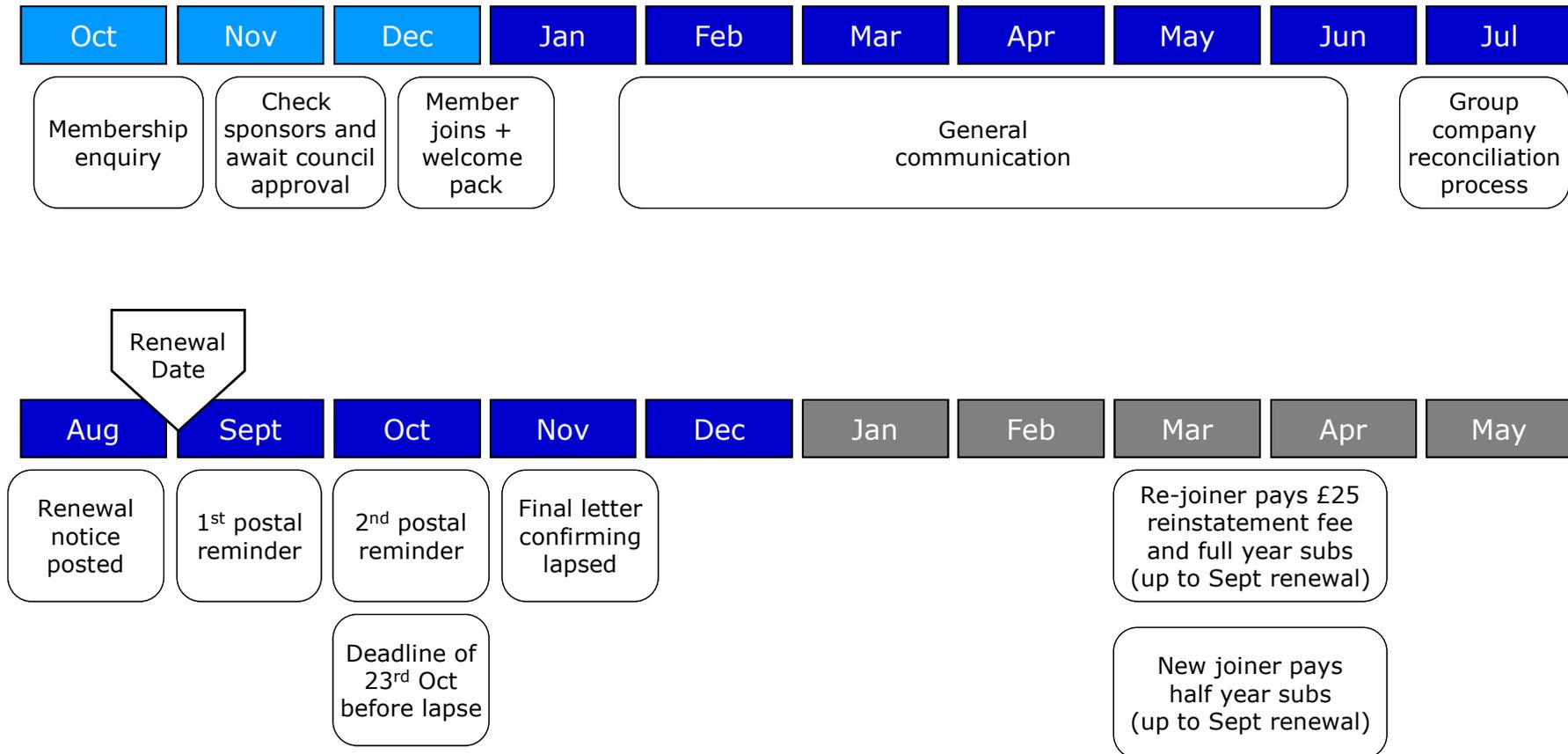
The majority of membership organisations contemporary to BSHAA offer an online renewal facility, and BSHAA is one of the very few who do not. Benchmarking results demonstrate that those who offer this method of payment achieve a better retention performance than those who do not. Our general experience is that most members who pay for their own subscriptions prefer this method, and as stated in section 3.9 this is equally true for BSHAA members. We understand that the arrangements agreed with the existing provider make the introduction of online renewal problematic, but would recommend that this is reviewed prior to the next renewal cycle.

