

## President's Newsletter July 2020 Number 2

I hope this finds you all well and safe and looking forward to some down time particularly with the schools and Colleges about to break for the summer. I am pleased to provide an update following our Strategy and Executive Committee (EC) meetings held on the 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> June on some key activities and initiatives that will be taking place over the next 12 months. However before doing so I thought you may find it helpful to have access to an organogram showing the Committee structure of the Society.



Organogram BTS  
Committee Structure

I will start this newsletter by thanking those members who attended our Executive Committee meeting as observers. It was a pleasure to welcome you. Our observers represented the UK, the EU and Kenya and it was great to be able to have them observe our meeting and contribute to it. This was the first time of offering this facility and we were so pleased to have had this opportunity to share the workings of the EC. I am aware from their reflections at the meeting and subsequent emails that the observers found this a useful exercise and we look forward to offering this again later this year so please look out for an invitation via an email to the membership and please put your name forward to join an Executive Committee meeting as an observer. Before discussing the Strategy several pieces of news which I thought you would be pleased to hear about:

**Membership fees will not be increased in 2022:** Membership fees are reviewed as is the norm for this time of year so that any increase proposed can be reported to the forthcoming Annual General Meeting (AGM) for approval and then introduced the following year. We had considered an increase in fees to come into effect from January 2022. However I am pleased to report that given the current situation of COVID-19 and its effects it has had the Executive Committee has decided that there will be no increase in membership fees for 2022. Of course this will be under review but for the immediate future there is no increase in membership fees.

**Annual Congress 2021 registration fees will remain at 2020 prices:** As you are aware, we had to again postpone our Annual Congress to April 2021. It will be held at Voco® St David's, Cardiff from the 12<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> April 2021. You will have already received an email to ask if you would like to consider transferring your booking for this year to the 2021 Congress. I do hope we will see as many of you as possible next year. Again the Executive can confirm that the 2020 prices would also be honoured should there be any increase in the registration rates or costs for 2021.

**Toxicology Research Journal Impact Factor:** Another piece of great news is the Impact Factor (IF) for our Journal has recently shown an increase from 1.593 to 2.283! This is a 43 % increase in the impact factor. Heather Wallace, Editor in Chief, would like to thank you all for supporting the Journal and to continue to support it by submitting your manuscripts. I would like to add my thanks to you all for your support and to the Editorial Team for their work in this increase in the IF. Well done everyone.

**Members Benefits:** I am often asked what the benefits are of being a member of the BTS. There are many benefits which are available to view on our website. For ease I have added a PDF of the current benefits for our members.



Members Benefits  
June 2020 Final.pdf

At this time of year the President works with the EC on the forthcoming strategy for the Society and, building on the work of our previous President, Chris, considers the priorities for the forthcoming year. Our priorities are to continue to support the membership and improve the visibility of the Society so that we are the principal forum for toxicology. We have therefore made some minor changes to both the Vision and Mission Statements to reflect the business of the Society. Our Vision Statement is “*drive excellence in toxicology*” and our Mission Statement now reads “*To provide the principal forum for toxicology in the UK, to support and enrich the careers of toxicologists, and to promote the importance and advancement of toxicology in the wider scientific and lay communities*”

As I mentioned in my first newsletter to you back in May our strategic vision will be to consider how the BTS is seen by others as the principal forum for Toxicology and how we can meet the needs of our members. The EC reviewed each of the key strategic areas which are at the heart of our business namely:

- Financial Stability.
- Succession Planning.
- Communication and Advocacy.
- Education, Training and Careers Development,
- Congress, Specialty Sections and interactions with related Scientific Societies.

Our Strategy for 2020-2024 will be published in full on the website in the next few weeks. It how underpins our commitment to be the principal forum for toxicology. In the meantime I wanted to provide you with some of the decisions that have been made that have a direct effect on you, as members, now and some of the immediate initiatives we will be working on over the next few months for the benefit of the membership.

As a Society we are financially stable as our accounts demonstrated at the last AGM and the EC have considered that some monies can be invested to support initiatives for the benefit of our members.

