

# BAFUNCS

British Association of Former United Nations Civil Servants

# NEWSLETTER



**Number 87**  
**Spring 2025**



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Design & layout: Clive Davies  
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# The future of annual reunions Questionnaire

At the final session of the 45th Annual Reunion in Bath in May 2024, participants were provided with information on various aspects of these reunions and given an opportunity to comment on the questions raised, even though time was very short. An overview of this session can be found in Newsletter No.86, Autumn 2024, pp.14-15.

Regrettably, time ran out before many questions could be answered, and even then it was realized that the audience was a particular subset of the BAFUNCS membership as a whole, and that steps to survey the opinions of non-attendees would be needed.

The Executive Committee therefore decided to prepare a questionnaire to be circulated together with the newsletter, and available online on the BAFUNCS website.

Except for the intervention of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020 and 2021, BAFUNCS has held an annual reunion every year since 1978. The Executive Committee launched this survey in order to assess the level of support for convening the annual reunion in the future, and to elicit members' opinions on aspects of the Reunion.

The survey questionnaire is being circulated as a loose flyer together with this Newsletter. It would be very helpful if you could take a few minutes to let us know your views.

## Contact the Editor

The final deadline for receiving contributions to the Autumn 2025 issue is 31 July 2025, provided they are expected. The Editor should preferably be contacted no later than end-June 2025 to discuss an idea before writing: by phone at +352 621 660252; by letter at 51 route de Mondorf, L-5552 Remich, Luxembourg; or, preferably, by e-mail ([maryroll51@gmail.com](mailto:maryroll51@gmail.com)).

# Note from the Editor



## BAFUNCS Newsletter Number 87 - Spring 2025

The Editor and the Executive Committee of the British Association of Former United Nations Civil Servants accept no responsibility for the opinions expressed in reports, articles and advertisements published in the Newsletter or for the accuracy of the information given.

Furthermore, mention of any product, service, organization or company in the Newsletter does not necessarily represent an endorsement by the Association.

Dear BAFUNCS Members,

As we struggle to grasp straws of normality in a topsy-turvy world, our newsletter strives to maintain stability. As is usual in the Spring edition, the main content comprises the documentation for the AGM, that will again be virtual this year. The voting form is enclosed with the newsletter.

The significant additional document is the revised Constitution (pp.33-37). Our thanks go to Robert England who has spent many hours toiling over this updated and modernized version, and ensuring that the Executive Committee made all necessary input and that the membership at large got every opportunity to comment and make suggestions.

Although the idea of an Executive Committee report may sound boring, I would strongly recommend members to read it, especially new members, as it gives a detailed overview of the depth and breadth of the work undertaken within the Association (pp.22-30). ExCo members take on a range of tasks on behalf of everyone, putting to good use their specific expertise in a variety of technical fields. In my capacity as ExCo Member and Newsletter Editor, I have the privilege of knowing most of what is being done, but even so I have found reading the report extremely interesting and enlightening.

Although a lot of space is taken up by the mandatory official documentation, there is still a bit of room left to treat readers to more unusual content. This time we have been very fortunate in that Lt Col Matthew Whitchurch (who was a speaker at the Bath Annual Reunion) agreed to write a piece especially for BAFUNCS members. This can be found on pp.7-9 and its subject, the protection and possible evacuation of civilians during armed conflicts, has suddenly become globally significant.

The latest on the Annual Reunion to be held in Norwich in May 2025 is described on pp.4-6, I hope your plans include attendance, as it all looks very interesting. You will doubtless have noticed the cover picture which shows the campus of the University of East Anglia with the unique architecture of the student residences. I am somewhat biased about it, as I had the privilege of living in one of those pictured here in the early 1970s.

The final significant item of information is that the functions of Membership and Subscriptions secretaries have been merged, as there is considerable overlap between the two. Both jobs are now being done by Aubrey Botsford, after Duncan Barclay had been Membership Secretary for many years, for which we owe him our gratitude.

And please don't forget to complete and return the questionnaire on annual reunions (see p.2), included as a loose document with this newsletter.

**Mary Roll-Vallanjon**

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# 2025 Annual Reunion, Norwich

## 19-21 May 2025

We hope you will join us for the 46<sup>th</sup> BAFUNCS Annual Reunion in Norwich that lies in the heart of East Anglia. In our programme we can offer you inspiring speakers, excursions and music and most of all, the time to share experiences and make new friends. The location, Park Farm Hotel & Leisure and Spa, is set in over 200 acres of idyllic landscaped gardens and green fields. On the evening of Monday 19 May, we will gather there for pre-dinner drinks followed by the Reunion Dinner.

## Tuesday 20 May

### Morning

The *RT Hon Andrew Mitchell MP* will have a conversation with Sir Mark Lowcock, our President. Mr Mitchell first became an MP in 1987 and has been representing Sutton Coldfield since 2001. During his career as a Conservative politician, he has taken a keen interest in international affairs generally, and Africa in particular. In the process he has held a wide variety of government posts including Secretary of State for International Development and Deputy Foreign Secretary.

Andrea Kelly, Environment Policy Advisor for the Norfolk Broads Authority, will be the second speaker. Following an introduction about the values of the Broads National Park and the challenges brought to our attention by the Broadland Futures Initiative, Andrea will describe some of the ground-breaking projects in Britain's largest protected wetland.

### Afternoon

Now is the time to choose an excursion, learn something and make new friends.

#### 1. A walking tour of Norwich

For a glimpse into the fascinating history of Norwich, join us for a walk to explore more tantalizing stories around the city centre, beginning at the Forum and finishing at the cathedral. Along the way we will travel through the centuries, various industries, the ancient Anglo-Scandinavian marketplace and picturesque Elm Hill. For more details, see *Box on p.6*.

The coach we have organized (depending on remaining seats) could also drop people off in the city centre for the independent to have an opportunity to explore. The newly renovated Norwich Castle offers an art exhibition *Sunlight* by Roger Ackling.

#### 2. Blickling Hall and Estate

Another option is a beautiful National Trust property, a Jacobean stately home set in 5000 acres of parkland and built on Tudor ruins. Not only is the house steeped in history including being owned by the Boleyn family, it contains one of the most significant collections of manuscripts and books in England. An RAF museum has been created which can be visited too.

#### 3. Sainsbury Centre

If art is your thing, you can be dropped off at the Sainsbury Centre to enjoy ancient, contemporary and ethnographic art collections in modernist spaces and visit the outdoor Sculpture Park.

#### An evening of music

The evening meal will take the form of a buffet. Pre- and post-buffet, two of our younger members – Gary and Liz Lewis – will provide us with some relaxing music. Gary and Liz travelled the world with the UN (UNDP, UNODC, UNEP). These days they live in France and together they play a variety of instruments in an eclectic mix of styles.



Norfolk Forum

## Wednesday 21 May

### Morning

The speaker will be Asher Minns, Executive Director of the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research at the University of East Anglia. The Tyndall Centre is a partnership of four UK universities, plus another in Shanghai. It brings together researchers from the social and natural sciences and engineering to develop sustainable responses to climate change. Asher is a long-time attendee at UN global climate summits, and will discuss with us the topic of climate change, international policy, and UK strategies for energy security and climate risk.

### Afternoon

#### Excursion – Hickling Broad boat trip

Journey into the hidden heart of the Broads and discover wildlife-rich marshes, reedbeds and wet woodlands – home to dazzling dragonflies, vibrant fenland flowers, and flocks of winter wildfowl. A guided wildlife boat trip is the perfect way to explore the natural treasures of the Norfolk Broads and learn about this fascinating wild place (see also *Box*).

Don't hesitate, locate your invitation and registration forms on the website or your copy of the Autumn 2024 Newsletter, and book the hotel room now. We'd love to see you there!



Norfolk Broads

## The Norfolk Broads

“We know that in Roman times the Broads were full of small islands amidst large areas of wetlands and reed beds. Everywhere it was much more marshy, a nature's paradise for large numbers of fish, eel and birds.

As most of the Broads' rivers were at sea level the remaining dry land was susceptible to tidal changes. It was not an easy area to live in because most of the patchy land was essentially unused by people as it was impassable. Very slowly as the sea fell away the drying marshes became a little more inhabited in terms of crude fishing and local communities. It was really only in the 16<sup>th</sup> century that drainage of any significance began to happen, mainly due to the influence of the Dutch.”

Extract from the Introduction to the book *Water, mills, marshes: life and work on the Broads, 1920-2020*. (ISBN 978-1-8381087-0-0). The book can be purchased from Bittern Books at a cost of £17.50 (<https://bitternbooks.co.uk/product/water-mills-and-marshes/?bbaf=wise>). One of the editors, Olwen Gotts, is a member of BAFUNCS.



Norfolk Broads

# A glimpse into the fascinating history of Norwich

Ros Burgess

*Join us on the walking tour to explore more tantalizing stories*

Norwich is described on the road signs as “a fine city”, and it certainly leads a visitor to a host of historic connections and contemporary stories.

The name Norwich is a corruption of “norwic”, which translates from Scandinavian languages as the north market place (as distinguished from Suffolk). Its central location – connected by two navigable rivers to the coast – was an extremely important means of communication with the wider world. These links extended both northwards and eastwards to the Hanseatic traders of the Baltic and the European markets of the Low Countries.

In medieval times, Norwich was the centre of a flourishing wool market and the weaving trade. To this end, “strangers” from the continent with specialized skills were welcomed. Religious persecution in other places led to a thriving industry in Norwich, noted by Daniel Defoe, Cobbett, Paston and others. By the 19<sup>th</sup> century, it was also the hub of the leather and shoe

industry. Printing, engineering, the manufacture of chocolate and clothing and the timber trade also added to its prosperity.

Nowadays, the cathedral spire and cloisters dominate the skyline by the river, as do sections of the city wall that encircle the historic trading hub. The Norman castle keep and moat, designed partly to oversee the market areas, have recently been refurbished, and the city is home to several museums that shine a light on its past.

Retailing is still an important function of this interesting city. Its military connections to the USA are evidenced in the public library. The University of East Anglia, founded in the 1960s, has now become a leading centre of research and learning.

Prominent families and people with connections to Norwich and Norfolk include the Dukes of Norfolk, George Borrow, Sir Thomas Browne, Edith Cavell, Elizabeth Fry, Stephen Fry, the Gurneys, Mother Julian, Robert Kett, Admiral Lord Nelson, Amelia Opie and Philip Pullman.



A view of Norwich cathedral and the city

# Protection of civilians? Try deliberate evacuation

Lieutenant Colonel M.W. Whitchurch MBE F Inst RE

*Fools learn by experience;  
I prefer to learn from the  
experience of others*

Bismarck, 1874

*This article explains how loss of civilian life can be dramatically reduced by improved deliberate evacuation drawing on experience of operations in the Balkans, Africa and selected history. The tragic losses in current wars make adoption of this concept urgent. The author will be pleased to support any work on this subject.*

## What the UN is about – what we know

A major UN role remains saving people from the scourge of war and other horrors. It has never been easy. Study of war shows that when parties decide to use force, they seldom consider civilians who at best are an afterthought. The fact is *no matter what we do there are civilian casualties, but this can be reduced hugely*. Again, recall the old UN point: saving civilians will not get them to heaven but we can save millions from going to hell.

## What the UN and others could do – proven options for protection of civilians\*

The practice of protection will vary according to politics and geography, including local culture. As ever case-by-case is the rule. There are two methods. Both have worked in the past, but must be considered again in light of the ghastly losses in DR Congo, Sudan and Gaza. They are *regional security* and *deliberate evacuation*.

*Regional security of villages and towns.*\*\* To protect civilians as in eastern DR Congo, their villages and towns must be put into a system of defence. This is the method intended for the long term. History contains useful examples showing what could be done. By careful adoption and adaptation of lessons for the affected villages and towns, security (meaning freedom from fear and want) can be improved, creating a framework for civil development.

*Deliberate evacuation to a protected area.* In brief, remove the population from the fighting zone to an area which is organized for their security. They stay there until conditions allow their return home. This is for the short term of up to five years.

*How does this work?* The late Secretary General Kofi Annan saw the problem with this joke: "When there is a fire, a country calls out the fire brigade with their ready-to-go engines. When the UN has a fire, it must build a fire engine first". Clearly the UN needs a long time to build a force to hold a protected area.

