

BATOD National Treasurer

Alison Weaver, current BATOD National Treasurer, responds to questions about the officer role.

Alison's tenure in the role will be coming to an end in March 2026. The National Executive Council (NEC) nomination form highlights the opportunity for members to express an interest in the vacancy, with the invite to shadow for a year to support the transition between the role holders

What do you see as the key elements of the Treasurer role?

The key role of the BATOD Treasurer is to work with Steering Group (SG) and NEC to ensure that BATOD's finances are allocated in a way that to all members is:

- fair
- transparent and accountable
- sustainable.

At the beginning of each financial year, the BATOD Treasurer draws up a proposed budget for discussion and agreement by NEC. This is based on previous years' income and expenditure, and on any new decisions NEC may have made during the previous year.

The Treasurer then monitors the agreed budget, providing at least quarterly reports and updates to SG and NEC, before submitting the final year-end accounts.

For all new initiatives, the Treasurer must consider the financial implications to ensure that decisions made are affordable and good value for money.

It is important that all decisions are fair and consistent, through the application of clear and transparent decision-making processes.

The Treasurer will help to ensure that all processes are clear and consistent but it is important to remember that all significant financial decisions are made by NEC as a whole.

Which three words would you use to describe the role of BATOD National Treasurer?

- challenging
- enjoyable
- rewarding.

The role is challenging as the Treasurer is a member of SG, taking part in all the significant, strategic decision-making. It can also be challenging in terms of the time commitment required to fulfil both the strategic and administrative roles effectively.

It is enjoyable meeting colleagues with different perspectives, discussing options, planning, and making decisions that should ultimately benefit members and the children, young people, and families with whom they work.

It is rewarding when you can see that decisions have worked out as planned and when we receive positive feedback from members and partners.

It is enjoyable and rewarding, also, having the opportunity to network with colleagues from across the United Kingdom, to discover what is happening more broadly in

deaf education and to learn how others are tackling similar challenges to those you may be facing in your own professional role. The benefits of working in this way can never be overestimated. I have learnt so much from my roles within BATOD over the years; I believe that the time supporting the association has been very well spent.

Looking back over the years, what has changed?

I have always felt that as a small association, BATOD, run predominantly by volunteers, has punched far above its weight in the work that it achieves and the respect in which it is held by other professionals working in deaf education.

In 2020 I returned to NEC after a break of several years. Overall, I could see early on how the association has continued to develop and grow in response to changes in the profession, changes in technology, and effective ways of working, further extending its reach and influence.

Like so many others, BATOD had to adapt quickly during the pandemic to alternative ways of working. We have learnt from that and are now able to conduct much of our business remotely. Although we all recognise the value of face-to-face interaction, the effective use of Teams and Zoom has allowed more members the opportunity to participate in the work of the association. We have also been able to increase the training offer with the addition of a number of free or low-cost online training sessions.

In terms of the finances, the previous Treasurer, Carol, had left the accounts in a healthy position, with systems and processes in place and reserves that enabled the Association to come securely through the challenges of the pandemic.

This has enabled NEC to agree on a number of new initiatives, such as the updating of the Audiology Refreshers resource and support for the Specialist Deaf Curriculum Framework.

Until recently, in addition to the strategic responsibility for managing the accounts, the National Treasurer also conducted all the day-to-day administration.

However, as Carol handed over the accounts, she advised that BATOD move to using accounting software. This has been a very positive step forward in providing efficient and effective accounting processes for the Association, and significantly reducing the time required on a day-to-day basis.

In addition, BATOD has commissioned a few hours per month of administrative support. Natalie, the current administrator, provides great support for the regular

invoicing and banking activities, freeing Treasurer time for the more strategic elements of the role.

How does the national role differ from the role of a Treasurer in a region/nation committee?

The Treasurers from the regions and nations play a crucial role for BATOD in managing those accounts and also in linking with the National Treasurer, to ensure that there is consistent practice and understanding of the role across all regions and nations.

The role of the National Treasurer not only includes support to the regions and nations, but also many other responsibilities such as:

- managing payroll, pension, and tax returns
- overseeing and reporting on all national income and expenditure
- preparing the national accounts for scrutiny by accountants
- supporting conference planning
- ensuring that financial implications are taken into consideration for all BATOD activities – both day-to-day running and new developments – so that projects are affordable and sustainable.

What advice would you give a future Treasurer?

In taking on the role of National Treasurer, I was clear that my experience and knowledge lay not in the day-to-day administration but in budget management, and in my years of experience in deaf education and broader local authority roles.

I had to quickly get to grips with the administrative side of the role. With the employment of an administrator and the implementation of accounting software, the role is now more clearly one of budget management. A new Treasurer

will need to understand and monitor the use of the software but will benefit greatly from Natalie's knowledge and experience.

In considering the financial elements of the role, it is essential to remember that you are part of a team. All decisions are made in discussion with SG and NEC. Many of the members of NEC have years of experience working with BATOD and a good understanding of how the Association works. The continually developing service-planning and decision-making processes also provide an effective framework for financial management.

This role is ideal for anyone who enjoys developing services, and is looking for opportunities to expand the work of BATOD in a way that embraces change and constantly improves the benefits to members.

I would never have considered myself as a likely candidate for the Treasurer role and was clear of my strengths and 'areas for development' when taking on the role. However, with the support of NEC and the changes mentioned above, I hope I have been able to make the role my own – playing to my strengths, to make the best possible contribution. Any new Treasurer coming into place will do the same – the strengths of the individual will vary but the contribution will be invaluable to the association as a whole. ■



Alison Weaver is a BATOD Association Officer.

BATOD membership: developing professional world partners in deaf education

BATOD is a professional body which offers a 'community' of dialogue and information.

If a UK-based BATOD member has an established involvement with a developing world project, they can make a recommendation for the head teacher of the school for the deaf or teacher in a deaf resource base associated with their project to be registered with BATOD as an online 'overseas special member' at no charge to either member.

- BATOD has an expectation for the overseas special member to submit an annual magazine article or information for a blog post. BATOD encourages the overseas special member to be the author/co-author of the article submitted.
- The BATOD overseas special member must have internet access in order to access the online resources which may be of interest.
- Online members can access the five magazine editions/year in the electronic version. The BATOD magazine frequently features articles about deaf education from across the world. Thus, our special overseas members can share with and learn from UK and other worldwide professional peers in deaf and deaf related education.

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BATOD Magazine

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