4.1 Membership Lifetimes

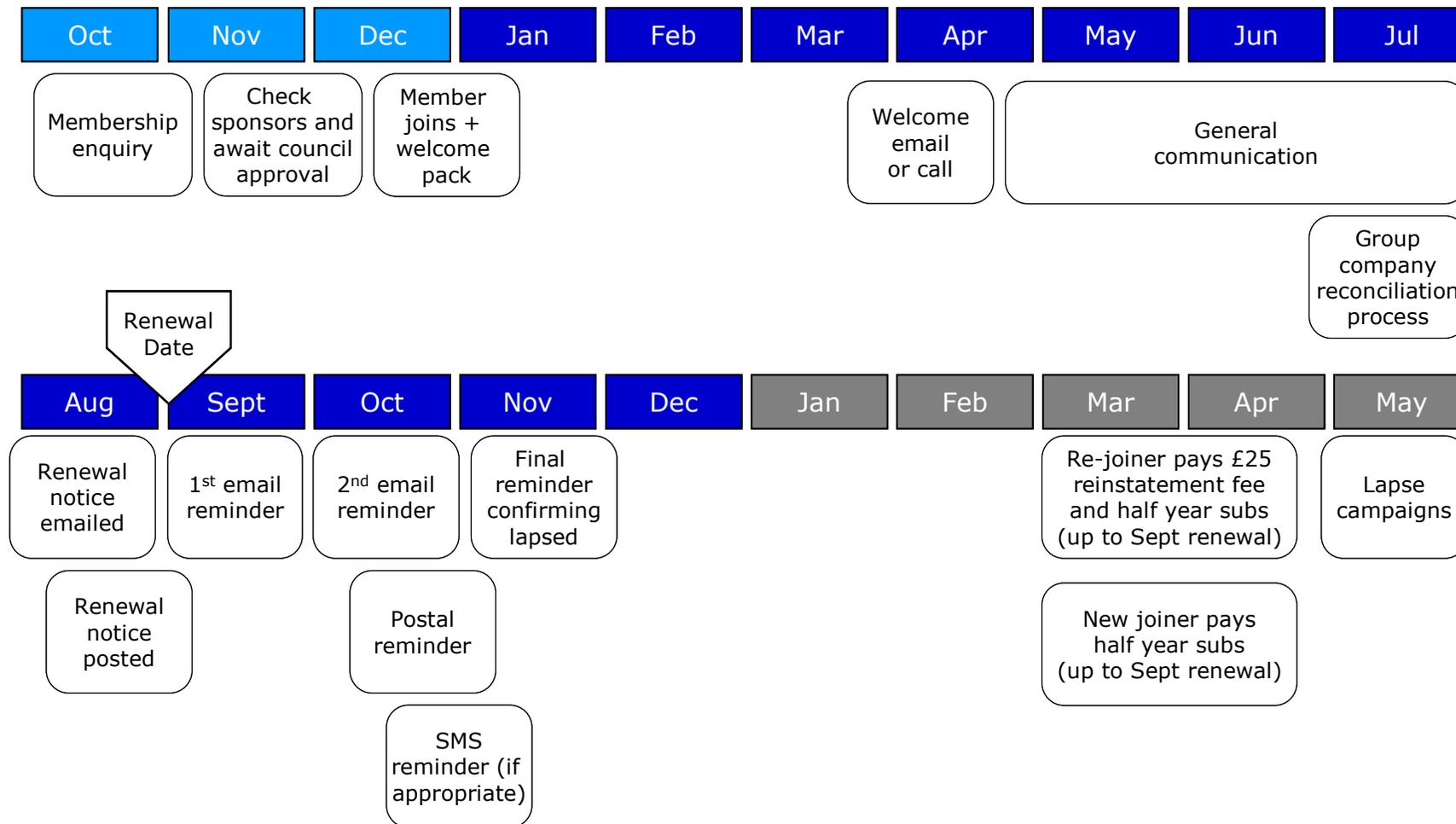
This chart looks at all of the past members and sets out their total number of years in membership. It illustrates that a large proportion of members leave in the early years. Current processes and ways of working are more likely to exacerbate this problem, not reverse the trend.



