



**TAI CHI**  
INTERNAL ARTS

## ANNUAL REVIEW

2024

What we have achieved.  
Where do we want to go.

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

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*A Union for all those interested in the Internal Arts in the UK.  
Maintaining and promoting Standards.*

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## Your Board of Directors

Responsible for running the company

All the directors are volunteers who receive no form of payment for their work

<u>Name</u>	<u>Areas of responsibility</u>
<b>Betty Sutherland</b>	Joint Chair of the Technical Panel, Union magazine
<b>Colin Hamilton</b>	Joint Chair of the Technical Panel; Training Standards
<b>Tina Faulkner Elders</b>	Marketing and Public Relations. Member of Technical Panel
<b>Ben Morris</b>	Health and Research
<b>Peter Ballam</b>	Finance and Operations

## Technical Panel

Responsible for maintaining standards

Betty Sutherland	Colin Hamilton	
Tina Faulkner Elders	Jane Launchbury	Gordon Faulkner

## Support Team

The people who make it all work.

We have one paid employee and everyone else is a volunteer who receives no form of payment for their work.

<u>Role</u>	<u>Name</u>
<b>Membership Secretary</b>	Aileen Mandić (employee)
<b>Treasurer</b>	Aileen Mandić (employee)
<b>Magazine Editor</b>	Ken Symon (volunteer)
<b>Courses and Events Manager</b>	Currently Vacant
<b>Communications Manager(s)</b>	Currently Vacant

Contact any of the above by emailing: [enquiries@taichiunion.com](mailto:enquiries@taichiunion.com)

## A brief history of the Company.

The Tai Chi Union for Great Britain C.I.C. was formed in 2018 to replace the former unincorporated organisation, The Tai Chi Union for Great Britain which was formed in 1991.

The new Company adopted all the original objectives and the main aim remains to unite all recognised styles of Internal Arts and promote the study of these arts with the wider public.

We are a Community Interest Company that is owned and run by the members. It is a not-for-profit organisation with all funds being reinvested in promoting the aims and objectives set out in our Articles.

As a principles-based organisation, we focus on the aspects in common to the arts while respecting the differences and supporting all our members equally.

We've had various trading names over the years and the new trading identity is "Tai Chi Internal Arts", a longer explanation for the rebranding appears elsewhere in this Report.

More information about our history and ethos can be found on our website.

<https://www.taichiunion.com/about-us/>

## Why an Annual Review

The Board feel it is important to engage with the membership, let them know what we have achieved, what we are working on and where we want to take the organisation. We also believe it is important that the members should be engaged in their community and be able to contribute either by suggesting issues that are important to them or taking on one of the many voluntary roles that are essential in keeping the Union running.

In the past we have arranged members meetings but most of you are busy people so although many may have wished to attend unfortunately the actual turnout was a very small proportion of the members. The dangers of this are that the Union can be dominated by just a few vocal members rather than enabling everyone to have their say as we did with the survey at the beginning of the year.

To ensure all the members get the same information at the same time it was decided to replace the meetings with this Annual Review.

To find out what has been happening read on .....

## Overview

We hope this Review will be of interest and will encourage you to promote the Union wherever possible.

**2024** has been about continued investment and development in the operations and systems to support our members efficiently and robustly.

This puts us in a good place for **2025** which will be more about increasing the Union profile with the general public, promoting the Union and our members, improving members benefits, supporting them through training and encourage the sense of “community”.

This is our first published review and replaces the 2024 Members’ Meeting which was cancelled because so few members were able to attend. We know our members are engaged in the Union; our first ever members’ survey had a great response (around 20%) so we are looking at other ways to keep members updated on our progress and plans for the future.

We hope you find this useful. Remember if you have any comments or questions about the Union, you can contact us at the usual email: [enquiries@taichiunion.com](mailto:enquiries@taichiunion.com).

## Progress Update

In the 2023 meeting we said we were looking to engage more with members, so we started the year with our first ever members' survey which around 20% of you completed. Whilst this is a fantastic response rate demonstrating how engaged our members are we are conscious of our wider commitments to others including the public as a source of independent information on tai chi internal arts.

From the survey, the members identified the benefits that they most valued and where there could be additional improvements. These aligned well with the initiatives the Board had already identified and enabled us to confirm plans and set priorities.

## Rebranding

At the 2023 Members Meeting we announced the intention to rebrand the Union to reflect our commitment to all the internal arts and make our “brand” more memorable, consistent and relevant.

The Union has always been a community for all the internal arts (such as Baguazhang, Xingyiquan as well as Tai Chi Chuan and Qigong) and we said in 2023 we were looking to make this clearer with the branding.

Over the coming months the new logo will start to appear and replace the previous logos on T shirts, documents, social media etc. We have opted for a “soft” introduction to allow our small volunteer Support Team time to make the changes carefully.

Keep your eyes open for the new logos as they are introduced!



We are delighted to have received confirmation that the new logos have been approved as registered trademarks so protecting the images for the Union.

