



Tai Chi & Qigong  
Union for Great Britain

MEMBERS'  
MEETING




25<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2023

The Tai Chi Union for  
Great Britain C.I.C.

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Why are we meeting?

TINA FAULKNER ELDERS

-  Update our members on progress
-  Share our ideas on how we would like to take the Union forward
-  **Listen to your views on these and other ideas**

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## Order of proceedings

TINA FAULKNER ELDERS



Who we are



Progress update



Strategy



Plans



Your views

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## Community Interest Company (C.I.C.)

TINA FAULKNER ELDERS

### The Union is a Community Interest Company (C.I.C.).

- Formed in 2018; owned and run by the members
- Managed by a Board of Directors, all volunteers (not paid)

### Clear aims and objectives

- *Company's activities will provide benefit to the general population of Great Britain by promoting the benefits of practicing Tai Chi Chuan as a Martial Art and Health regime for people of all ages and abilities*
- *NB: Tai Chi Chuan is defined in the Articles as covering all the main Internal Arts*
- Many detailed Objectives in the Articles of Association

### Supporting two groups, members and the public

- Members get the benefits e.g., advertising for classes and events, magazine, practical support, credibility for being a Union Instructor etc
- For the public, the Union provides
  - Reliable, unbiased information on all types and styles of all Internal Arts; Tai Chi, Baguazhang, Xing Yi Chuan and Qigong
- Details of Instructors, classes and events they can trust to be of a good standard

### Not for Profit

- Surplus income over expenses generated by the Union must be re-invested to fulfil the aims and objectives of the Company and cannot be distributed to the members


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## Your Board and Support Team

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Board	Support Team	Technical Panel
<p>Betty Sutherland</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Joint Chair Tech. Panel</li> </ul> <p>Colin Hamilton</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Joint Chair Tech. Panel</li> <li>• Teaching Standards</li> </ul> <p>Tina Faulkner Elders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health &amp; Well-being</li> </ul> <p>Ben Morris</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communications</li> </ul> <p>Peter Ballam</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finance</li> </ul>	<p>Aileen Mandić</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Treasurer</li> <li>• Membership Secretary</li> </ul> <p>John Roper</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Magazine Editor</li> </ul> <p>Suse Coon</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assistant Editor</li> </ul> <p>Vacancies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More about this later in the meeting</li> </ul>	<p>Betty Sutherland</p> <p>Colin Hamilton</p> <p>Tina Faulkner Elders</p> <p>Jane Launchbury</p> <p>Gordon Faulkner</p>

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# Progress update

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## *Review of last 12 months*

PETER BALLAM

### What did we say we would do?

- Magazine – return to printed copy (digital version still available)
- Website – complete refresh of site
- Website - improve location search for classes– underway
- Gerda Geddes Fund for Instructors working with disadvantaged groups - 3 awards made
- Simplified grading system – in response to feedback, enables consistency
- Reduced price of certificates with electronic versions available in refreshed format
- Remove membership cards; electronic renewals now in place

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## *Review of last 12 months*

PETER BALLAM

### What else did we do?

- Improved event listing using Facebook and optional “what3words”
- Improved Facebook profile
- Personalised web pages for listed instructors
- Promoting members books and DVDs; 14 authors, over 30 books
- Made information on Tai Chi & Qigong more accessible to the public
  - Plans to do the same for Baguazhang and Xing Yi Chuan
- Incentive for members to introduce others
- Continued operational improvements; efficiency and robustness
- Improving website search for online classes and the Internal Arts of Baguazhang, Xing Yi Chuan, Qigong as well as Tai Chi - in progress

