

Easy stages guide for Secretaries

What is the secretary role?

The secretary's role is to support the President or Chairperson in ensuring the smooth functioning of the Executive Committee whilst administering the business of the Club. A secretary is an Officer of the Club who is responsible for ensuring meetings are effectively organised and minuted, maintains effective records, deals with correspondence, admits new members, and organises official meetings and events.

Secretaries might also manage all the administrative details of running a conference or arrange the catering for a meeting. Often the secretary takes the minutes at meetings and prepares meeting documents for review. Some Clubs have an appointed 'Minutes' secretary.

In the role description for secretaries, it states the duties as...

- Receive, present to the Club or appropriate Officer and respond to all correspondence and communications.
- Receive and disseminate Club mailings, working with the Club Executive Committee (CEC) to ensure Club Officers and members receive appropriate information.
- Assist the President in preparing an Agenda for Club Meetings.
- Ensure that proper records of meetings are kept.
- Ensure that notices of formal Club Meetings are prepared and served with proper notice and

How do you go about it?

Correspondence

Meetings

Administration

AGM

Correspondence

- Receive all mail from Federation Office, usually once a fortnight. Save it electronically either on a memory stick or on file.
- Forward all mail to President and Executive members with the proviso that they pick out what is relevant to them, e.g. Programme Action, Membership, etc.
- Secretary to check with President on whether any mail needs to go to Club members, e.g. Conference information.
- Respond to any correspondence that requires an answer: invitations, queries, thank you and sympathy letters.
- Ensure SIGBI mail has a slot in Correspondence at both Executive and Business meetings.
- Encourage each Committee member to comment on the correspondence received. Some correspondence may go direct to the Officers that the secretary would not then be aware of.
- Refer Members to the SIGBI website where correspondence can be viewed or when additional information is available on the site.
- If the Club has its own website, ensure that it accords with the Federation Website and is regularly updated by the website administrator

Meetings

- Meet, if possible, with the President in advance of Executive and Club meetings. If face to face meetings are not possible, agree with the President what communication method is best for them, e.g., electronically, phone, Skype, etc.
- Send Agenda and Minutes out in advance to all members.
- Ensure that Members not on e-mail have e-mail "buddies" who will print off whatever they may need.
- Coordinate with the Minute Secretary to ensure that proper records, i.e. action points and decisions, are kept of Executive and Business meetings.
- Ensure that all members are aware of the Club programme for the year; this includes Regional meetings and events. An Annual Directory and programme leaflet circulated at the beginning of the year is good practice.
- Communicate any changes to programme promptly.
- Ensure that appropriate venues are booked for all meetings.

Administration

- Ensure that accurate records of membership are kept, and in conjunction with the Treasurer, prepare and submit the Annual returns to meet the SIGBI deadlines.
- Notify Federation Office of any interim changes e.g. deaths and change of address.
- Ensure that Club members are supplied with badges, stationery and SI literature to keep them up to date. Refer them to the website when appropriate.

AGM

- Prepare nomination and voting papers in good time for the AGM.
- Consult with the President to produce the agenda for the AGM, ensuring proposers and seconders are aware of their duties.
- Ensure Committee Chairs prepare reports.
- Coordinate any presentations and /or gifts/ and the ordering of the Past President's badge.
- Prepare the Secretaries Report: this covers the nuts and bolts of a Club year, to include number of meetings held, attendances and membership statistics.