Some Member States have a formation of regular troops who at very short notice can get to the area of the fighting zone and build a protected area for evacuated civilians. This area protects refugees from the elements of weather and violence. It sustains them so that they can live in good order. The space can be constructed quickly with an effective force to protect it. Planning a UN force takes about six months. To some extent an example is the Anglo-French action in Ituri province in DR Congo in 2003. They arrived with 5000 troops, stabilized the area and were relieved by the UN within six months.

## Evacuation to a protected area in more detail

I personally witnessed elements of this concept in Kosovo and Northern Macedonia in 1999, in DR Congo in 2004, and in Darfur in 2008. With observation of other conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, plus study of wars in South-East Asia, here is the idea.

The regular force (5000 troops) is launched into a selected area to clear, hold and build a protected area that can be occupied by refugees in 21 days. Clearly OCHA (<https://www.unocha.org/we-coordinate>) will lead in much of this. Indeed, they will have anticipated evacuation with considerable planning beforehand as seen in the prevailing UN Capstone Doctrine.\*\*\*

- *Clear and hold.* The force secures the area so work may begin with camps in accordance with UN practice. It is likely that these forces are sustained by airlift as well as road and rail. With them arrives tentage and other material that can be used to construct camps of up to 200 000 each.

\* See <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/protection-of-civilians-mandate>. These suggestions resonate with UN thinking.

\*\* This was explained in an article published by the Royal Engineers Journal in August 2021. Copy available from the author on request. Contact [matthew-whitchurch@hotmail.com](mailto:matthew-whitchurch@hotmail.com).

\*\*\* The Capstone Doctrine highlights three success factors: legitimacy, credibility and local ownership. The legitimacy of UN peacekeeping operations is derived from its unique position in internal law, the UN Charter and UN Security Council authorization.



Lt Col Whitchurch on his third UN tour in Sudan in 2007 (seen here with the Rajputs of the Indian Army).

Lieutenant Colonel Matthew Whitchurch was one of the speakers at the Annual Reunion in Bath (his place of residence) in May 2024, and he has kindly agreed to write this piece specially for the BAFUNCS Newsletter. He has published many articles in the *Royal Engineer Journal*, and is an instructor for UN-type operations.

Nicknamed “Sticky”, Matthew is the sixth generation to serve in the British Army (going back to the Indian Army of 1821), and a second-generation UN soldier (his father served in Korea in 1950-1952).

He completed 44 years of service with the Royal Engineers, from the Cold War through Desert Storm, the Balkans, Iraq and Afghanistan. He commanded two regiments and an independent field squadron. He is now an Army Reservist.

He was appointed MBE following his instruction at Warminster on land warfare, and specialized in UN operations at Staff College. His last operational tour in Iraq was as Advisor to the War College in Baghdad.

He is devoted to helping the UN to help others, and has seen operational service three times with the UN, including in DR Congo, Sudan and Uganda. He was also involved in the NATO Anti-Corruption Project, making many trips to Kabul.

He has led over 100 battlefield tours and spent the past eight years advising and supporting many others, including the high-profile British Army Staff Rides from 2014 to 2018. His area of expertise is the Russian Front from 1943 to 1945, and he has been instructing NATO on this subject in the Baltic States since 2017, and also in Ukraine. This work continues.



- *Build.* Engineers build the camps to last for two years. These tented camps are laid out so as to reflect culture, customs and practice of the people concerned: schools, shops, hospitals, mosques, churches, etc. The key point is to establish a workable structure as they know it. By the end of the first year, the target is to replace tents with suitable huts and other camp structures. The reality is that camps like this tend to be used much longer than initially envisaged.
- *Evacuation.* Once the area is ready, it is occupied by refugees. This starts from the 21<sup>st</sup> day after building the tented city.
- *Recovery.* At a future stage when conditions allow, the refugees return home. Camps are dismantled and made ready for future operations. The UN force closes down.

- *What is not practised cannot be done.* These types of operations must be studied and practised by the UN with stand-by forces. Consultation with the affected States is key from start to end.
- *Don't be national, be rational!* Strive to get Member States to see what is in the common interest. Never give up and never create friction.

### **So how could this help in DR Congo, Sudan and Gaza?**

*DR Congo.* Looking back over the past 25 years, DR Congo in the east remains unstable with constant fighting. My suggestion is a system of fortified villages and towns as described in the paper cited above. This system has worked for hundreds of years in the past so why not now? This is the least we can do for the people who live there.

*Sudan.* If there is one country that needs deliberate evacuation to protected areas as described above, it is Sudan. Look at what the UN and AU built in Darfur 2007-2009: the idea is sound. As in DR Congo, the host nation's reaction may vary from cooperative to hostile. The point here is about saving lives and pressing the case by force if required.

*Gaza.* Imagine if we had plans for protected areas ready in neighbouring countries. How many lives could have been saved? Permanent evacuation is not wanted or workable however. [This is highly controversial. At the precise time of publication, the dilemma mentioned here has blown up into a conflagration of global proportions following suggestions by President Trump to relocate the entire civilian population of Gaza. Ed.]

### **Action this day? Enter the UN**

The UN has a vital part to play in getting willing members to help. Never be afraid of a new idea. Much reduced loss of civilian life is the objective. Imagine how this can help now and in the future. Please may the following take place:

- UN/HQ via the British Permanent Representative should consider the concept described above for possible adoption and adaptation. This is passed to all parties across the UN family.
- If agreed, it must be written, taught and practised.
- SRSGs and Force Commanders should be made aware of the idea.
- This article should be disseminated throughout the UN system so that the like-minded can consider it.

My hope is that this has ignited your imaginations and thoughts. Please write with your comments to [matthewwhitchurch@hotmail.com](mailto:matthewwhitchurch@hotmail.com).

## *It is better to face the dangers and difficulties of the task than be blind to everything but success*

The Duke of Wellington, 1806

### **Difficulties**

- *The idea of stand-by forces is not new.* Member States will help or hinder according to their interests. The UN needs to identify possible members who can and will provide forces for such tasks. Consider NATO or the EU in the case of Europe, the AU for Africa, and so on. The trick here is to identify which States are likely to help and build contingent plans with the willing.
- *Who pays and with what kit?* This is part of the stand-by agreement with camp stores ready in UN depots. The store in Brindisi (Italy) is a good example. Such material is not expensive. These stores can be air-lifted to the protected area in a timely manner. Heavier structures follow by ship, rail and road.

### **Dangers**

- *These suggestions get polite interest and little more.* Listen to the speeches of the SG in the last 12 months and the ideas for protecting civilians. Look at the huge number of unnecessary civilian casualties in the past two years alone. Recall the role of the UN.
- *Neighbouring nations cannot or will not help.* Temporary can mean permanent. Clearly incentives will be wanted. Temporary is just that. The prevailing opinion of the States affected is key. Return of the evacuated peoples to their land post conflict is guaranteed as expected, wanted and within the law.

# Passing the baton – guiding the next generation of UN staff

## The BAFUNCS Career Paths Programme

Stephen Rudgard

The BAFUNCS Career Paths Programme (CPP) stages events at universities comprising conversations about UN careers that involve our members and student participants. The host university provides a moderator, ideally a student member of its UN Association or Society, and BAFUNCS members act as expert panellists contributing their experiences as former and current UN staff. The university sometimes contributes a younger alumnus with UN experience to participate in the panel and provide an early career perspective.

The introduction and discussion amongst the 3-4 panellists take around 45 minutes, focusing on how the panellists secured their first role in the UN, the positive and negative aspects of working in the UN, and the attributes helpful for securing a job in the UN. That discussion is followed by a question-and-answer session with the students lasting up to 45 minutes, in which they present their queries to the panel. The BAFUNCS panellists stay for a while after the event, as the students want to chat over points that arose during the session.

Eight of these CPP events were organized in 2024, including Cambridge University, the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) at the University of Sussex, Imperial College, King's College and University College in London, the London School of Economics (LSE), and Oxford University. Aside from the universities, a CPP event was held at the London International Model United Nations conference (LIMUN-UK) in Westminster. A total of around 850 students participated in the eight events.

In terms of leadership of the Programme, Marilyn Carr (SRY) stepped down in March 2023 and handed over to Stephen Rudgard (OXF). Stephen worked with Nicholas Rosellini (LON) to develop a new roster of 11 members from five BAFUNCS regions, most of whom have retired within the last five years or are still working (*see Box*), and they have participated in at least one panel in 2024. Those members offer a variety of experience across many UN entities, covering political, development and humanitarian work, enabling the students to hear a range of viewpoints.

### Roster of BAFUNCS members

Michael Askwith (KSX)	Titi Oyejola (CAM)
John Cubbon (LON)	Sarah Papineau (LON)
Nicola Harrington (OVS)	Nicholas Rosellini (LON)
Melanie Hutchinson (OXF)	Stephen Rudgard (OXF)
Jocelyn Mason (LON)	Alison Tilbe (CAM)
Tomoko Nishimoto (LON)	

For the 2024 programme, Careers Services were contacted in most of the universities to provide better continuity between years and widen the potential pool of student participants, while links were maintained with the student Association or Society as co-sponsors. As an example, the Cambridge University Careers Service and the UN Association together attracted 160 students at undergraduate and postgraduate level from over 30 departments.

The Careers Services offer the students excellent continuing support through practical activities such as drafting of curricula and interview practice, which complement the knowledge shared by the BAFUNCS panellists. The 2024 events were predominantly organized in-person with panellists and students in the room together, but in some cases, students have been able to join remotely through online webcasts either in a hybrid format (LSE) or in exclusively online mode (Imperial College). The Careers Service at Imperial College ensured that the event was recorded and made available to students, including those unable to attend the event on the day. The Careers Service at Cambridge University published a blog\* on the BAFUNCS careers event so that students who did not attend could benefit. BAFUNCS panellists shared documents on UN careers and links to UN recruitment websites.\*\*

The feedback received from students attending these CPP events has been overwhelmingly positive, and the universities concerned have appreciated having access to former and current UN staff to share their experiences. It is felt that this formula is an excellent way for BAFUNCS to extend its value as well as guide future generations of UN staff.

\* <https://unicamcareers.edublogs.org/2024/11/08/top-take-aways-from-our-panel-on-career-paths-in-international-development-with-the-united-nations/>.

\*\* <https://careers.un.org>.

As ever, the CPP relies on the participation of BAFUNCS members, and especially recent retirees, willing to share their experiences with eager young audiences. The core of institutional partners under this well-received programme will be maintained, and there are prospects for further modest expansion to other universities. The factors limiting such expansion include the availability of two or three recently retired BAFUNCS members who are interested in being panellists and live close enough to the university in question to limit the costs of travel. Please let Stephen Rudgard (OXF) know if you are interested in participating.



LSE United Nations Society careers event, 2024. In the centre BAFUNCS panellists Nicola Harrington, Nicholas Rosellini and Sarah Papineau, flanked by UN Society members Mihika Chechi (left) and Laila Gauhar (right).



Cambridge University careers event, 2024. Left to right: Liam Travers (alumnus); Alison Carless (moderator); BAFUNCS panellists Stephen Rudgard and Alison Tilbe.



LIMUN careers event, 2024. Left to right: Jocelyn Mason, Stephen Rudgard and Sarah Papineau (BAFUNCS); Joseph Pengelly (moderator).

## Some of the points that BAFUNCS panellists make during the CPP events

### *Understanding the UN and all its complexity.*

Panellists highlight that the UN comprises a large variety of entities beyond the Security Council and the General Assembly, some of which are highly specialized, and note that the UN is changing. The large variation between agency budgets is explained, with the principal humanitarian and peacekeeping entities having the most funding and staff, while smaller entities offer a wide variety of specialist opportunities.

*Pros and cons of working for the UN.* Panellists note that UN work is fulfilling and meaningful, with opportunities to address complex multifaceted problems and support governments in making critical changes. Other highlights include travelling and working with diverse international and multicultural teams, and facilitating collaboration between people with different perspectives. There are fewer full posts now than there used to be, as a larger proportion of roles in the UN move to consultancy mode, often in short-term positions with no prospect of renewal. Particular challenges with humanitarian work can include frequent travel and postings to non-family duty stations, and there can be a heavy emotional toll from such work.