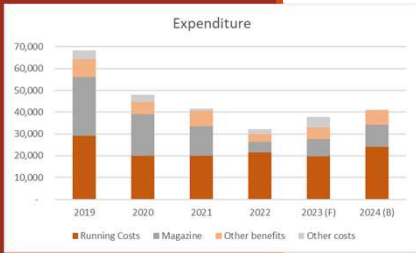
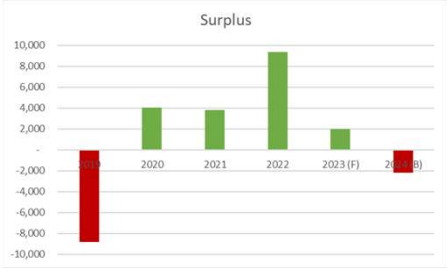
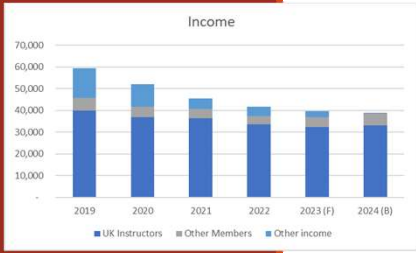
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## Financials

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- Membership now holding steady
  - Ordinary Membership up by 25% which mostly offsets
  - Instructor member falling, rate slowing to 4% (was 7%)
- Funds remain healthy, forecast at £46,000 at year end
- Minimum funds required are £22,000

- 2024 Plans include
  - One-off investment
  - Estimated increased running costs to provide better benefits
  - **Subject to active support from members**
  - Small fee increased (£5 pa) to pay for professional support



# Looking ahead

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TINA FAULKNER ELDERS

# Strategy

BETTY SUTHERLAND

- Supporting the public
- Supporting our members
- Mutually beneficial
  - For everyone interested in Tai Chi & Internal Arts
  - Supporting and promote **all** Internal Arts with our members and the public.
  - As a CIC our activities must provide benefit to *“the general population of Great Britain by promoting the benefits of practicing Tai Chi Chuan as a Martial Art and Health Regime for people of all ages and abilities”*

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# Plans

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PUTTING THE STRATEGY INTO ACTION

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## Overview

BETTY SUTHERLAND

- Increasing Union profile
- Continued benefit improvements
- Governance & management
- Operational improvements

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## PLANS

### Increasing Union profile

BETTY SUTHERLAND

- Coherent marketing and communications plan

  - Branding to reflect all Internal Arts
    - Baguazhang, Xing Yi Chuan as well as Qigong and Tai Chi Chuan
  - Advertising outside the Union to create awareness and increase demand for Union Instructors
  - Planned communications across all relevant media consistently and coherently
- Shorter more focused communication

  - More use of social media e.g., using Members Facebook group, "X" etc
  - Short regular mailings with information for all
  - Engage with non-members
- Contingent upon getting support

  - Proven expertise to ensure work is carried out efficiently and effectively
  - Able to propose and carry out clear implementation plans with realistic costing and achievable outcomes
- Vacancies – see later in governance & management

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## PLANS

### Continued Benefit Improvements

BETTY SUTHERLAND

#### Significant change over 2023

- Much of it easy to identify but now want to understand members wishes
- Need to review feasibility of those wishes
- Balanced against the wider responsibility as a C.I.C.

#### Promotional Support for Members

- Many are good at Internal Arts BUT less good at promoting themselves
- Ideas include website deals, promotional posters etc

#### Events sponsorship

- Union is yet to be able to run own events BUT members already do events
  - From smaller, local events to larger gatherings
- Looking for mutually beneficial arrangements

#### Contingent upon getting support

- Proven expertise to ensure work is carried out efficiently and effectively
- Need professionals who are able to propose and carry out clear implementation plans with realistic costing and achievable outcomes

#### Vacancies – see later in governance & management

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## PLANS

### Governance & Management

### Board & Support Team

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#### Board – responsible for running the company

- Must be a Union member with FULL membership rights
- Expected to have proven, recent, relevant business skills
  - Not required to be Internal Arts expert
- Act strategically– by thinking externally and longer term
- Act legally and properly - by acting with integrity, honesty, within the law and the Articles, and in the company's best interests at all times.
- Responsibilities including financial soundness and legal compliance
- Focus on pragmatic and proportionate solutions

