

PSA UK&I Board Reports 2026

Yvonne Emery

Chair of the PSA Board

Yvonne.emery@thepsa.co.uk



My Role in the PSA

Traditionally the role of the Chair is to oversee the decision-making process for the Board of Directors and to ensure the correct governance is in place to ensure the Association is running smoothly.

The actual role of the Chair at the moment is both to oversee the Board, and also to support the Association with additional administrative work where necessary to support the whole team in running the PSA UK & Ireland

This year has been an eye-opener of the work that happens behind the scenes at the PSA and without the work done by My Management Company comprising Sara Beth, Hazel and Chrissie in particular, we would not have the consistency that is required for all the activities that take place. Not only do they support the RPs with their Events, but they keep our conferences on track, keep the right items on our Board agendas and provide background support with all of our systems.

We are a fabulous volunteer association, and everyone does a great job of stepping up and stepping into new roles on a regular basis.

It's always wonderful to see the new RPs manage their Regional Events, manage the competitions and support the conferences. Without these wonderful humans taking on the reins, stepping up to these challenging roles and taking on a whole year's worth of learning what to do at very short notice, our Regions wouldn't be what they are.

I hope that in time the role of the Chair will move away from the CEO role and 'glorified PA' role that it has become and that it will allow the Chair to be more strategic in steering the PSA to Grow, Add Value and Simplify our systems in the future.

Over the last year

We have continued to stabilise our financial outlook and gain better oversight on the costs associated with our conferences.

Impact!26 in Leeds was so well attended and we had lots of fun. New connections were made and thanks to our continued collaboration with Q Hotels we were able to keep the

costs down too. More of you were able to be there than in previous years which was great to see and we hope that trend continues into 2027.

At SBS25 we continued our collaborations together and had a wonderful conference which led to a record number of members signing up for SBS26. This has helped to shape the upcoming conference and we are expecting a larger number of you to attend SBS26 as a result.

Strategy had to be set aside in the previous year, but this year we have been working towards creating a lasting Strategy for the Association to work towards.

Whilst we have had a top-level strategy we call 'putting our foot on the GAS', further strategy meetings have taken place to establish who we are and where we want to be in the future.

Moving systems to Sport 80 has caused some issues with lapsed memberships that members are unaware of and we are still working to get this back on track.

We moved back to Eventbrite to capture details required for all Regional Events in April which has supported the RPs in the role they have to understand numbers attending and the requirements of members too. We continue to work on improving our member experience, and we still have a long way to go.

I would also like to congratulate the current RPs for working with Carol Benton, our Speaking Competitions Co-ordinator to host the Emerging Speaker of the Year (ESY) competition in its first outing and creating a fabulous competition at Impact!26. This was a tough call having just taken on the roles and as it was a new competition. I have also been impressed with the way RPs have taken on the PSY (Professional Speaker of the Year) competition, and I look forward to seeing the results of all your hard work at SBS26.

I'd also like to congratulate Paul Archer, the RP for the Virtual Region who has successfully launched the Virtual Speaker of the Year (VSY) competition.

We have successfully completed Go-2-Pro 2 with another 8 delegates growing their businesses, with several now being able to upgrade to Professional Membership – Congratulations to all who attended, played full out and worked with both Sam Warner and myself to add value to your speaking businesses.

We also ran the Build a Speaking Business 1 course for delegates to establish their speaking platform, identify how they will go about getting paid speaking gigs and begin to work towards having a flourishing speaking opportunity.

So much is going on behind the scenes, and I look forward to sharing more with you over the coming months.

During the next year I will be focusing on

Adding value for all Members will be one of the biggest focuses both for me and for the Board as a whole. There are many benefits for members in addition to attending the

regional meetings, however, many people perceive that the benefit is from those meetings alone, which means if they are unable to attend, they feel there is less value from membership. We are growing the number of affiliations we have with benefits providers, and we will be highlighting these during the next year.

With the greater value that we will be adding, we hope to grow the Association to bring more speakers to our events and to help them to grow their speaking businesses.

Whilst the PSA doesn't provide individual members with speaking gigs directly, the networking groups we create and the amazing members we have often refer each other and this is one of the most powerful things that the PSA has to offer. The way we encourage each other and promote each other has to be one of our best assets. Our intention is to create more opportunities for members to experience this through our meetings and communities.

Our systems continue to be complex. This year we are focusing on further streamlining, making things simple and creating a flowing customer experience that works for everyone.

This is all part of the strategy work that we have started with the help of Sue Evans who is walking us through a thorough investigation of what we require and how we are going to provide the best experience for all of you as members of the PSA.

At the root of the PSA, the Volunteer Community keeps the association afloat, and we have done some significant recruitment this year to maintain the flow of amazing talent both on the Board and throughout the association.

Next year we will reach the point where several Board members have served 3 years. They will of course have the opportunity to continue to serve if they are willing, however it will also see new opportunities for other members to get involved, raise their profile and take part in the discussions that design and uphold the PSA into the future.