*Getting in to the UN.* Panellists note the high levels of competition when applying for UN positions. Ensuring applications respond to minimum requirements in job descriptions is important, due to automated checks of applications. Relevant experience can be acquired with a charity or NGO, some of which work very closely with the UN. Foreign Affairs departments and government aid agencies give their employees a good understanding of UN work as well as working contacts. In addition, students are advised to develop a network of people working in similar areas.

*Developing skills.* The ability to operate in more than one of the UN's six official languages is noted as a big benefit. In addition to technical skills and expertise, familiarity with a range of "soft" skills is highlighted, such as working effectively with cross-cultural teams, communication, and knowledge-sharing techniques and tools. Panellists also underline the value of experience in fundraising.

# Regional activities

in 2024

compiled by **Nicky Rodgers**, Regional Convenor

## Cambridge Region

Nicky Rodgers

The region has enjoyed an active year with four events, starting with an AGM and lunch at the Bell Hotel Thetford attended by 16 members. Having been approached by ExCo on the possibility of hosting AR2025 in the CAM region, we recommended that Norwich would be a suitable location for this event.



Houghton Hall, June 2024 CAM

At Houghton Hall in June, 10 members viewed the exhibitions which included Magdalene Odundo's ceramic work beautifully displayed in the grandeur of the state rooms, while Antony Gormley's extraordinary sculptures could be found scattered in the grounds of the estate. In September, a tour of Ickworth House in the impressive Italianate Rotunda was followed by lunch and a walk round the grounds, with the stumpy proving to be an intriguing surprise in a secluded woodland area. Our Christmas lunch was held at the George Inn where 17 members enjoyed pre-lunch drinks followed by a delicious meal in the sunny festive garden room.

Nicky Rodgers and Charles Robson (Registrar) joined the Norwich AR2025 Committee to assist with the arrangements and we wish to thank Ros Burgess and Jane Harding for help in the search for a suitable hotel. Already others have come forward with offers to participate, so we hope more members will join us at the next AGM/lunch to be held in Thetford on 5 March where we will discuss the plans for Norwich.



Ickworth House, September 2024 CAM



Christmas lunch, December 2024 CAM

## Kent Sussex Region

Terri Jezeph, Heather Johnson & Richard Sydenham

The region continued an active schedule of meetings and lunches during the year, holding seven meetings including an AGM and the Christmas lunch. KSX members and guests gathered in February at the Regency restaurant on Brighton seafront where 16 of us enjoyed good food in an attractive setting.



Informal AGM, Lewes, May 2024 KSX

In May, we met for lunch at Cote restaurant, Lewes. An informal AGM followed, with a discussion on how the region was being run, plans for the year and possible venues for lunches and visits. Agreement was reached at the AGM that Terri, Heather and Richard would continue to informally lead the region, and that Richard would continue to act as Treasurer. Richard presented the financial statements for 2023/24.

KSX member Joan Wilson kindly arranged a lunch in July at Rock A Nore Kitchen, Hastings. Some of us also met in July for lunch at the Arun View Inn, Littlehampton. Our thanks go to Margaret Bills for her recommendation and help in making arrangements. August found us at the Hydro hotel, Eastbourne, where 10 members enjoyed an excellent lunch and conversation.



Arun View Inn, Littlehampton, July 2024 KSX

For our autumn get-together in October, we met for lunch at the King's Head pub, Southover, Lewes, followed by a walking tour of the ruins of Lewes Priory.



Lewes Priory, October 2024 KSX

Special thanks go to KSX member Philip Daniel, Treasurer of the Trust, who arranged our visit and to Arthur Franklin, Chairman of the Trust, for his informative guided tour.

We celebrated the holiday season in December with our Christmas lunch, attended by 12 members at Cote restaurant, Brighton, which made a very enjoyable ending to our programme for 2024.



Christmas lunch, December 2024 KSX

## London Region

Hannah Shabathai

London's new team on the job, Hannah Shabathai (Regional Representative) and Carole Harris (Treasurer/Secretary) successfully re-launched London Region at the start of 2024.

To introduce London members to each other, Hannah's sister Yvonne Gill, who is also a BAFUNCS London member, kindly hosted a luncheon party in her Mayfair home on 2 May, so our year started off with a big bang as testified by our delighted guests.



Lunch hosted by Yvonne Gill, May 2024 LON

Two other events highlighted the year: on 11 September, a unique experience for members to visit the Wallace Collection's exhibition on Ranjit Singh, Maharaja of the Sikh Empire. This was a private guided

tour narrated to us by the Museum’s Guest Curator and benefactor of some of the magnificent works of art. Tea and scones followed in the true British style in the Museum’s beautiful atrium. The year finished off with our festive Christmas lunch on 6 December, which took place in the Summerhouse, London’s Little Venice restaurant ideally located on the canal and thoroughly enjoyed by all.

Close contact was kept with our fellow regions. To start the year, Hannah attended Surrey Region’s AGM, so she could get a taste of what was involved in regional activities, while both Hannah and Carole attended ExCo meetings as well as the Annual Reunion in Bath.

We have plenty in store for 2025, both social and cultural, so we look forward to gathering together with our like-minded friends and former UN colleagues.



Christmas lunch, December 2024 LON

## Northern Region

Robert England

Because of its large geographical footprint – Scotland, Northern England and Northern Ireland, not to forget the Isle of Man – the region has long had the practice of holding one two-day gathering each year. There is also a modest concentration of members in and around Edinburgh who occasionally get together.



Visit to Nairn, September 2024 NOR

The main event in 2024 was a gathering in Nairn, the region’s – and indeed the Association’s – northernmost outpost. Organized in September by Ron and Grania Skeldon, who live in Nairn, the event featured a walking tour of the town and beach, a visit to the site of the Culloden battlefield, and a boat trip on Loch Ness during which no monsters were spotted. For those hardy members who ventured this far north, the gathering was an enjoyable and memorable experience.

In June, David Macfadyen organized a visit to the National Gallery of Scotland in Edinburgh which has recently had a facelift. The visit included lunch and was enjoyed by all those who came.

## Overseas Region

Mary Hamouda

In 2024, the OVS Geneva region met three times for lunch: in April at the restaurant Sur l’Ardoise in Versoix (15 participants), in August at La Table du Lac in Divonne-les-Bains (13 participants), and in November at the Brasserie d’Henriette in Ferney-Voltaire (11 participants). Invitations to these lunches were sent to all OVS members in the event that any were in the Geneva area at the time. A few OVS members attended the Annual Reunion in Bath.



Divonne-les-Bains, August 2024 OVS

Harry Leefe expressed the wish to stand down as Regional Representative in early 2024 but agreed to remain as interim Regional Representative until a replacement could be found. As there were no expressions of interest in response to his e-mail in early 2024, I have agreed to take on this role from 2025.



Ferney-Voltaire, November 2024 OVS

## Oxford Region

Stephen Rudgard

The Oxford Region held its summer lunch at the delightful George Hotel in Dorchester-on-Thames on 13 June. A total of 19 members enjoyed the meal, which was served in the very elegant main dining room in this historic coaching inn. Before the lunch, some of the party attended a guided tour of Dorchester Abbey by Margot Metcalfe, an official guide and curator of the Abbey Museum. We were given a short description of the almost 1500 years of the Abbey's history since it was founded and were guided around the various fascinating features of the Abbey itself, including medieval stained glass, tombs, wall frescoes and the impressive solid lead font. The Abbey continues to be an important part of the community and stages many music events.



George Hotel, Dorchester-on-Thames, June 2024 OXF

The Oxford Region Christmas lunch was held at the characterful Chequers Inn in Burcot on 4 December. Altogether 18 members enjoyed the atmosphere in this lovely location, with excellent food and attentive service. Stephen Rudgard (Regional Representative) made a few announcements at the end of the meal, including promoting the upcoming Annual Reunion in Norwich in May 2025.



Christmas lunch, December 2024 OXF

There were a few calls for member support during the year, responded to by Latifa Noman. In addition, a card and a small gift were sent to various members who are housebound or unable to attend events.

In terms of plans for 2025, there will be at least one tour combined with lunch, with suggestions being the Harwell Science and Innovation Campus and one of the Oxford University college's gardens.

## South Central Region

Claudine Pichon

As 2024 draws to an end, I would like to thank the South-Central members for their support, particularly those who faithfully attend SCL lunches.

Throughout the year, I have endeavoured to organize the lunches across the region to give everyone an opportunity to attend: the Bluebell Inn in Emsworth, La Parisienne in Romsey, the Riverside in Tuckton near Bournemouth and the Christmas lunch at the White Hart Cadnam.

While some of you are unable or may not wish to join us, we are hoping you will get in touch to let me know how you are or if you need to help, on behalf of BAFUNCS.

In July, I “participated” in the FAFICS Annual Meeting. Andrew Flatt represented BAFUNCS in Bangkok, while I woke up every day at 3 a.m. to follow the debates on Zoom. If you are interested, particularly concerning UNJSPF matters, additional information is available on the BAFUNCS website.

## Surrey Region

Marilyn Carr

As usual, the Surrey Region held three Committee meetings in January, April and October. During the year, we welcomed Rini Reza to the Committee as General Secretary.

A high level of participation in social events has continued during 2024, with 23 members attending the spring lunch and AGM on 7 March and the Christmas lunch on 3 December. Both lunches were again held at the Angel Inn in Thames Ditton. Sir Mark Lowcock gave an after-lunch presentation in March. The summer outing this year was to Syon House in Brentford and took place on 4 July, with 17 members including four from the London Region. After a guided tour of the house, participants enjoyed a meal at the cafeteria and a stroll in the park and the impressive Grand Conservatory. The visit was organized by Annie Kean, and was chosen by members from five possible outings she presented at the March AGM.



Christmas lunch, December 2024 SCL



Christmas lunch, December 2024 SCL



Syon House, July 2024 SRY

## South West Region

Penelope Ratcliffe (Member Support) & Nicky Rodgers

The Annual Reunion in 2024 held in Bath was attended by some local members. There is some good news, as we are currently in discussion with a possible volunteer to take on the role of Regional Representative.

Christmas hampers were dispatched to seven members, but no Christmas message was sent out to the membership this year. Penny continues to provide vital member support when required and is also a Trustee of the BAFUNCS Benevolent Fund.

During the year, telephone contact was made with 13 elderly members. Three birthday cards were sent to members in their 90s whose dates of birth were known. This included one member who celebrated her 100th birthday, who was also sent flowers and prosecco. Flowers were sent to three members who were unwell. Members have been encouraged to apply to the BAFUNCS Benevolent Fund where appropriate. Christmas cards were sent to 23 members not attending the Christmas lunch, and a Christmas card and small gifts were sent to 16 housebound members.

The next scheduled event will be the AGM and spring lunch to be held on 11 March 2025.





Christmas lunch, December 2024 SRY



Meeting at the home of Rina Rizzi SRY

## West Midlands and Wales Region

Nicky Rodgers

It was a pleasure to meet some of the region's members who attended the Annual Reunion in Bath, including Dr John Doherty who gave the valedictory thanks on the last day of a most enjoyable event.

Since Edith Davis stepped down in January 2024, following a successful two-day event at Stratford, we continue to search for a willing volunteer to be Regional Representative, while Elizabeth continues to act as Treasurer.

If you think you could consider acting as communicator for the region, i.e. take on the role of Regional Representative, please get in touch with Nicky Rodgers who can explain what it involves, to help you decide. Meanwhile some of the region's members have already booked to attend the Annual Reunion in Norwich in May 2025. We hope many members will join us.

## Emergency contacts

Occasionally we lose touch with a member – and their family or friends. Probably the most notable example of the sort of problem that can ensue is the suspension of pension payments.

Each year UNJSPF sends BAFUNCS a list of UK pensioners whose signed CEs (Certificates of Entitlement) have not been received. If the beneficiary cannot be traced (e.g. because he or she has changed address or is in hospital) the pension is suspended. Obviously, having the name of a family member or friend makes it easier for BAFUNCS to find the person and let the Fund know – before the payments are suspended.

This is an appeal to members who have not already provided the name of someone whom we can contact, or have not recently updated it, to do so now. You can do this in your profile on the BAFUNCS website or by informing your regional officer or the membership secretary.