#### Support Team – actually doing the company's work!

- Team has significant autonomy within clear delegated authority
- Work constructively with Board and under their guidance
- Required to have recent, proven, relevant skills
- Focus on delivery of agreed solutions within realistic timescales

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## PLANS

### Governance & Management

### Other roles & vacancies

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#### Specialist advisers

- One off projects when expertise needed that is outside that of Board or Support Team
- Recent example, website development

#### Technical Panel

- Standard setting for practise and teaching
- Must be expert in their field
- Expected to get outside advice if needed

#### Vacancies – Support Team – doing the work!

- Aiming for a business model where critical administration roles are paid at industry rates
- Appointees will have required skills they can clearly prove
- Focus needed on pragmatic and proportionate delivery
- All members will have equal chance to fill roles where appropriate
- Current skills shortages in marketing & PR, social media and technical skills from website maintenance to data management
- More information to follow!

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## Summary

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Summary

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- Focused on our members
- Supporting the public
- Looking ahead
  - We will focus on our plans
  - We invite members to contribute pragmatic, realistic ideas with achievable outcomes!
  - You can do this in our next session or
  - Contact: [enquiries@taichiunion.com](mailto:enquiries@taichiunion.com)

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Your views

THOUGHTS AND IDEAS  
FROM OUR MEMBERS

TINA FAULKNER ELDERS



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We were delighted to see so many members at the Members Meeting in November 2023.

Below are summary notes from the meeting to supplement the information in the slides.

### **1) More support needed throughout 2024**

- a) It was emphasised throughout that new initiatives in 2024 were heavily dependent on additional people being able to do the work to support the Board's plan.
- b) Board welcomes ideas from members but members need to consider how such ideas could be implemented and whether they could help implement their own ideas.

### **2) Rebranding to include Internal Arts**

Main issues raised

- a) New identity will look to encompass the Internal Arts of which the main ones are Baguazhang and Xing Yi Chuan in addition to Tai Chi and Qigong already included.
- b) BUT it is important that members and the public are educated about what "internal arts" means.
  - i) As an example, it is hoped that the Technical Panel may be able to provide some videos to help as part of this education (an important part of the Union's wider CIC public aims)
- c) Promotion of the Union and how best to do this
  - i) John Roper (magazine editor) offered to help using his contacts and sending the magazine to various publications to help promote the Union as the place to come for information and comment on tai chi chuan and the internal arts.
  - ii) Facebook is a good forum to use and Mark Peters clarified that the Facebook pages and groups were now under the control of the Board.
  - iii) Others also noted that leaflets in strategic locations such as hospital waiting rooms could be useful

Robert Agar-Hutton agreed that brand identify was important and raised a question about whether the general public understood what the Internal Arts and whether the Union included ALL internal arts.

### **3) Fee increase**

- a) Some discussion as to whether £5 per annum was sufficient
- b) Board are conscious of the need for balance between raising sufficient revenue to maintain services whilst keeping membership affordable. Whilst there are members' funds for one-off investments it is unsustainable to use this for regular expenditure.

### **4) New "Find a Class" location search**

- a) Brief discussion to clarify that the new location search would make it much easier to "find a class near you" using postcode for the class.

**5) CIMSPA and Insurance**

- a) There was some discussion to clarify about insurance and CIMSPA
- b) Mark Peters (former director, formerly responsible for the Union and CIMSPA relationship) was later asked for comment but by that stage the matter had been cleared up and he declined to add more.

**6) Governance**

- a) In the discussion at the end, Stewart Hay raised the following:

It was mentioned that we have an "elected board" but yet none of the current board have put themselves forward for election by the broader membership. when will current directors resign (per articles) and either seek re-election or perhaps make space for new directors who have the professional skills that are now being sought?

- b) Peter Ballam assured Stewart that the [Articles of Association](#) (23.2) were being followed and that directors were resigning as required and offering themselves for re-election.
- c) PB further assured him that when new Board directors were needed, posts would be advertised so that eligible members can apply. During 2024 the Board will be looking for specialist skills for the Board and Support Team; expert knowledge in Internal Arts is less important than recent relevant experience.