4.2 "As Is" Membership Enquiry to Lapse Process

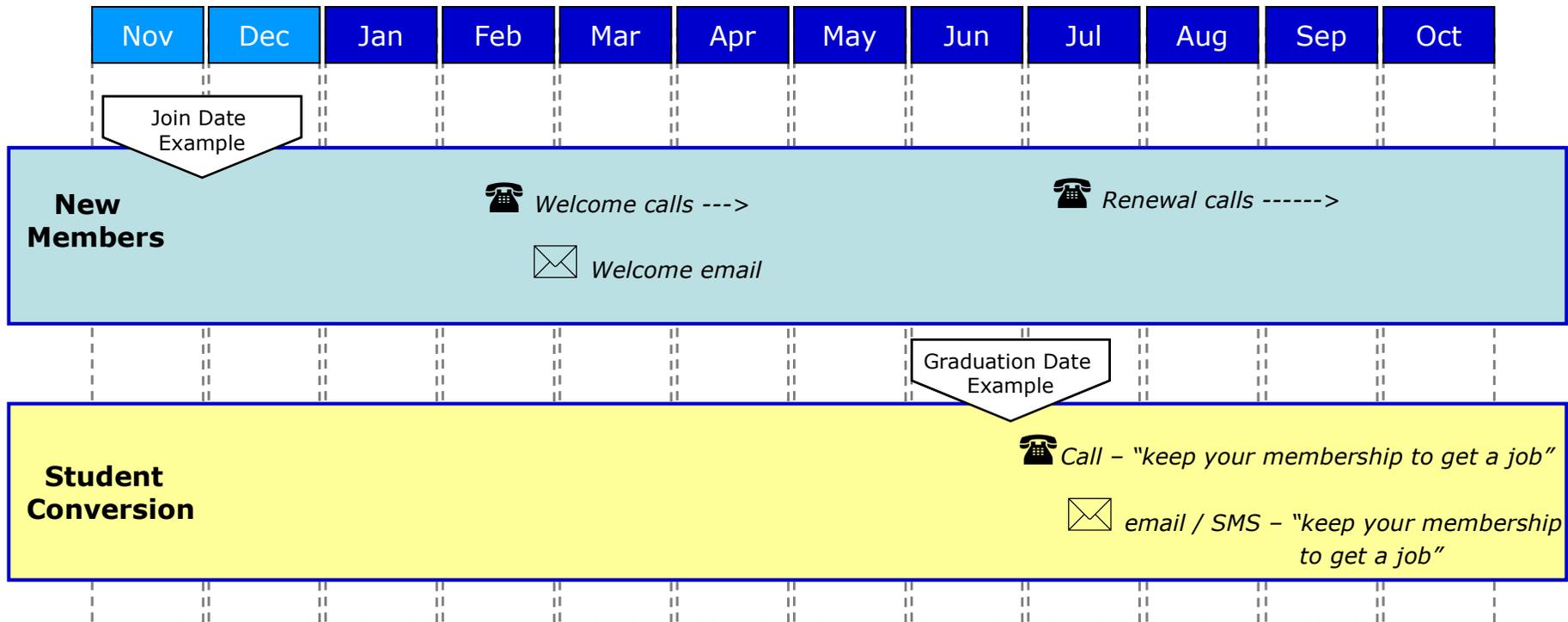


4.3 Future Membership Enquiry to Lapse Process

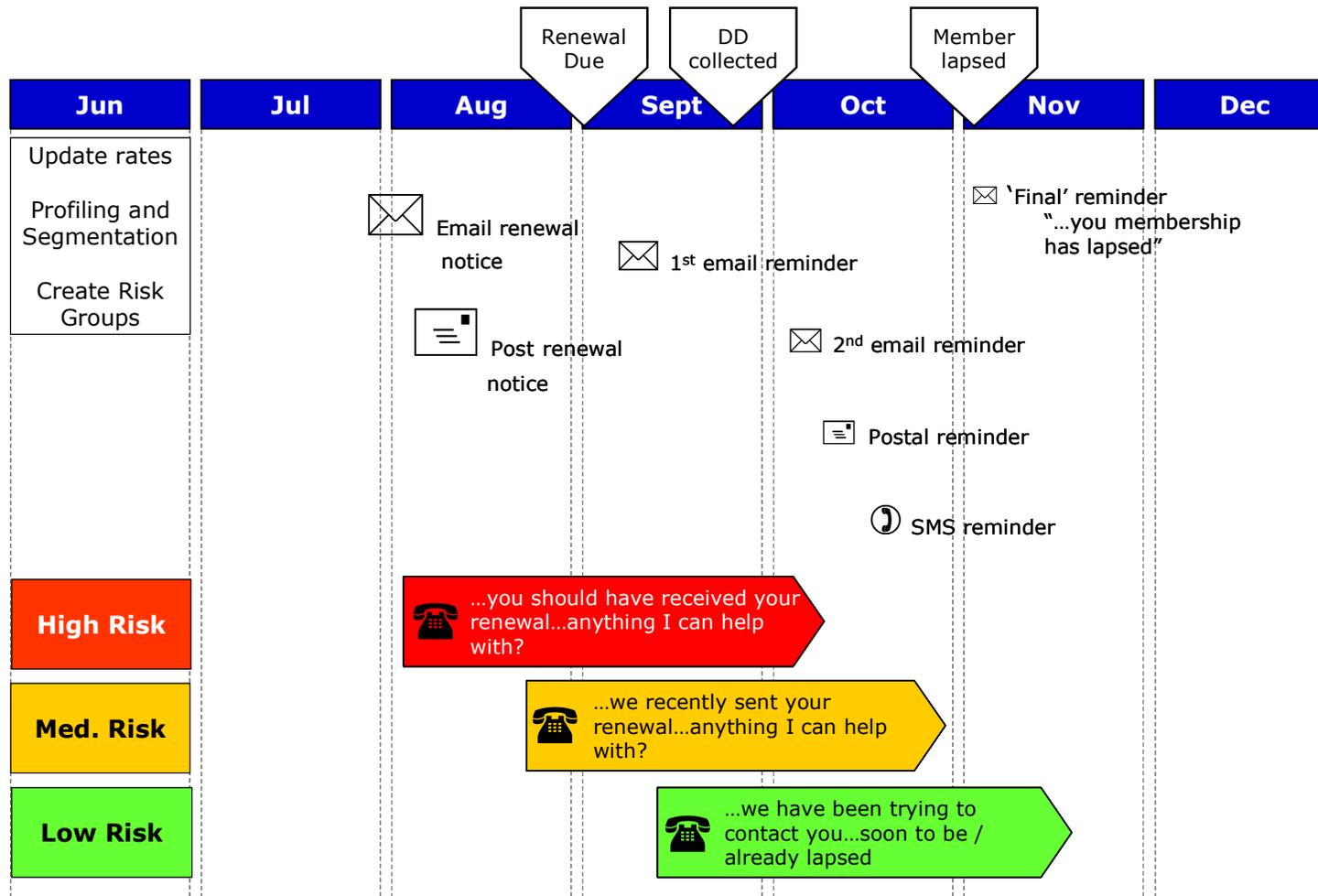


4.4 Welcome Calls and Student Conversion

“Welcome” calls or emails should be implemented as part of the renewal process, in order to engage with new joiners and manage 1st year renewal expectations. Attention should also be paid to students around their graduation date to manage conversion to full membership. Here is an example of the welcome call and student conversion concepts:



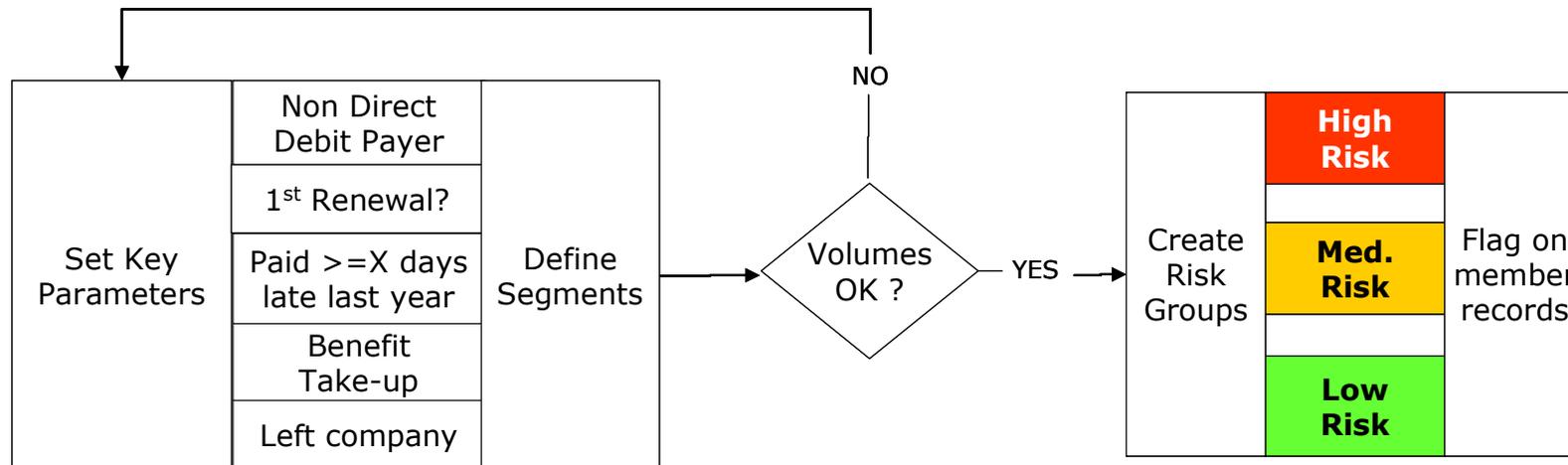
4.5 Future Renewal Processes



4.6 Future Segmentation Process

The diagram below illustrates the segmentation process for establishing the “risking” categories. The segments can be defined by any criteria that determine those at highest risk of non renewal, though two common factors would be members in their first renewal and those who paid late last time. If the information is available, another factor to be considered is “benefit take-up”. This would also assist the personalised renewal reminders and increasing awareness of the membership services available. A key group would also be those individuals who were previously part of a group scheme and have now left the company.

An example of pre-emptive renewal techniques:



5 Summary of Recommendations

Member engagement:

- Carry out a campaign to obtain current contact details for all members.
- Ensure that contact details are established for all new recruits as a mandatory component of the joining process.
- Regularly survey, analyse and review opinions of joining, exiting and returning members.
- Make the member feel that it's a personal relationship – they are not just a number.
- Implement “welcome calls” or emails to launch ongoing engagement with new joiners, and set positive renewal expectations during the early years of membership.

Membership benefits:

- Also use member engagement as a barometer of member feelings and perceptions.
- Find out what members and potential members really want, particularly the less engaged.
- Focus upon the basic benefits that members and target audiences say are of value to them.

Renewal processes:

- Streamline the renewal process and move away from a one size fits all approach.
- Pre-renewal, segment the membership population according to risk of late or non renewal.
- Carry out telephone and email based contact prioritised by the level of risk.
- Use all available media; talk to members in the same way that they talk to each other.
- Review the opportunity for introducing an online payment facility.