# UN Career Records Project (UNCRP) Update

Nicholas Rosellini

UNCRP started in 1989 as a partnership between BAFUNCS and the Bodleian Library, Oxford University, to collect the memoirs and personal records of former UN staff, as well as of those with service linked to the UN system. The UNCRP collection complements the official records of the UN kept by the Bodleian in its capacity as an official depository of UN documents. These contributions now number more than 500, providing a substantial database of practical on-the-ground UN experience over the years. The collection tells the story of how individual UN staff have contributed to a better world, with limited resources and often in difficult circumstances, and as such provides a valuable resource for researchers.

When the second phase of UNCRP ended in 2021 and Mike Askwith handed over as Coordinator after 18 fruitful years, Bill Jackson kindly agreed to stay on in his role as Editor and liaison with the Bodleian for a limited time to provide continuity for the third phase. Now Bill has decided it is time to hand over the reins. He has made an enormous contribution to the success of UNCRP by assembling and editing materials and ensuring they were in decent shape to be deposited at the Bodleian. He will produce this year a third supplement to the *Guide to the collection* he first issued in 2016, as his final formal contribution.

I am very pleased to announce that Terry Jones has agreed to take on the editorial element of Bill's role. Many of you already know Terry, who retired in 2008 after 38 years with the UN system, and then continued to provide support to many offices in the Asia and Pacific Region until 2021. He continues to live in Hanoi with annual visits to the UK and has participated in several recent BAFUNCS reunions as an Overseas Region member.



Weston library (main building of the Bodleian libraries complex in Oxford).

In early September 2024, Terry, Bill and I visited the Bodleian where we met Jeremy McIlwaine, the senior archivist responsible for some 400 special collections at the library. He had gone to great efforts to organize the visit by showing us a variety of examples from the UN collection. It was fascinating to see manuscripts of crucial episodes in the history of the UN covering a wide range of issues going back to the very beginnings of the UN. We all very much appreciated it.

With the new team now operational, we would be delighted to continue to provide support to anyone considering adding papers to the steadily growing archive. Any material can be considered if not already formally published, either in hard copy or electronic form. It is also important to know that you can place a time embargo of your choosing on material which you may regard as sensitive. We can also arrange to record interviews if this is your preferred medium. If you have materials or want to ask further questions about UNCRP please contact us at the email addresses listed below.

## Contacts

Nicholas Rosellini  
nrosellini@hotmail.com  
Terry Jones  
terencedj@gmail.com

UNCRP Coordinator

UNCRP Editor

## Useful resources

BAFUNCS website – UNCRP page:  
United Nations Career Records Project (UNCRP) – BAFUNCS

Bodleian Library:  
<https://archives.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/>

UNCRP questionnaire:  
<https://bafunco.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/UNCRP-Questionnaire-and-Guidelines-for-completion-Version-1-July-202001-07-20.doc>



Terry Jones, Bill Jackson and Jeremy McIlwaine, senior archivist at the Bodleian libraries.

# The BAFUNCS Benevolent Fund

## Background

The BAFUNCS Benevolent Fund (BBF) was set up as a registered charity by BAFUNCS in September 1987. The purpose of the Fund and its mode of operation are set out in its governing document, the Declaration of Trust, which was approved by the 10<sup>th</sup> BAFUNCS AGM in 1987. The Fund receives bequests and donations and its monies are invested in the Charities Official Investment Fund (COIF) managed by the Churches, Charities and Local Authorities (CCLA) investment management company.

While BAFUNCS established the Benevolent Fund, the Fund operates independently of BAFUNCS, as required by Charity Commission rules. Nevertheless, the BAFUNCS Executive Committee (ExCo) does have some responsibilities towards the Fund, as laid down in the Declaration of Trust, namely in appointing the trustees, and in agreeing any changes to the Declaration of Trust.

BBF trustees must be members of BAFUNCS. The trustees are solely responsible for the operation of the Fund and for decisions about the awarding of grants and loans. At the time of writing, the BBF has six trustees, of whom three are Officers: the Chair, the Treasurer and the Secretary. As the BBF can have up to nine trustees, towards the end of 2024 the BBF started the recruitment of additional trustees.

## Eligibility for grants or loans

When considering applications to the Fund for grants and loans the trustees keep in mind the stated object of the Fund, which is to “relieve in cases of need, hardship or distress persons who are former employees of the United Nations Organization or of its Specialized Agencies and the spouses, widows, widowers and other dependents of such persons”. While members of BAFUNCS are automatically eligible to apply, an applicant does not need to be a BAFUNCS member. In practice eligibility to apply is extended to any employee of the UN system and related organizations,\* not just the UN Organization and its Specialized Agencies.

Given the variety of types of UN employment available, such as staff contracts, special service agreements

and consultancies, the trustees have broad discretion in determining eligibility. Applicants who are not members of BAFUNCS are required to provide evidence of UN employment.

The Declaration of Trust does not explicitly state any geographical limit for applicants; however, as the BBF is a British charity set up by a British association the trustees consider that the intention is for recipients to be British, resident in the UK or to have another sufficient connection to the UK.

The trustees make a judgement of need, hardship or distress by assessing applicants in the round; this includes a consideration of their financial status. To assist trustees in this judgement, applicants are invited to explain why costs cannot be met from other sources, which is an opportunity to provide information about financial difficulties.

The BBF flyer\*\* lists the kinds of needs that grants and loans have been used for. While medical costs can be covered, the trustees do not consider that the Fund should be used to meet the shortfalls of a person’s health insurance other than in exceptional circumstances.

## Grants and loans awarded in 2024

In 2024, the BBF awarded £74,198 in grants and £8000 in interest-free loans. These payments were for a variety of needs, including hardship grants to cover general living costs, installation of a stairlift and home modification. The hardship grants included £42,000 to refugees from Afghanistan, Gaza and Syria who had worked for the UN in their home countries.

## Recent developments

The application form for grants and loans has been revised and an online version developed. Guidance notes have been written to assist applicants. In addition, Information Note 10 – Guide to the BAFUNCS Benevolent Fund, and the BBF flyer have been updated. To increase the visibility of the BBF on the BAFUNCS website a BBF “button” has been placed on the public and members home pages. In the future, the trustees plan to provide short reports of their meetings in the BAFUNCS Newsletter.

\* <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/un-system>.

\*\* <https://bafuncls.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/BBF-Flyer-11Jun24.pdf>.

The Fund's Declaration of Trust makes a distinction between capital funds and income funds: this distinction, in practice, has never been made in our financial management. After consultation with the BBF's accountants and independent examiners, the trustees have decided to use this distinction, for clarity, in presenting the BBF's financial position in future. The Charity Commission provides for three types of funds to be held by charities: restricted, designated and unrestricted funds. The BBF will now use a Designated Fund as its capital, with a starting amount of the invested balance held with CCLA. This Fund will continue always to be available for grants and loans, whenever income funds are insufficient. Its size will therefore fluctuate with market movements, and with additions or withdrawals. This Designated Fund invested with CCLA will also be a source of income funds from interest or gains generated. The BBF will accompany this change with a medium-term budget, starting with one year, that sets out the BBF's

expected income and projected disbursements for the coming year.

### Relevant documents about the BBF

The following documents prepared by the BBF trustees can be found on the BBF webpage (<https://bafuncs.org/bafuncs-benevolent-fund-bbf-rev/>):

- A Guide to the Benevolent Fund (Information Note 10);
- The Benevolent Fund flyer;
- Use of BBF regional subventions;
- Application form for a grant or loan;
- Guidance for completing the application form;
- Information booklet on physical frailty, dementia and long-term health care.

AGM/2025/1

# Annual General Meeting 2025

## List of documents

- AGM/2025/1 List of documents
- AGM/2025/2 Process for the Annual General Meeting 2025
- AGM/2025/3 Report of the virtual General Assembly 2024
- AGM/2025/4 Report of the Executive Committee for 2024/25
- AGM/2025/5 BAFUNCS accounts for the year ended 31 December 2024  
Proposed budget for 2025 and 2026
- AGM/2025/6 Revised BAFUNCS Constitution, final proposal 14 January 2025
- AGM/2025/7 Nominations for National Officers and Members of the Executive Committee 2025/26
- AGM/2025/8 Report on the BAFUNCS Benevolent Fund to 31 December 2024
- AGM/2025/9 Voting form\*

\* Separate flyer circulated with the newsletter.

# Process for the **BAFUNCS** Annual General Meeting 2025

It is a constitutional requirement that BAFUNCS convene its AGM once a year to consider certain items of business, including: approval of the annual report; approval of the accounts and budget; noting the report of the Benevolent Fund; election of officers to the Executive Committee; and any other business that may be proposed for discussion/decision by the Executive Committee. BAFUNCS will again conduct its AGM virtually in 2025, as it did in the previous five years (2020-2024). The main elements are:

- **Documentation.** This will be provided in the Association's Spring 2025 Newsletter No.87, which will also be available on the website.
- **Online discussion group.** There will be a discussion group on the website, where members can ask questions and receive responses from members of the Executive Committee.
- **Zoom session, 10.00 a.m. on Monday 12 May 2025.** There will be a single session on Zoom, moderated by our President, Sir Mark Lowcock. Members interested in attending this meeting should indicate their interest to [agm2025@bafuncs.org](mailto:agm2025@bafuncs.org) and they will be sent the link a few days prior to the meeting. This meeting will consider the reports of the Executive Committee and the Benevolent Fund, and any other business raised by members.
- **Annual Reunion in Norwich.** There will be an opportunity during the Reunion for participants to discuss the Association's activities.
- **Voting.** Voting on the items of business will be managed by Alnoor Nathoo as our Polling Officer, operating under the aegis of our President. The voting process is outlined below.

All the above details will also be posted in the Members' Area of the BAFUNCS website. They may be accessed by clicking on the following link:

**<https://bafuncs.org/category/news/agm/>**

## **Voting process**

The voting form lists the items of business to be considered by the AGM. In addition to being distributed with Newsletter No.87, the form can be accessed at the above website link. Members may register their vote on the items of business in one of three ways:

1. Complete the voting form and mail it to Alnoor Nathoo at 74 Ovesdon Avenue, Harrow, Middlesex HA2 9PD.
2. Access the voting form on the BAFUNCS website (see link above); fill in the form; save it to your computer, and e-mail it as an attachment to [agm2025@bafuncs.org](mailto:agm2025@bafuncs.org).
3. If voting in favour of all the items of business, send an e-mail to that effect to [agm2025@bafuncs.org](mailto:agm2025@bafuncs.org).

The deadline for receipt of votes is **Saturday 31 May 2025**. Once voting is complete, Alnoor will tally the votes and request the President to endorse the results.

## **Reporting the outcome**

The election results will be announced in the *Website bulletin*; posted on the website; and published in Newsletter No.88, Autumn 2025, which will also include a full report of the entire AGM 2025 process.

# Report of the **virtual General Assembly 2024**

This can be found in Newsletter No. 84, Autumn 2024, pp.17-20.

# Report of the **Executive Committee for 2024/25**

## **1. Chair's report ( *Andy Flatt* )**

This report formally relates to the year that started with the passage of the resolutions adopted at the 2024 Annual General Meeting, but in practice it mainly covers calendar year 2024.

As noted at the end of this ExCo report, a revision of the Constitution of the Association is being submitted for approval by the membership. The extant text dates back to 2010 and needs to be updated in a number of areas, not least to document the procedures that were initially forced on us by the Covid pandemic, and to reflect the relationship between the Association and the BAFUNCS Benevolent Fund. The text before us has been the subject of extensive debate within the Executive Committee and beyond, ably and patiently shepherded and coordinated by Robert England. I commend the revised text to the membership.

Faced with slowly declining membership numbers, and in the knowledge that there are many eligible retirees who haven't joined the Association, the Executive Committee spent some time on designing a recruitment flyer. We are indebted to the UNJSPF Secretariat who circulated the flyer to UN pensioners with a UK address in August 2024. As a result, we received about 90 expressions of interest from potential members, about half of whom have subsequently joined BAFUNCS. There may still however be other former colleagues who might consider joining the Association if they are approached by an existing member. The recruitment drive notwithstanding, deaths, lapses and other factors have taken their toll on membership numbers, which totalled just over 700 at the end of 2024.