Below is some more detail explaining the reasoning behind the new logo design:

- 1) The Tai Chi symbol is commonly adopted by all the internal art disciplines.
- 2) Yin and Yang are complementary opposites which combine to create Tai Chi. The combination can result in a positive or negative outcome depending on other factors. The relationship between Yang and Yin is continually changing with one element waxing while the other wanes, maintaining balance is the aim to create a positive, developing environment. The emblem the Union has adopted represents “Young Yang”, with Yang ascending and Yin descending so this represents Springtime, the morning of the day and new beginnings.
- 3) Since its formation the Union has used a red and white emblem, in Chinese culture red is considered auspicious, bringing good luck, health, wealth and happiness, something we wish for all our members. However, we were aware that some members were uncomfortable with this colour combination, so we have now adopted the more traditional approach of white to represent Yang and black for Yin. We retained the use of some red lettering to acknowledge the original choices and maintain that thread to our past.
- 4) We remain a UK focused organisation but removed GB from the acronym because it is technically inaccurate and we were looking for something shorter and more memorable.

## Marketing

We have begun to work with a marketing professional and to agree plans to start promoting the Union to the wider public through social media, various publications and contact with the general media to ensure that anyone looking for information on the internal arts see the Union as the go to place for unbiased advice. In conjunction with the improved Instructor search facility in the website, this should drive more enquiries for our registered Instructor Members.

They have some exciting ideas to engage and educate a wide cross section of the public to reflect the diverse nature of our members' experience.

We are looking forward to sharing more but work has been postponed for reasons beyond our control. See "[Where to next](#)" for more information.

## Working with others to raise our profile

In the last year there have been a number of projects where we have the opportunity to promote the Internal Arts these have ranged from Royal National Institute for the Blind to the UK Parliamentary Staff group. We are also supporting one of our members in working with the Royal Osteoporosis Society in creating a video teaching safe exercises for those suffering from this condition.

## Training

The biggest area of interest highlighted by the survey was the members desire for training and events. This was particularly true for Ordinary Members.

We have advertised the role of Courses and Events Manager but to date have not received any interest from members.

However, we have made enquiries with some commercial organisations that offer online training in subjects such as; Risk Assessments, Data Protection, Safeguarding, First Aid and general coaching skills. We are hopeful that we will be able to negotiate partnership arrangements offering this training at reduced costs for our members. Implementing this will need additional team members to help us.

## Website

A much-improved website search facility has been introduced which allows members of the public to enter their own postcode and find our members offering classes near them. The search can also be used to find individual instructor members by entering their name and allows the public to find specific internal arts or styles.

There have also been various technical upgrades to improve the website ranking and make it more prominent if anyone searches for any of the Internal Arts.

## Magazine

From the survey we know how much the members value the magazine. Unfortunately, our editors John Roper and Suse Coon had to step down earlier in the year.

We are pleased that we now have a completely new team who bring with them considerable experience in the field. The new magazine will have a new look and feel as we try and make it more inclusive and offer something for everyone from the curious to the experienced instructor. We'll keep many of the things you said you liked!

To give the new team time to get established we decided to pull the summer edition of the magazine but will return to 3 editions per year in 2025. All the usual formats will remain available: print, pdf and digital.

## Board and Support Team Roles

We advertised for a new Director to join the Board to fill the role of Health and Research and we were delighted that Ben Morris applied.

Ben has been a Director in the past so has a good understanding of how the Board works. His role will focus on Research and Health and hopefully he will be able to bring some clarity to the value of the numerous published research documents.

## Where to next?

We have some very ambitious plans for the future but, as is always the case, bringing them to fruition will depend on three resources: **funds, time and energy**.

**Funds:** Collecting sufficient **funds** can be achieved either by raising membership fees or by our preferred option of significantly increasing the membership! It is here that we appeal to **ALL** our existing members to encourage their students and any instructors they know who are not yet members to join us.

**Time** is a finite resource for our small team so if you feel you have a skill that can be used in the support of the Union please get in touch.

**Energy** can become depleted when we view the mountain we want to climb and the limited funds and time available to the existing team, so again if you have the passion and want to help make the Union a more professional and relevant organisation, get in touch.

Subject to us getting the resources we need, our goals for the coming year are set out below.

## Marketing

We will be looking to promote the Union and our members across all relevant media, consistently and coherently. This means we need to identify opportunities to raise our profile with the public through the press, social media, working with partners and local groups.

There are many things we know we need to do. These include:

- ensure our social media offering is kept up to date with regular posts of the good things our members are achieving.
- identify and contact influencers to recruit them to promote the benefits of the Tai Chi Internal Arts.
- have well thought through Press and other packs so if members ask for support in promoting an event they are running we do not have to spend time pulling something together and we can give them advice on how best to promote the event.

This is where the expertise of a marketing professional will be so important to the success of all our members.



## **Website**

We are looking to further develop the website to provide a restricted members only area where members can access all their benefits and where they can make amendments to their website listing e.g. changes to classes, venues etc. without having to submit a form and wait for a member of the team to update these for them. This will significantly improve the service that can be offered and reduce costs in the future.

## **Training Courses and Events**

Training falls into two main areas the training that Instructor Members need to navigate the various legal requirement as well as those that may be required by insurers, venue hirers etc. to ensure that the member is not running any unnecessary risks and Art specific training to ensure standards are met and people get an opportunity to see what a varied community we represent.

We will work with partners to provide officially recognised online courses to provide the business skills required at discounted prices for our members.

Our Technical Panel are working on videos to assist those wishing to apply for Instructor status to prepare for their assessment and give clear guidance of what is expected.

Events are something that we would like to be able to arrange but realistically we do not have the resources to do this at present. However, we are aware that many members are putting on events locally and we would welcome the opportunity to promote these through our marketing team and maybe able to provide some financial support through sponsorship in return for a small discount for members who attend.