We will be running a new survey for the membership later this year to capture what you, the members, would like their Society to do for them in addition to what is currently on offer. I would encourage you all to partake in this survey so we can know what is needed for our members. The results of the survey and actions being taken will be reported at the AGM at the 2021 Congress in Cardiff.

We do want to attract more of you to be part of the working of the Society whether that is as an Officer, Member of the Executive Committee or subcommittees, an Ambassador or supporting the Society through networking or submitting articles to our Journal Toxicology Research. If you are interested in being more involved, please send your name and a short statement of what you are interested in, and we will look to see what vacancies are available. Please contact me through [president@thebts.org](mailto:president@thebts.org)

The BTS has an Ambassador Scheme which takes the form of a BTS member acting as a key point of contact within their organization. This allows them to interact with current and potential BTS members and to promote the BTS. The EC are keen to continue to support our Ambassadors providing some financial support to allow them to promote the Society through their outreach work. Anyone interested in becoming an ambassador or finding out about funding events please refer to <https://www.thebts.org/information/btsambassadors/> or contact [bts@execbs.com](mailto:bts@execbs.com) If your company or institution does not have an Ambassador please contact [bts@execbs.com](mailto:bts@execbs.com) to discuss your interest.

Communication is key to keeping in touch. Our Society has members across the world from the UK to New Zealand and in all continents between and providing everyone with a means to keep up to date is

key. We want to improve our methods of communication and ensure that we support our members. We will therefore be investing in improvements to the website. If you have any thoughts on what we could do, please email me at the [president@thebts.org](mailto:president@thebts.org). I would also be pleased to hear what you like about our website too. I will pass on your thoughts to the team undertaking this.

We currently provide updates through the NewsFeed. The Editorial Team would welcome suggestions for news items to be included in the NewsFeed from members. Please contact the [editor@thebts.org](mailto:editor@thebts.org) if you would like to have something considered

Training and education are key areas for the Society, and we want to provide a balanced (fundamental and applied) forum of meetings webinars and workshops using both virtual platforms and face to face. The hybrid approach will ensure that we reach out to all our members and particularly those who are unable to come to our Annual Congresses. The Executive Committee are pleased to confirm that further investment is being made to support the Scientific Subcommittee and the Speciality Groups to host webinars and virtual meetings. In September, the Scientific Subcommittee will be providing some webinars from speakers who were scheduled to present at this year's meeting. To start the series Professor Michael Skinner of Washington State University will provide a webinar on Transgeneration Toxicology. Each webinar will be followed by a question and answer session open to all members. These webinars will be free to the membership and more details will follow via an email on how to register.

In addition the Continuation Education Programme, due to be presented at this year's Congress, will be provided as a webinar to our membership and given the current pandemic situation this will also be offered free of charge to our members.

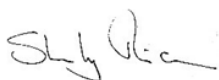
We will continue to work with other Societies such as the IVTS, BSTP, BPS, UKEMS and EUROTOX but we do want to strengthen other links with National Societies across the world and other professional groups. In doing so we hope to be able to provide the membership with opportunities to link to offerings provided by these Societies in a similar way we have done with the American Society of Toxicology through their webinar series. For more information please go to <https://www.thebts.org/events-2/courseandwebinars/acte-learn/>

Our Public Statements (see <https://www.thebts.org/publicstatements/>) have improved our visibility both within our own membership and with external stakeholders. We want to build on this achievement and if any members have ideas on topics for us to consider please send these to myself ([president@thebts.org](mailto:president@thebts.org)) and I will forward these to Dr Phil Botham who chairs the Steering Group. We will continue to strive as a Society to influence Government policy in relation to human and environmental health and promote the science of toxicology.

To engage more with our early career toxicologists we have agreed to a new subcommittee **Network for Early Stage Toxicologists (NEST)**. More details on this and its membership to follow.

In the meantime, do stay safe and well during this current Covid-19 situation and look forward to seeing as many of you next April at our Congress.

Yours sincerely



Professor Shirley Price, President of the BTS.