At the time of writing there are still a few rooms available at the Park Farm Hotel and Leisure near Norwich, which is the venue for our environmentally-themed 2025 Annual Reunion. To be held from 19 to 21 May, this flagship national social event of the Association has as usual outstanding speakers, including Andrew Mitchell, former Secretary of State for International Development and Deputy Foreign Secretary, and Asher Minns, Executive Director of the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research at the University of East Anglia. Included as an insert in this Spring 2025 Newsletter, and available on the BAFUNCS website, is a survey questionnaire on annual reunions. Please spend five minutes or so to tell us what you think, so that we can make future events as successful as possible.

Communications are well featured later on in this report, with contributions from both the Newsletter Editor and Website Manager. Also under way, co-ordinated by Carole Harris, is a review of the information notes available on the website – at least two are in need of serious updating, including that on taxation in the United Kingdom (mea culpa!). I did however post an update on the website Discussion Forum on the application of the Double Taxation Agreement between the US and the UK; anecdotal evidence suggests that there may still be some

BAFUNCS members who could benefit from this now well-established taxation treatment of income from the UN Pension Fund.

BAFUNCS benefits from our membership in the Federation of Associations of Former International Civil Servants, as FAFICS is uniquely able to represent our interests at the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board, and with UN senior management on after-service health insurance and long-term care. As mentioned later, FAFICS had organized a global survey on ASHIL early in the year. After several years of virtual attendance by BAFUNCS, I was privileged to represent the Association in person at the 54<sup>th</sup> FAFICS session held in Bangkok in July 2024; Claudine Pichon and Alnoor Nathoo participated virtually, despite the several hours of time difference. Apart from pensions and ASHI, where I was impressed by the deep knowledge and technical support provided by a dedicated number of FAFICS volunteers, the Federation set up new Standing Committees on Membership and Communications, and a much-needed revamp of the FAFICS website has now gone live.

As we commence the rundown to the elements of the 2025 Annual General Meeting and Annual Reunion, I should like to thank everyone who has helped to keep the Association running, whether at the national or regional level. I am particularly grateful to the members of the Executive Committee, most of whom have kindly allowed their names to go forward for election for another year. At this juncture we say goodbye to two stalwarts of ExCo: Coby Sikkens, who has been our Annual Reunions Coordinator for over six years, and Duncan Barclay, who has handled membership matters since taking over from Anne Gunning around 2020. We wish them both a peaceful and well-deserved “second” retirement, this time from active Executive Committee service. It bears repeating that the Association is only as strong as its volunteers make it, so if you feel that you can contribute in any way, please contact me, any member of the Executive Committee, or your regional representative.

Lastly, and on a personal note, I would like to thank most warmly all those members who have extended their best wishes to my wife Nikki, who broke her leg whilst we were in Paris just after Christmas. I am particularly grateful to Vice-Chair Stephen Rudgard who stepped in to take over several time-dependent tasks early in the New Year. At the time of writing Nikki is making a good recovery, and we are both looking forward to the Annual Reunion in Norwich.

## **2. Administration (*Richard Sydenham, Secretary and Archivist*)**

The Executive Committee held three meetings in 2024. Two meetings, in March and November, were hybrid meetings, both in person at the International Maritime Organization and on Zoom. The meeting in August was held virtually on Zoom. All meetings were well attended by Committee members and in the November meeting by an observer from the London Region.

The Annual General Meeting comprised a number of activities, including a Zoom question and answer session in May and online voting. There have been Zoom meetings of the Regional Representatives, the Member Support team, the Annual Reunion Committee, and the Website Sub-committee. Online website training sessions have also been conducted.

Changes occurred in the Executive Committee following the 2024 AGM, with Andy Flatt taking the role of Chair and Stephen Rudgard replacing him as Vice-Chair. Towards the end of the year, Carole Harris was co-opted onto the Executive Committee by acclamation.

The website-based archive is up to date with the Newsletter and Minutes of the Executive Committee meetings, and it is being regularly updated.

Since the 2024 AGM, the membership of the Executive Committee, with their portfolios, has been as follows:

### ***Elected National Officers***

Andy Flatt	Chair
Stephen Rudgard	Vice-Chair, Career Paths Programme and UNA Liaison
Richard Sydenham	Secretary and Archivist
Richard Saynor	Treasurer

### ***Elected Members***

Duncan Barclay	Membership Secretary
Aubrey Botsford	Subscriptions Secretary
Carolyn Murphy	Pensions
Nichola Rodgers	Regional Convenor
Mary Roll-Vallanjon	Newsletter Editor
Coby Sikkens	Annual Reunion Coordinator

### ***Co-opted Members***

Robert England	Website Manager
Carole Harris	Information Notes (from November 2024)
Sheila Macrae	
Alnoor Nathoo	FAFICS/Pensions/Tax & ASHI/ASLI
Nicholas Rosellini	UNCRP

### ***Others assisting the Committee have included***

Claudine Pichon	FAFICS
Jenny Towler	Accounts Examiner

### **3. Treasurer's report (*Richard Saynor*)**

As in 2023, despite a projected budget deficit, our accounts in 2024 (p.31) showed a slight surplus of income over expenditure. Although our income from subscriptions was lower than anticipated, a campaign through the UNJSPF to promote our Association resulted in a burst of new members paying the joining fees. Interest rates on our deposits were beneficial and we received two generous donations from life members to help to cover the costs of receiving the newsletter. Other "non-digital" life members are very welcome to make voluntary contributions now that annual members are paying a supplement if they wish to continue to receive the newsletter in hard copy. Lastly, savings were made during the Annual Reunion in Bath mostly due to the hotel waiving their charges for additional menu choices and floral arrangements. On the expenditure side, despite an increase in costs for ExCo travel, there were savings on UNCRP and UNCPP activities as well as on regional subventions and website costs.

The Annual General Meeting approved, with just one abstention, the increase in the rates of subscription fees which became effective from 1 September 2024. For those members who have elected to pay their subscriptions by Direct Debit, there is no action to be taken, but those paying by standing order will need to adjust the amounts with their bank. Unfortunately, there are still many members paying at the pre-2019 rates, or even earlier, and this entails a laborious follow-up exercise by Aubrey Botsford, our Subscriptions Secretary. All members are strongly encouraged to either update their standing orders or contact Aubrey who will guide them through the simple process of paying by Direct Debit. This payment method is extremely safe and once adopted needs no further intervention on the member's part.

Now that the new rates have been adopted, we anticipate that there will be no further need for an increase for at least the next five years.

The proposed revised budget for 2025 and the provisional budget for 2026 are provided on p.32.



#### 4. Membership (*Duncan Barclay, with Richard Saynor and Aubrey Botsford*)

The membership numbers at end-2024 were as follows:

Region	Single	Single life	Joint	Joint life	Total
CAM	28	8	22	10	68
KSX	21	11	16	6	54
LON	77	21	42	4	144
NOR	55	8	22	14	99
OVS	42	22	18	6	88
OXF	25	5	20	0	50
SCL	28	6	6	0	40
SRY	39	6	18	2	65
SWT	17	9	10	4	40
WMW	30	3	26	0	59
<b>Grand total</b>	<b>362</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>707</b>

#### 5. The regions (*Nicky Rodgers*)

On browsing through the summaries of the regional events in 2024 on the website, one can only admire the dedication of the *regional teams* in having provided opportunities to enjoy socializing with new and old acquaintances. The reports can be found on pp.12-17.

Two virtual meetings of the Regional Representatives were held during the year, as a result of which they contacted members with updated information on the UK tax relief on UN pensions, reminded members of the benefit of providing BAFUNCS with an emergency contact for unexpected life events, and encouraged members to comment on the proposal of a revised Constitution which will also reflect current approaches in the regions. The regional activities and the minutes of those two virtual meetings are available on the website.

During the Annual Reunion in Bath in May 2024, an informal meeting was held with the *BAFUNCS Benevolent Fund Trustees* to discuss ways in which the Fund could be promoted. The BAFUNCS website has been updated so that a complete description and the application form are available online, while confidential advice can be obtained through the Member Support Contacts in the regions.

Mary Hamouda has agreed to take on the role of Regional Representative for the Overseas Region in 2025, after Harry Leefe stepped down. The search continues for a member to act as Regional Representative for the West Midlands & Wales and the South West regions. If you have joined in the last few years and live in either of those regions, please do consider whether you could take on a small range of light but very valuable tasks. If so, please get in touch and we can explain more about what is involved.

Come and join other members at an event local to you or in any region, and we appreciate fresh ideas for venues and activities and practical assistance in serving the regions.

Above all, we thank the regional teams, past and present, who have volunteered their time for the BAFUNCS membership.

#### 6. Annual reunion activities (*Coby Sikkens*)

The Annual Reunion in 2024 was held in Bath. The AR Organizing Committee had decided for practical reasons to revert to a more traditional approach than we had had the year before in London. A detailed report was published in the Autumn 2024 Newsletter, (pp.11-13) and those members that attended the Reunion much enjoyed both the

speakers' presentations and the excursions that were organized. During the AR, a discussion was held between the Executive Committee, the AR Organizing Committee and the members, on the future of our annual reunions that have been suffering a gradual decline in participation, aggravated by the hiatus in holding them caused by Covid. Members indicated their views that the decline seems to be due in part to the changing BAFUNCS membership not feeling the need to meet up with colleagues in these reunions, and in part to the need to update the format of the annual reunions themselves. The annual reunions are the flagship social activity of the Association in which all members can take part. Other associations of UN retirees around the world sometimes limit themselves to monitoring issues concerning pensions, taxes and after-service health insurance, and do not always hold social events. BAFUNCS has traditionally maintained the social side of the Association, but the members need to participate if this aspect of our activities is to be maintained. It is with this in mind, that together with this Spring 2025 issue of the Newsletter (as well as on the website) you will find a questionnaire to which the AR Organizers urgently seek your replies so that we can adapt our reunions to the wishes and tastes of the UN retirees of today.

In spite of this hopefully temporary setback in participation, the 2025 Annual Reunion is being organized in Norwich from 19 to 21 May. Details were provided in the Autumn 2024 – Newsletter and can also be found on the website, and more information is provided in this newsletter, (pp.4-6). Apart from the more regular participants, we would especially welcome all members who recently joined the Association and who have not yet had the opportunity to experience the special atmosphere of friendship of these reunions based on our mutual and shared involvement in the United Nations and its Specialized Agencies.

We are also looking ahead to 2026 and are investigating the possibilities of holding an Annual Reunion in either Chester, Cardiff or maybe Canterbury, but at this point we still have an open mind and welcome any suggestions members may have.

## **7. Pensions and Health Insurance (Carolyn Murphy)**

During the 78<sup>th</sup> Session of the Pension Board, the Chief Executive for Administration reported that there were currently 150,000 active staff members contributing to the Fund and 86,000 beneficiaries. The value of the Fund increased by \$10.33 billion in 2023 and its 15-year annualized rate of return was 4.81% – more than the 3.5% long-term objective. “No liquidity issues were expected over the next 50 years, the funded status being above 100% as at 31 December 2023”. Small pensions have been adjusted to reflect cost-of-living increases since 2016.

The investment strategy includes an emphasis on the transition to a low-carbon economy which includes divesting from heavy emitters and investing in the green economy and transitioning companies. More details are in the Fund's Climate Report 2023 on its website.

In 2025 the Board will review all recently adopted proposals for governance reform. The working group appointed to prepare the review determined that a key measure of the impact of the reform would be the comments and views of Fund stakeholders on its effectiveness.

In a global study covering 2019-2023 a private firm, CEM Benchmarking, concluded that “UNJSPF outperformed its pension fund peers in cost-effective investment returns”. For further details, see the full report from CEM Benchmarking on the UNJSPF website.

The Fund continues to champion digital governance. The 2025 Certificate of Entitlement app has been open since January. It is proving an effective tool, saving time and money. BAFUNCS members are encouraged to make use of it.

The Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) in April 2024 led to a 3.4% increase in pension benefit on the US Dollar track and a 4.0% increase in the GBP local track pension. It is anticipated that the Dollar track pension will rise by 2.9% in April 2025, with the GBP local track pension increasing by 2.5% on the same date.

