

What is happening to BASW?

BASW Members will be shocked with what is happening to our Association and who controls the organisation. It feels as if it no longer belongs to us, the Members, but is being administered by a small group of staff members and elected officials. Even though we did have 20,000 Members a year ago, no one is any the wiser as to what the financial position actually is. The Annual General Meeting is only days away and we have a responsibility to ask some questions, and the leadership has a duty to answer them honestly.

We are totally embarrassed by the fact that if you look up the Companies Act website, BASW and its associated companies including professional services have been red stickered for 4 months, just like last year. The accounts were only available this week beginning 17 August 2026, so we are only just discovering something about our current fiscal integrity yet there is critical information missing. You can see for yourself, on the Companies House website search company number 00982041. Page 4 of the accounts list the risk factors to our association identified in February this year yet despite members asking questions we have had no replies to allay our worst fears.

We would like to know if BASW UK is currently undertaking another restructure that involves centralising the association, abolishing the country structure and making Professional Officers and administrative staff redundant? If this is occurring then who is overseeing this and making these fundamental changes on behalf of members? The Professional Officers and their support staff are at the core of all that we do.

Members have lost faith in the Association and have seen personnel changing the infrastructure without consultation. Have all these organisational restructures been fully agreed by the Chair and BASW Directors?

If this is the case then this is the most extraordinary attack on the supremacy of the principle that this is a Membership led organisation and the notion of consultation.

What is the current membership figure? BASW UK figures, for September year end 2022 were 22,469, end of 2023 - 22,223, and last accounted figure was 21,688. The membership of SWU was as of

September 2024 15,335. The reported number of members eligible to vote in the General secretary election in June 2026 was 12,509. Does this indicate that BASW figures may have fallen further too?

Reduction in membership numbers are only a part of the problem What is the implication for income based on membership fees? What is the membership profile? How many have left or not renewed membership? A member who is over 5 years qualified pays £307.20 per year and students £64.68. It makes a difference to income how many people are in each category. We need to know those figures to know how viable our association is.

All these questions inform us, the members, whether this is a reputable organisation for Social Workers.

Is BASW close to bankruptcy as was implied from the restructure that took place this time last year and confirmed in the members meeting in December 2025? In the risk factors identified in February in the now published accounts why are we organising an Annual Conference which will cost money? Is this a priority and how does it fit into the strategy to reduce risk? Have we been informed about the budget and potential fiscal risk for this event? Why have moves in the past year to hold an EGM to consider a motion of no confidence been thwarted? In the best interests of the future of the organisation, we now need an open meeting for all Members to have a full discussion on what is happening to BASW. Not the usual information giving members meeting with disabled chat and therefore no facility to listen to members concerns and questions.. This is our money not the Chair's or anyone else's to fool around with.

Can anyone explain how £2,000,000 reserves were spent? Why was the previous CEO made redundant and were they subject to a non-disclosure agreement? If so for what reason? What was that about and why are we not being informed of all that has gone wrong and why?

As Members, we all feel that we are on the outside looking in. Now is the time for immediate change and, at the very least, we must reintroduce Membership control of the organisation, complete transparency and a stop to any restructuring until there is a new Chair and Council. We need a Council that can undertake its fiduciary duties and is able to act with due diligence. The fact that the whole BASW Northern Ireland Committee resigned a few months ago may, otherwise, be the eventual trigger for us all to leave and start a new Association elsewhere.

We call on all Members to support the Black Country Branch motion at the AGM:

Censure of Chair and Directors of BASW proposed by The Black Country Branch

Suddenly in September 2025 members were informed of an approximate £500,000 shortfall, additional voluntary redundancy costs of £400,000, and significant staffing restructuring reducing support across UK nations. Several directors resigned during this period.

Despite repeated requests for open dialogue involving the wider membership, only partial information was provided via a letter to Branches and an open meeting that did not allow debate of the issues. A requested EGM did not occur.

Consequently, members have felt disrespectfully treated and that current communication and governance fall short of that expected in a membership-led organisation.

This AGM therefore resolves to censure the Chair and Directors for their failure to provide members with adequate information, advice, consultation and meaningful dialogue during this period.

It is further resolved that Council undertakes a full review and act to strengthen communication, governance, and support processes to ensure BASW operates transparently and encourages active member participation.

The Matter is now urgent – we ask all Members to use their vote and membership to help restore our Association. Please circulate this statement to other Members and media.

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