Recruitment and growth:

- Refine the joining message and channel recruitment efforts in line with member feedback.
- Sell a solution to specific member issues, not just goodwill and a list of generic benefits.
- Use case studies and testimonials to promote membership and increase value perceptions.
- Design, pilot, and launch an Association “Advocate and Ambassador” programme.

6 Business Cases

To situate risk and opportunity, we have compared various business cases. The following table sets out the position if current membership trends continue. The estimated total market figure is arbitrary and intended for illustration purposes.

BSHAA					
Steady State Scenario					
Current Membership Performance		Future Membership Performance			
			Near Term	Medium Term	Longer Term
Total Number of Members	1,330	Total Number of Members	1,316	1,303	1,290
Membership Income (£ total)	£195,000	Membership Income (£ Total)	£192,947	£191,041	£189,135
Average Subscription (£ per member)	£147	Average Subscription (per member)	£147	£147	£147
Retention (%)	90.0%	Retention (%)	92.0%	93.0%	94.0%
Gross Recruitment (%)	9.0%	Gross Recruitment (%)	12.0%	14.0%	15.0%
Number of FTEs	1	Number of FTEs	1	1	1
Members per FTE	1,330	Members per FTE	1,316	1,303	1,290
Income per FTE (£)	£195,000	Income per FTE (£)	£192,947	£191,041	£189,135
Market Penetration		Market Penetration			
Estimated Total Market	1,700	Estimated Total Market	1,700	1,700	1,700
Market Penetration (%)	78%	Market Penetration	77%	77%	76%

This table reflects the potential decay in membership numbers and income if BSHAA continues to operate on a reactive basis and suffers the downturn being experienced by contemporary membership bodies following similar routines.

BSHAA						
Potential Risk Model						
Current Membership Performance			Future Membership Performance			
				Near Term	Medium Term	Longer Term
Total Number of Members	1,330		Total Number of Members	1,276	1,199	1,103
Membership Income (£ total)	£195,000		Membership Income (£ Total)	£187,083	£175,793	£161,718
Average Subscription (£ per member)	£147		Average Subscription (per member)	£147	£147	£147
Retention (%)	90.0%		Retention (%)	88.0%	87.0%	86.0%
Gross Recruitment (%)	9.0%		Gross Recruitment (%)	8.0%	7.0%	6.0%
Number of FTEs	1		Number of FTEs	1	1	1
Members per FTE	1,330		Members per FTE	1,276	1,199	1,103
Income per FTE (£)	£195,000		Income per FTE (£)	£187,083	£175,793	£161,718
 Market Penetration			 Market Penetration			
Estimated Total Market	1,700		Estimated Total Market	1,700	1,700	1,700
Market Penetration (%)	78%		Market Penetration	75%	71%	65%

This table illustrates the improvement which we believe is possible following implementation of the recommendations contained in this report.

BSHAA						
Improvement & Growth Model						
Current Membership Performance			Future Membership Performance			
				Near Term	Medium Term	Longer Term
Total Number of Members	1,330		Total Number of Members	1,370	1,452	1,568
Membership Income (£ total)	£195,000		Membership Income (£ Total)	£200,865	£212,887	£229,895
Average Subscription (£ per member)	£147		Average Subscription (per member)	£147	£147	£147
Retention (%)	90.0%		Retention (%)	92.0%	93.0%	93.0%
Gross Recruitment (%)	9.0%		Gross Recruitment (%)	11.0%	13.0%	15.0%
Number of FTEs	1		Number of FTEs	1	1	1
Members per FTE	1,330		Members per FTE	1,370	1,452	1,568
Income per FTE (£)	£195,000		Income per FTE (£)	£200,865	£212,887	£229,895
 Market Penetration			 Market Penetration			
Estimated Total Market	1,700		Estimated Total Market	1,700	1,700	1,700
Market Penetration (%)	78%		Market Penetration	81%	85%	92%