Beneficiaries are reminded that *it is essential* to complete and return to the Fund the form Pension E/11 (Change of country of residence) as well as PF23 (Change in payment instructions) and PF23/M (Change of mailing address). The PF23s can be *used whether or not* you are officially changing country of residence so the Pension E/11 alerts the Fund to the need to recalculate monthly payments in line with the new CPI. Failure to do this can have very serious financial consequences further down the line.

The recruitment flyer advertising BAFUNCS which was sent out by the Pension Fund attracted a flurry of queries about taxation in the UK, which were referred to the members' home page on our website.

A survey of BAFUNCS members carried out in February 2024, on behalf of the Federation of Associations of Former International Civil Servants (FAFICS), on Staff Health Insurance schemes was answered by 96 members from 20 agencies. The median age of respondents who volunteered information was 77. A majority of responding members (55) used the Cigna scheme, followed by WHO (18), UNSMIS (11), and various other schemes (12). A total of 77 respondents were resident in the UK, and the 19 that were resident outside the UK lived mainly in Switzerland and France. There was general satisfaction with premiums, coverage and performance although it was pointed out that dental and optical coverage is increasingly inadequate. There were very different views on the timeliness of response to claims. Cigna got the best ratings. FAFICS also asked whether they should pursue the issue of long-term care (LTC) even if this could entail significant increases in premiums and not be feasible in the near future – to which the answer was YES (68 respondents) but mostly on an optional basis. Almost all said they would be willing to increase their contribution by an average of around 20% to cover it. A very useful account of current LTC provision in the UK was provided by Terri Jezeph and Nicky Rodgers.

Thank you to all who helped set up the After-Service Health Insurance (ASHI) exercise and to all who responded. Through its Standing Committee on After-Service Health Insurance and Long-Term Care, FAFICS continues to monitor the performance and quality of ASHI programmes, and makes senior management aware of the issues in these fields.

## **8. Member support (Nicky Rodgers)**

The regional teams continued to offer practical support to members and their families in times of bereavement and illness. Two virtual meetings in 2024 were held to disseminate experiences and knowledge, in particular relating to the UN health insurance schemes. Members have been encouraged to make a Lasting Power of Attorney, and above all to seek family support in managing personal affairs. Advice on providing BAFUNCS with an emergency contact can be found on p.17.

The support provided by the regional teams for the benefit of the members is greatly appreciated.

## **9. UN Career Records Project (UNCRP) (Nicholas Rosellini)**

The second phase of UNCRP ended in 2021 with Mike Askwith handing over as Coordinator after 18 years to Nicholas Rosellini. At that time, Bill Jackson agreed to stay on in his role as Editor and Liaison with the Bodleian for a limited time to provide continuity for the third phase. The changing of the guard of the UNCRP team was completed in 2024 with Terry Jones taking on the editorial function from Bill Jackson and Nicholas Rosellini looking after the liaison role.

The handover was finalized in September 2024, when Terry and Nicholas together with Bill visited the Bodleian Library and met Jeremy McIlwaine, the senior archivist responsible for some 400 special collections at the library (see p.18). He showed the visiting BAFUNCS team examples from the UN collection including manuscripts of crucial episodes in the history of the UN going back to its very beginnings. Archiving of physical documents is up to date while digital archiving is pending updating of systems at the library. Full digital archives are available with UNCRP and are in the process of being transferred to the BAFUNCS document repository.

Documentation about UNCRP has been reviewed and updated, including the guidance note and questionnaire for those interested in providing materials. A letter to recently joined members was circulated in January 2025 encouraging them to contribute.

## 10. UN Career Paths Programme (CPP) and collaboration with United Nations Association of the United Kingdom (UNA-UK) (Stephen Rudgard)

UNA-UK. In 2023, the UNA-UK management had clarified that they did not have the capacity to collaborate with BAFUNCS on the CPP. Contact was re-established in mid-2024, and it was established that the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of UNA-UK had resigned. Stephen Rudgard attended the reception for UN Day organized by UNA-UK in October and met Frances Chambers, Trustee and Acting Chair of the UNA-UK Board. She recognized that UNA-UK's collaboration with BAFUNCS had been suspended in the last three years, and promised to draw the Board's attention to the potential benefits that might arise when the new management team is in place. Frances Chambers announced the appointment of a new Chair of the Board of Trustees, Ian Martin, and a new Vice-Chair, Theo Clark. The Trustees aim to have a new CEO in position by early 2025. UNA-UK staff noted that collaboration with BAFUNCS could be discussed a few months after the appointment of the new CEO, to allow strategic directions to be established. It was agreed that contact would be made in mid-2025.

UNA-LASER (London and South East Region). Meetings were held with Patricia (Trisha) Rogers, Chair of UNA-LASER, which supports about 30 local branches in London and South-East England, and with David Wardrop, Chair of UNA-Westminster. It was noted that the Executive Committee had decided to keep BAFUNCS activities at local level distinct from those of UNA's branches, while it was acknowledged that individual BAFUNCS members could contribute to UNA's branch-level activities. UNA-LASER prepared a message to be sent to BAFUNCS members in London and the South-East informing them in a general sense about the UNA branches, the types of activities and meetings, and how they could participate. The message was sent to BAFUNCS members in the appropriate regions early in 2025.

BAFUNCS Career Paths Programme (CPP). As described in the article on pp.10-11, eight events were staged with conversations about UN careers between BAFUNCS members and student participants. The CPP events in 2024 allowed a total of around 850 students to participate in those events as shown in the table.

### Summary of CPP events in 2024

Venue	Date in 2024	BAFUNCS panellists	Number of participants (approx.)
Cambridge University	October	Stephen Rudgard (OXF) Alison Tilbe (CAM)	160
Imperial College, London	November	Stephen Rudgard (OXF) Melanie Hutchinson (OXF)	100
Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex	October	Michael Askwith (KSX) Nicholas Rosellini (LON)	300
Kings College, London	February	Nicholas Rosellini (LON) Sarah Papineau (LON) John Cubbon (LON)	30
London International Model United Nations Conference	February	Stephen Rudgard (OXF) Sarah Papineau (LON) Jocelyn Mason (LON)	80
London School of Economics	October	Nicholas Rosellini (LON) Sarah Papineau (LON) Nicola Harrington (OVS)	30
Oxford University	October	Stephen Rudgard (OXF) Tomoko Nishimoto (LON)	100
University College, London	June	Nicholas Rosellini (LON) John Cubbon (LON) Titi Oyejola (CAM)	50

## **11. Communications (Mary Roll-Vallanjon – Newsletter Editor and Robert England – Website Manager)**

Communication continues to be central to the services that the Association provides to its members, and it has several different elements: the website, the periodic BAFUNCS Bulletin, the biannual Newsletter and the exchanges within the regions. This year, the BAFUNCS membership has been divided into digital and non-digital elements. This is a societal trend, and the world is increasingly divided in this way, but the “pre-digital” generation is finding it ever more difficult to function autonomously.

The website sits at the centre of this system and has become the source of most of the information made available to members, whether about specific Association activities and social events, or about other matters that may be of interest, e.g. our membership directory, advice on tax, member support, etc. It also contains the Association’s archives, including back numbers of the newsletter and ExCo minutes.

Work has continued to improve the website and to decentralize responsibility for content creation and posting. Altogether ten members are empowered and trained to add content, including of course Robert England, the Website Manager. The general membership can also add content by means of the various discussion groups. That said, we are always looking for more content to add to the site so we would request all members to consider suggesting or adding material either directly or via the website manager ([website@bafuncs.org](mailto:website@bafuncs.org)).

An integral part of this setup is the periodic BAFUNCS Bulletin which is intended to keep members abreast of developments in the Association as well as to alert them to new content that is available. During 2024, 12 such bulletins were issued, which were received by over 90% of our members, i.e. all those who are online and who have subscribed to the Bulletin. On average over 75% open these bulletins which have become our primary means of communication. If you are not receiving the Bulletin and wish to do so, please contact [website@bafuncs.org](mailto:website@bafuncs.org) and we’ll get you sorted.

Our flagship publication is, of course, our ever-popular biannual newsletter, edited by Mary Roll-Vallanjon. Work has continued to ensure that all aspects of the life of the Association are duly reflected in the content of the newsletter, along with a variety of subjects concerning the UN more broadly. Many members already receive this freestanding newsletter via the website and, because of escalating mailing costs, we have had to charge members who want a paper copy a higher subscription. This has resulted in more members migrating to digital-only communications; we hope others will take up this offer to save the Association’s budget (the paper versions are still subsidized).

The Executive Committee has spent quite some time reviewing the Constitution, and the result is being submitted to the membership for approval (pp.33-37). In that context, the newsletter plays a central role in fulfilling several of the aims of the Association, *inter alia* by maintaining “a regular flow of communication and information” (3ix) and providing all together in one place the statutory documentation for the general meetings of the Association (5iia-e).

## **12. A major updating of the BAFUNCS Constitution (Robert England)**

During the year, the Executive Committee has been engaged in a major update of the Association’s Constitution, which was last reviewed in 2009. Apart from a variety of small improvements, the more significant changes may be summarized as follows:

1. *Redefine membership (Article 2)*. Apart from eliminating Associate Membership, as approved at the 2024 AGM, this amendment is intended to broaden the definition of UN Civil Servants to include BWI staff and service contract holders, i.e. non-pensionable staff. This is an increasingly significant element of UN staffing around the world.

2. *General Assembly to General Meeting (Article 5)*. The former terminology of “General Assembly” has been converted to “General Meeting” (Annual and/or Extraordinary); this will bring the Association in line with the great majority of such bodies.
3. *Enable virtual meetings and communications (Articles 5, 6 & 7)*. This is intended to legitimize recent past practice, namely to conduct General (and other) Meetings of the Membership virtually. Note that this is intended to include physical and virtual participation, as well as by proxy, and thus to assure all members that they will be able to participate in the business of the Association.
4. *Recognize BBF*. The current Constitution is silent on the BBF (except for a more recent footnote), largely because it was founded in 1987, a decade later than the Association itself. The proposed changes are intended to indicate the status of the Benevolent Fund, the responsibilities of ExCo and the Annual General Meeting, and the Fund’s overall accountability to the Charity Commission; in effect this reciprocates the provisions that exist in the BBF Trust Deed.

The proposed new Constitution can be found as document AGM/2025/6 in the AGM papers (pp.33-37). In finalizing this proposal, the Executive Committee conducted a broad consultation with the membership, which included: several website posts; a website discussion group; two BAFUNCS bulletins; and distribution within the regions, courtesy of the regional representatives.

The Executive Committee is therefore confident that the current proposal enjoys the widespread support of members and recommends that it be approved as part of the AGM 2025 voting process. Adoption requires a two-thirds majority of votes cast.

## Report

**on the accounts of the British Association of Former United Nations Civil Servants for the year ended 31 December 2024**

I have examined the accounts of the Association for the year ended 31 December 2024 and, to the best of my knowledge, I find them to be in accordance with the substantiating documents and bank statements provided by the Association’s Honorary Treasurer.

In my opinion the accounts present an accurate and fair view of the financial situation of the Association for the year 2024.

