

## BAA President Blog – 6<sup>th</sup> September 2021

Every year BAA asks members to put themselves forward to join the BAA Board. What would you say to encourage members to nominate themselves?

If you love this profession, then you have the drive to keep it moving forward and help shape our future. We need new ideas and people who are keen to work for the greater good of the profession.

How long have you been on board?

I joined 4 years ago, first being involved with SQC before becoming VP and then President, and it has flown by.

What made you volunteer?

To be honest, I was persuaded to think about joining. I have been involved regionally for most of my career and was happy to keep working to promote Audiology in the region. I hadn't thought about putting myself forward for Board before. I didn't think I was the best person and that there were many more Audiologists out there who would do a better job than me; I am more of a 'work in the background' person. I am now glad that I did, for all that I have learned and been involved with.

How have you benefitted from being on Board?

You get to see what is happening at a broad level, both nationally and internationally, and have the opportunity to help shape what we do working with our partners. I feel I have had a more enriched experience of Audiology with everything I have been privilege to be involved with.

What have you brought to the BAA Board?

I am unsure how to answer that - I think you would need to ask the Board and members. I hope that I have brought a calm, considered approach to what we do. I am enthusiastic about the new Director roles and developing further the CPD opportunities, building on Sue Falkingham's vision for professional development and mentoring.

BAA has term limits, where some organisations don't, what is the benefit of that?

I think it is very important that there are new people joining Board to ensure that we keep ourselves fresh, with new ideas, enthusiasm, and momentum. Besides, we all have our own jobs to do and there is a limit to how much you can do for a long period of time to keep that work life balance.

Do members need to have been working in Audiology for a long time or have specific experience before volunteering?

We have opportunities on Board and our committees for early professionals with great new ideas besides experienced Audiologists who can bring a wealth of experience and knowledge. Enthusiasm is what we need and joining a committee is a great way to see if this is for you and if you feel you would like to take a role on Board.

What will be expected of me if I do volunteer? Are there specific time commitments?

Time commitments will vary depending on what we are working on at any time. There are committee and Board meetings that are set through the year. Our committees work on projects that can be short or long term. You will know what you can give but you work as a team and share workloads. That goes for Board Directors too - we work across our roles and support each other. Sometimes it is very busy and other times less so. I hope we have realistic time frames for projects and that comes down to what our volunteers across committees and Board can do.

What happens if, once elected, I find I do not have the time to commit, do I have to complete the three-year term?

This can happen, and it is important to ask for help. We can discuss how we can support and make the commitment lighter for certain periods of time, to help you through. If you find that you really cannot commit to the 3-year term once in the role then we understand that, and you will not be expected to complete the three years. This very rarely happens though.

If you join any committee or Board, do it for the development of the profession and not as a means to improve your status. It is hard work but very enjoyable hard work, and you will be expected to get involved.

I know there are many audiologists out there that have been happily working hard for the profession at a local level and perhaps, like myself, didn't think about joining Board or a committee.

I hope that you get the nudge that I did and consider putting yourself forward. We need our young, mid-career audiologists to seriously start to think about becoming involved with their professional body - you are our future shapers!

Take care

*Kath Lewis*