

2022 CWC AGM President's Report

This year we have managed to keep your premiums the same as last year despite high price rises with most other goods and services. This was due to the negotiating skills of Max Grigg and our Insurance Broker agent Nathan Woodhead. Well done to both of you.

Covid has seen most clubs survive through however the necessary lockdowns and restrictions have not encouraged many new members to clubs. Understandably, because why would you join a club you have difficulties attending!

Covid has however, not stopped us all from aging another year and we all know aging leads to less activity, retirement, and membership of that woodwork club in the sky. This means that most woodwork clubs are likely to be dropping in membership and the membership is aging. This is concerning to us all and some clever thinking will have to be done to reverse this disturbing trend.

I have been contacted over the past year on issues at a small number of clubs about conflict between past members of committees and new committee members. At times these conflicts have become quite heated and upsetting to those on the receiving end.

In these situations (which are best avoided in the first place) we need to all step back and realise we are members of our woodwork clubs. Our focus must be woodwork, woodwork activities, learning and exploring new woodworking techniques and sharing ideas about woodwork. To make this happen we need committees to administer our clubs.

It is difficult to attract good members to committees and arguments, negative criticism and accusations to new committee members can often result in the eventual demise of a club. We need to focus on woodwork and spend our spare time thinking of new woodwork related projects and ideas rather than negative sniping.

There have been some enquiries about complying with the law. No matter whether we are volunteers or highly paid employees, we can be prosecuted if we don't comply with the law. Safety standards, bullying, wearing of masks, are our responsibilities even if we are not for profit, loveable, poor and kind woodworkers with the best of intentions. Our committees must enforce the legal requirements imposed by the law even if it is not popular, inconvenient etc. We should praise our committee members for often making difficult unpopular decisions, if you were on that committee you would be irresponsible if you did not make the same decisions.

I would like to remind all club representatives that insurance advice can only be given by a registered Insurance Broker - this is the law.

Thanks to all the outgoing CWC committee and Alison Dews, without your patience, support and encouragement the CWC wouldn't exist and clubs would be struggling to continue without the necessary but affordable Public Liability Insurance.

- Rob Allan

President, Council of Woodwork Clubs