Signed:



Jenny Towler

Date: 15 January 2025

## BAFUNCS accounts for the year ended 31 December 2024

	See Note:	£	£	£
<b>Receipts:</b>				
Balance brought forward from 2023				34,322
Subscriptions	1	11,639		
Membership joining fees	2	1,131		
Interest		483		
Surplus from Reunion		1,636		
Miscellaneous		164	15,053	
<b>Payments:</b>				
General Administration		0		
Executive Committee travel		3,059		
Executive Committee other		235		
Annual reunion		252		
UNCRP and UNCPP		155		
Regional subventions		527		
Regional administration other		40		
Website		2,977		
Newsletter		4,842		
FAFICS subscription		1,217		
Travel to FAFICS		1,500		
Miscellaneous		40	14,844	
Surplus of receipts over payments				209
Deferred income and expenditure net of releases	3			(979)
Balance carried forward as of 31/12/2024				<b>33,552</b>
<b>Balances in hand as of 31/12/2024</b>				
Barclays Community a/c			111	
Barclays Business Reserve a/c			31,972	
Barclays Reserve (Annual Reunion)			1,469	
Debtors			0	<b>33,552</b>
<b>Movement of funds:</b>				
<b>General Fund:</b>				
Balance as of 31/12/2023		16,083		
Surplus/deficit 2024		209		
Transfer from operational reserve		910		
Balance as of 31/12/2024			<b>17,202</b>	
<b>Operational Reserve:</b>				
Balance as of 31/12/2023		17,330		
Transfer to General Fund		(910)		
Balance as of 31/12/2024			<b>16,420</b>	
<b>Total Funds</b>				
			<b>33,622</b>	
<b>Liabilities:</b>				
General Fund		£ 17,202		
Operational Reserve		16,420		
Balance of deferred income and expenditure		(70)		
Balance carried forward		<b>33,552</b>		
<b>Assets:</b>				
			Barclays Bank	£ 33,552
			Debtors	0
				<b>33,552</b>
<b>Notes</b>				
1		Subscriptions net of refunds and Direct Debit charges		
2		Membership joining fees net of Direct Debit charges		
3			(909)	
			2,230	
			(2,300)	
			<b>(979)</b>	

# Proposed budget for 2025 and 2026

Provisionally approved by ExCo at its 14 November 2024 meeting

2024 Budget	Item	2024 Income/ expenditure	2025 Revised budget	2026* Budget
<b>Income</b>				
13,000	Member subscriptions	11,639	15,500	16,000
600	Membership joining fees	1,131	600	600
250	Bank interest	483	450	450
0	Surplus from Reunion	1,636	0	0
30	Miscellaneous	164	100	100
<b>13,880</b>		<b>15,053</b>	<b>16,650</b>	<b>17,150</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>				
<b>Central administration</b>				
100	General administration	0	100	100
2,200	Executive Committee travel	3,059	2,200	2,400
500	Executive Committee other	235	400	400
250	Annual Reunions	252	250	250
1,000	UNCRP and UNCPP**	155	700	700
<u>4,050</u>	Sub - total	<u>3,701</u>	<u>3,650</u>	<u>3,850</u>
<b>Regional administration</b>				
1,600	Regional subventions	527	1,600	1,600
450	Other costs	40	200	200
<u>2,050</u>	Sub - total	<u>567</u>	<u>1,800</u>	<u>1,800</u>
<b>Communications</b>				
3,580	Website	2,977	3,620	3,800
4,800	Newsletter	4,842	5,000	5,200
<u>8,380</u>	Sub - total	<u>7,819</u>	<u>8,620</u>	<u>9,000</u>
<b>External relationships</b>				
1,250	Subscription to FAFICS	1,217	1,250	1,250
1,500	Travel to FAFICS Council	1,500	1,000	1,000
<u>2,750</u>	Sub - total	<u>2,717</u>	<u>2,250</u>	<u>2,250</u>
100	<b>Miscellaneous</b>	40	100	100
<b>17,330</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>14,844</b>	<b>16,420</b>	<b>17,000</b>
(3,450)	Difference between income and expenditure	209	230	150
Notes:	*Submitted for provisional approval and will be revised at AR2026			
	**UN Career Records Project and UN Career Paths Programme			
<b>Recapitulation of assets</b>				
	Opening balance	16,083	16,984	16,634
	Surplus/Deficit (Actual/projected)	209	230	150
	Transfer to/from operational reserve***	(910)	(580)	0
	Total of General Fund	17,202	16,634	16,784
	Operational reserve	16,420	17,000	17,000
	Total funds available	<b>33,622</b>	<b>33,634</b>	<b>33,784</b>

\*\*\*Based on 12 months of the following year's estimated expenditure



# Revised BAFUNCS Constitution

## Final proposal 14 January 2025

### Contents

1.	Name	7.	Regions
2.	Membership	8.	Financial Regulations
3.	Purposes	9.	BAFUNCS Benevolent Fund (BBF)
4.	Officers	10.	Amendments to the Constitution
5.	General meetings of the Association	11.	Dissolution of the Association
6.	Executive Committee		

### 1. Name

The Association shall be called the British Association of Former United Nations Civil Servants (BAFUNCS).

### 2. Membership

- (i) Full membership shall be open to present and past United Nations civil servants and their spouses who pay the subscription as determined by a General Meeting of the membership.
- (ii) The definition of “United Nations civil servants” shall include anyone who has worked under direct contract with the United Nations, its agencies, funds and programmes, as well as the Bretton Woods institutions.
- (iii) A member may be granted honorary status in recognition of outstanding service to the Association; such honorary status shall be granted by a General Meeting on the recommendation of the Executive Committee.

### 3. Purposes

The Purposes of the Association shall be:

- (i) To encourage and help members to keep in touch with former colleagues through social, cultural and leisure activities.
- (ii) To ensure that members are kept aware of changes in pensions and health insurance matters.
- (iii) To provide advice to members and their families who plan to live in the United Kingdom on their retirement.
- (iv) To extend welfare support and advice to its members and other former employees of the United Nations, its agencies, funds and programmes and their spouses in need and, in doing so, to direct members to information and advice from national organizations supporting older people.
- (v) To represent members’ interests in relation to the UN Joint Staff Pension Fund (UNJSPF) and After Service Health Insurance and Long-Term Care (ASHIL), principally through its membership of the Federation of Associations of Former International Civil Servants (FAFICS), as well as in relation to the United Kingdom government, if or when the need arises.

- (vi) To support the Federation of Associations of Former International Civil Servants (FAFICS) and maintain liaison with other such bodies that are concerned in protecting and improving retirement conditions.
- (vii) To co-operate at both national and regional levels with organizations engaged in mobilizing public support for the United Nations and its agencies, funds and programmes.
- (viii) To encourage members, and others associated with the UN, to contribute memoirs, papers and other relevant materials to the UN Career Records Project for storage with the Weston (Bodleian) Library, University of Oxford, so as to facilitate use by researchers and other potential beneficiaries.
- (ix) To maintain a regular flow of communication and information to its members by means of its website, bulletins and newsletters.

#### **4. Officers**

- (i) The national officers of the Association shall be:
  - (a) the President;
  - (b) one or more Vice-Presidents;
  - (c) the Chair and the Vice-Chair of the Executive Committee;
  - (d) the Secretary; and
  - (e) the Treasurer.
- (ii) All national and regional officers shall be honorary and without emolument.

#### **5. General meetings of the Association**

- (i) A General Meeting shall consist of a meeting to which all members of the Association are invited:
  - (a) General meetings may be conducted physically and/or virtually, provided that all members have the opportunity to attend physically, virtually or by proxy.
  - (b) A quorum for any general meeting shall be 40 members participating by voting; such participation may be physical, virtual or by proxy.
  - (c) A general meeting shall be announced, together with its agenda, at least six weeks in advance and communicated to members through the Association's regular channels, including on its website, in its bulletin and in its newsletter; such information shall also be distributed through the regions.
- (ii) An Annual General Meeting (AGM) shall be held once a year to:
  - (a) consider the reports and independently-examined accounts of the Association for the preceding year;
  - (b) note the reports of the regions and of the meetings of the regional representatives as necessary;
  - (c) approve the revised budget for the current year and the proposed budget for the ensuing year;
  - (d) take note of the Annual Report and independently-examined accounts of the BAFUNCS Benevolent Fund;
  - (e) elect the national officers of the Association and members of the Executive Committee;
  - (f) decide on the conferring of honorary status on recommendation of the Executive Committee; and
  - (g) deal with such other business as it sees fit, subject to no decision being made on any financial commitments arising not previously considered by the Executive Committee.

- (iii) An Annual General Meeting shall generally comprise a virtual meeting that addresses the items of business defined in clause 5 (ii), and a series of draft resolutions which shall be formulated by the Executive Committee and presented to the membership. Voting on such resolutions shall take place through such arrangements for written and/or remote voting, under the aegis of the President and an independent Polling Officer, as the Executive Committee may decide. The closing date of the vote shall take place after members have had an opportunity to discuss the items of business and shall mark the closure of the Annual General Meeting.
- (iv) The President of the Association or, in the absence of the President, a Vice-President shall preside over the General Meeting. In the absence of the President and Vice-Presidents, the General Meeting may elect a presiding officer to conduct the meeting.
- (v) An Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) of members may be convened at any other time of the year in a special session when either the Executive Committee deems it necessary or a majority of the regional representatives so request.
- (vi) All general meetings shall be convened by the Executive Committee. The notification period for substantive items on the agenda shall be a minimum of six weeks before the closing date of the vote and therefore of the meeting.
- (vii) If in the course of the AGM discussion a significant division of opinion becomes evident, the President or Presiding Officer may, after consulting the Chair of the Executive Committee, declare that the matter should be decided on the basis of a two-thirds majority of those members present and voting.

## 6. Executive Committee

- (i) The Executive Committee shall consist of:
  - (a) the four officers, i.e. Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer;
  - (b) six elected members; and
  - (c) members co-opted by the Executive Committee, normally not more than four in any given year.
- (ii) The Chair of the Executive Committee shall normally serve for no longer than four years.
- (iii) The Executive Committee shall meet at established regular intervals during each year, as well as on an *ad hoc* basis, when necessary; these meetings may be conducted physically and/or virtually.
- (iv) The quorum shall be five, including one officer of the Executive Committee.
- (v) In the absence of the Chair and Vice-Chair, the Executive Committee may elect a Chair to conduct the meeting.
- (vi) The Executive Committee may admit to its meeting observers and advisers deemed to be of assistance in the discharge of its duties.
- (vii) The President, Vice-Presidents and regional representatives may, *ex officio*, attend the meetings of the Executive Committee.
- (viii) The Executive Committee may fill vacancies and may appoint sub-committees.
- (ix) The duties of the Executive Committee shall be:
  - (a) to implement the instructions of a General Meeting;
  - (b) to prepare papers for a General Meeting;

- (c) to issue information and reports on matters deemed to be of interest to members;
- (d) to consult and liaise with the Regions;
- (e) to coordinate preparations for the Annual Reunion;
- (f) to maintain and direct such offices and staff as provided for in the annual budget;
- (g) to carry out its responsibilities in relation to the BAFUNCS Benevolent Fund (BBF) as provided for in the Trust Deed and listed in Article 9;
- (h) to carry out other activities desirable for the fulfilment of its responsibilities.

## **7. Regions**

- (i) The Association has approved the establishment of Regions for the functioning of the Association and representation at the local level. Any proposal to modify these arrangements must be submitted by the Executive Committee, or by a Region or Regions acting together through the Executive Committee, for the approval of the General Meeting.
- (ii) Each Region shall organize its affairs as it sees fit within the Purposes of the Association.
- (iii) Each Region shall elect a Representative who shall be responsible for liaison with the Executive Committee and for the provision of reports on activities in the Region. The Representative shall normally serve for no longer than four years.
- (iv) There shall be a meeting of all regional representatives at least once a year; such meetings may be conducted physically and/or virtually and the deliberations shall be reported to the Annual General Meeting.

## **8. Financial Regulations**

- (i) The Association shall be funded by subscriptions and donations from members and any other sources that support the Purposes of the Association.
- (ii) It shall use such funds in accordance with its Purposes and requirements to which they may give rise.
- (iii) Each Region shall normally receive a grant for operating expenses; the annual amount to be determined every three years by the Executive Committee and approved by the Annual General Meeting.
- (iv) The accounts of the funds of the Association shall be independently examined before presentation to the Annual General Meeting.
- (v) The Association may establish various specific funds.

## **9. BAFUNCS Benevolent Fund (BBF)**

- (i) The BBF, founded in 1987 with the Declaration of Trust Deed dated 12 August 1987 registered with the Charity Commission, shall operate independently of and with the support of the Association.
- (ii) In line with Clauses 11.3, 11.4 and 12 of the Trust Deed, BAFUNCS shall have the following responsibilities with respect to the BBF:
  - (a) The statutory power of appointment of new Trustees shall be exclusively vested in the Executive Committee of BAFUNCS ("the Committee").
  - (b) The power of appointing new Trustees shall be exercised and effected by a resolution of the Committee.
  - (c) No amendment to the Trust Deed shall be made without the written consent of the Committee,
- (iii) The Executive Committee may invite Trustees of the BBF to provide the annual independently-examined BBF accounts for noting at the Annual General Meeting of BAFUNCS.

## 10. Amendments to the Constitution

- (i) Amendments to the Constitution may originate from either the Executive Committee, or from the Regions acting jointly or severally through the Executive Committee.
- (ii) Three months' notice of any amendment proposed by a Region or Regions must be provided in writing to the Executive Committee for discussion prior to presentation to the Annual General Meeting.
- (iii) A two-thirds majority of members present (physically, virtually or by proxy) and voting at the Annual General Meeting shall be required to incorporate the amendment.
- (iv) The President shall have the right to postpone a decision on any amendment until no later than the subsequent Annual General Meeting.

## 11. Dissolution of the Association

- (i) Dissolution of the Association may be decided by a General Meeting of the members (Annual or Extraordinary), by a vote of two-thirds of the members attending physically, virtually or by proxy.
- (ii) At the time of the dissolution of the Association, the General Meeting shall decide upon the disposition of the assets of the Association.

AGM/2025/7

# Nominations for National Officers and Members of the Executive Committee 2025/26

**President** Sir Mark Lowcock (UN)

### Honorary Vice-Presidents (life appointments)

Dr Erik Jensen (UN)  
Sir Richard Jolly (UNICEF/UNDP)  
Sir Kieran Prendergast (UN)

### Vice-Presidents (in order of seniority)

Mr Bryan Suitters (WHO)  
Miss Sheila Cooper (WHO)  
Mr Cyril Groom (FAO)

### Executive Committee

Chair	Mr Stephen Rudgard (FAO)
Vice-Chair	Mr Nicholas Rosellini (UNDP/UN)
Secretary	Mr Richard Sydenham (UN)
Treasurer	Mr Richard Saynor (WHO)

### Members of the Executive Committee

Mr Aubrey Botsford (IMO)  
Mr Andy Flatt (UN-ECA/HQ/ESCAP)  
Mrs Carolyn Murphy (WHO)  
Ms Nichola Rodgers (FAO)  
Mrs Mary Roll-Vallanjon (WHO)

Note: A list of co-opted members of the Executive Committee is provided in document AGM/2025/4 (see p.24).

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## Report on the BAFUNCS Benevolent Fund to 31 December 2024

The Annual Report and Audited Accounts of the BAFUNCS Benevolent Fund (BBF) will be made available to members on the website. The Chair will be available to answer questions in the AGM online discussion group and at the Zoom meeting scheduled for Monday 12 May 2025.

# Membership news

**Duncan Barclay** Membership Secretary

The following membership changes have occurred since our latest update in the Autumn 2024 Newsletter, and cover the period until end-January 2025.

As of 1 March 2025, the functions of Membership and Subscriptions Secretary are being merged. The current Subscriptions Secretary, Aubrey Botsford, has kindly agreed to take on both tasks. If there are any errors or omissions, please contact Aubrey at [membership@bafuncs.org](mailto:membership@bafuncs.org).

*Note: assigned BAFUNCS Region in first brackets, UN entities served in second brackets (UN agencies refers to multiple UN assignments).*

## New members

Charles Arden-Clarke	(LON)	(UNEP)
Anthony Axelrad	(CAM)	(ICJ/ICTY)
Marcus Betts	(SWT)	(UNICEF)
Magdolina Bona	(OVS)	(UN agencies)
Joe Bradley	(NOR)	(WIPO)
Margaret Cameron	(NOR)	(UNDP)
Giacoma Ceglie	(KSX)	(UN)
Paul Clifford	(NOR)	(UN)
Ian & Bridget Cree	(CAM)	(WHO)
Emma Creighton & Rhodri Phillips	(NOR)	(UN agencies)
Yvette Douglas	(CAM)	(WHO)
David & Christine Edwards	(LON)	(IMO)
Houston Fergusson	(CAM)	(DPKO)
Arlene Gillespie	(KSX)	(PAHO)
Anna Gleeson	(CAM)	(UNHCR)
Dr Robert Greener & Amanda Milligan	(OXF)	(UN agencies)
Mohammad Haroon	(LON)	(UNAMA)
Sally Haydock	(LON)	(WFP)
Anne Hempstead	(SCL)	(UN agencies)
Katharine Ignatieff	(NOR)	(UNICEF)
John Irvin	(NOR)	(UNODC)
Pat Johnson	(SWT)	(UNDP)
Chris Kirkcaldy	(NOR)	(UNON)
Dr Ratnanjali Koduru	(LON)	(UN)
David Lacy	(OVS)	(IAEA)
Teresa Lee	(WMW)	(ICTY)
Sir Peter Lewis	(LON)	(ICC)
Sarah & George McBean	(NOR)	(UNICEF)
Amanda Metcalfe	(SWT)	(ITU)
Dr. Stefan Micallef	(LON)	(UNDP/IMO)
Ian Miller	(NOR)	(UN agencies)
Margaret Milligan	(OVS)	(UN agencies)
Peter Napper	(CAM)	(ITC)
Jane Nicholson	(WMW)	(WHO)
Tomoko Nishimoto	(LON)	(UN agencies)
Nicola Ormerod	(SCL)	(IAEA)
Amanda Pitt	(CAM)	(UNDP/OCHA)

June Ray	(LON)	(OHCHR)
Mary & Frank Rayner	(LON)	(IMO)
Marjorie Robbins	(SCL)	(UN)
Peter Sanders	(KSX)	(UNESCO)
Kunal & Shilpi Sen	(NOR)	(UNU)
David Smith	(SCL)	(ESCAP)
Slavka Soirakova & Royal Kastens	(OVS)	(IAEA)
Ben Swanson	(LON)	(UN)
Carl Terry	(OVS)	(CTBTO/IAEA)
Stella Tomasevic-Quick & Nijaz Alic	(LON)	(ICTY&UNMICT)
James Vanier	(CAM)	(ICAO)
Patricia Walsh	(NOR)	(UNRWA)
Nyrovai Whande & John Taylor	(KSX)	(UNHCR)
Paul Whimpenny	(LON)	(FAO)
Cindy Woodall	(WMW)	(UN agencies)

## Former members

*(lapsed or resigned)*

Anthony Bricklebank	(NOR)	(DPKO)
Cynthia Brown	(SWT)	(UN agencies)
Anne Burgess	(NOR)	(UN agencies)
Alessandro Colaiacomo	(SWT)	
John Philip Cosgrove	(OVS)	(WFP)
Clifford Craig	(CAM)	(UNODC/ UNICEF)
Bakary Dabo	(CAM)	(UNDP/ UNDPKO)
Ms M. Davidson	(NOR)	(UNDP/FAO)
Mrs C.Davies	(WMW)	(WHO)
Pat Johnson	(SWT)	(UNDP)
Simon Lawry-White	(SWT)	(UNICEF/ OCHA)
Richard & Stephanie Murphy	(KSX)	(IAEA)
Margaret Prandle	(WMW)	(FAO)
Annegret Read	(NOR)	(FAO)
Elizabeth Rumeau	(OVS)	(FAO)
Andree Shergold	(CAM)	(ITU)
Margaret Stuart & Jorge Sequeira	(NOR)	(UNESCO/ UNICEF)
Pail Thompson	(NOR)	(ESCAP/DPKO)
Gabriella Veiera	(SRY)	(UN)
Dr Christopher & Dr Heather Wild	(KSX)	(WHO)
Mr R.L. Willan	(OXF)	(FAO)
Nigel Wilson	(WMW)	(UN)

## In memoriam

Elizabeth Isles	(NOR)	(UNIDO)
David Jenkins	(OVS)	(UN agencies)
Robert Kinloch	(OVS)	(UN agencies)
John Rodda	(OXF)	(WMO)

# Regional officers of BAFUNCS as at end-January 2025

Contact details for all BAFUNCS officials are in the online Membership Directory available on the BAFUNCS website (<https://bafuncs.org/membership-directory/>)

## CAMBRIDGE

Regional Representative/Secretary Nicky Rodgers  
Treasurer Lynette Kimata  
Member support Nicky Rodgers

## KENT AND SUSSEX

Please contact either Richard Sydenham  
Heather Johnson  
Terri Jezeph

## LONDON

Regional Representative Hannah Shabathai  
Secretary Carole Harris

## NORTHERN

Regional Representative Secretary/Convenor Nikki Feirn  
Treasurer Duncan Barclay  
Edinburgh sub-region Sarah Mehta  
Member support Hossein Khermandmand  
Nikki Feirn

## OVERSEAS

Regional Representative Mary Hamouda  
Treasurer Richard Saynor

## OXFORD

Regional Representative Stephen Rudgard  
Treasurer Anoma Jayawickrema  
Member support (central) Latifa Noman

## SOUTH CENTRAL

Regional Representative Claudine Pichon  
(to be contacted on all matters)

## SOUTH WEST

Regional Representative Vacant  
Treasurer Vacant  
Member support Penny Ratcliffe

## SURREY

Acting Regional Representative/  
Treasurer Marilyn Carr  
Secretary Rini Reza  
Member support/Helpline Joanna Tempowski  
Social Secretary Annie Kean  
Membership Secretary Karen Jørgensen

## WEST MIDLAND AND WALES

Regional Representative Vacant  
Treasurer Elizabeth Searle

## BAFUNCS Membership

BAFUNCS exists to facilitate communication between former UN employees both for social purposes and to provide practical help and advice. Members are urged to recruit friends and former UN colleagues. Members receive the Newsletter in Spring and Autumn. The Membership List is available on the BAFUNCS website (<https://bafuncs.org/membership-directory/>). BAFUNCS has also issued the following information notes that can be downloaded from the publications page of the website:

1. About us (information available on the website)
2. What to do when a pensioner dies
3. Accommodation for older people
4. [No longer applicable]
5. Taxation in the United Kingdom
6. Managing your personal information
7. Member support
8. Wills and succession
9. United Nations Career Records Project (UNCRP)
10. Guide to the BAFUNCS Benevolent Fund

Subscription rates (subject to change): single £30 (non-digital £35); joint £45 (non-digital £50); single life £750; joint life £1,125.

Applicants for membership should complete the online application form that can be found on the website. A paper application form as well as hard copies of the available information notes can be obtained from the BAFUNCS Membership Secretary, [duncanbarclay95@hotmail.com](mailto:duncanbarclay95@hotmail.com)  
23 Schaw House, 69 Schaw Drive, Bearsden, East Dunbartonshire, G61 3AT

## BAFUNCS Benevolent Fund

### Trustees:

*Chair:* Philip Daniel (IMF)

*Treasurer:* K C Tan (UNRWA/ICAO/UNFPA/ITC)

*Secretary:* Joanna Tempowski (WHO)

*Members:* John Doherty (FAO/IAEA), Terri Jezeph (FAO/ESCAP), Penny Ratcliffe (WHO)

### Correspondence

All correspondence with the Benevolent Fund is treated as confidential; please address it to the Secretary, Joanna Tempowski, at [benevolent.fund@bafuncs.org](mailto:benevolent.fund@bafuncs.org)

The Fund is a registered charity. It welcomes contributions through the Gift Aid scheme.

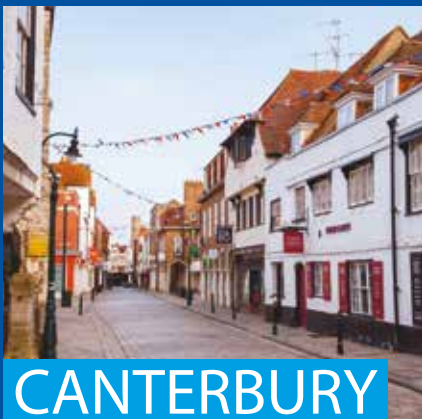
The Fund can reclaim income tax on all donations as long as a gift aid declaration is completed, and the donor has paid income tax and/or capital gains tax equal to the tax the Fund reclaims on the donation during that tax year. Forms and/or further information are available from the Secretary.

# Where to in 2026?

The venue for the Annual Reunion next year still to be decided



CARDIFF



CANTERBURY



CHESTER



The Permanent AR Committee is investigating the possibilities of holding the 2026 Annual Reunion in either Chester, Cardiff or maybe Canterbury, but at this point we still have an open mind and welcome any suggestions members may have.