It has been a privilege to work with all of the Board this year and I thank them sincerely for their support. I also wish to thank the Head Office team for everything they do, and to all our wonderful RPs who create the tribes within their regions enabling member's businesses flourish.

And a huge thank you to all of you, the members, without whom none of this would be possible.

I look forward to another year of growth both for the PSA and for you all in your businesses.

Alastair Greener

President, PSA UK & Ireland
alastair.greener@thepsa.co.uk



Things I've worked on in 2025 and 2026

It has been an enormous privilege to serve as President of the Professional Speaking Association UK & Ireland over the past year. I took on the role knowing that it would bring responsibility, opportunity and considerable work. What I could not fully appreciate was just how much support, friendship and connection it would bring. I feel extremely fortunate to work in such a generous industry and to be in an association whose members care deeply about one another and our profession.

Our theme for the year has been *The Art of Connection*. This means how we connect with our clients, their audiences and each other, so it has been wonderful to see that theme embraced so enthusiastically across the association. I'm thrilled that each of our regions has interpreted it in their own way and turned it into conversations, sessions and experiences that have helped members build stronger relationships and better speaking businesses.

Over the past eleven months, I have attended more than 20 regional events and visited nearly every region. Each has its own character, but the warmth of the welcome and commitment to helping members speak more and speak better are remarkably consistent. I truly feel our regions remain the lifblood of the PSA, and I offer my heartfelt thanks to all our Regional Presidents and their committees for all they've done over the last year. They give enormous time and energy to supporting members, welcoming newcomers and running excellent events. Their work is often carried out quietly, but the impact is felt throughout the association.

IMPACT! in Leeds, welcomed 130 people to our spring convention and not only was it brilliant, it created real momentum. The packed day brought together learning, networking and celebration, including the Emerging Speaker of the Year competition, showing what happens when we create the right space for people to connect. I was immensely proud and grateful to everyone who spoke, organised, volunteered, competed and attended.

That momentum is continuing as we look towards this year's Speaking Business Summit in October. Ticket sales are going really well, and we are shaping what I believe will be a tremendous conference, with keynotes, workshops, a panel session, the PSY competition, *Ask the Experts* and plenty of time to build the relationships that make the PSA so valuable. The programme has been designed to help members develop their craft, grow their businesses and deepen their connections with clients, audiences and fellow speakers.

By removing the Sunday morning element of the conference, we have made SBS more affordable and at the same time, we have created an optional social day on Sunday. *Continuing the Connection* will give those who wish to stay longer an opportunity to enjoy

Oxford together and extend the conversations and friendships formed during the Summit. As we have seen in previous conferences the most valuable connections are not always made during a formal session, but in the conversations that follows it.

It has also been an honour to represent the PSA internationally. In March, I attended the *Global Speakers Summit*, and I have also attended the Canadian, French and Spanish speaking associations' conferences. On every occasion I have proudly represented our association while promoting our conferences, membership and the strength of the UK and Ireland speaking community. These relationships remind us that we are part of the *Global Speaking Federation* and a worldwide profession that give us opportunities to share ideas, build partnerships and raise our members' profile.

None of the progress made this year stands alone, so I would like to pay particular tribute to Michelle Mills Porter. I have benefited enormously from her leadership through a demanding period last year, and the work she did provided much stronger foundations for this year. I am equally grateful to be a part of an amazing board and truly appreciate their wisdom, energy and incredible support. The association has gone from strength to strength because people have taken responsibility, made difficult decisions and kept members at the centre of their work.

And finally, I am so thankful to our office team who have always gone above and beyond in supporting the association. So much of what members experience depends on work behind the scenes, and it's their professionalism, patience and commitment that make our regions and annual events possible.

Looking Ahead

At the close of Speaking Business Summit 2026, I will hand over the presidency to Denise Fay. I'm excited about what she has planned as she brings her own ideas, energy and style to the role, so I'm looking forward to supporting her throughout her in the president's role. As immediate past president, I also intend to explore further projects through which I can continue to support the association and help to build on the progress we have made.

Before then, I'm excited about everything still to come at SBS 2026. With the support of our board, office team, speakers, volunteers and members, confident it'll be another brilliant opportunity for all of us to speak more, speak better and connect. I hope it will also be a fitting celebration of a year in which *The Art of Connection* has been brought to life across our association.

Serving as President has been one of the greatest honours of my professional life. I am proud of what we have achieved, but above all I am grateful for the trust placed in me, for every welcome around the regions, for the candid conversations, for the friendships old and new, and for the many people who have stepped forward to help.

The PSA is a wonderful association because of the people within it, so thank you for allowing me the privilege of serving you.

Michelle Mills-Porter

Immediate Past President, PSA UK & Ireland

michelle.millsporter@thepsa.co.uk



Since stepping down as PSA UK&I President, I have continued to serve on the Board as its longest-standing member, helping to provide continuity and organisational memory as we carry forward previously agreed strategy and decisions.

A key development since my last report has been the progress of the **PSA Neurodiversity Community**, the first Community to be launched within the PSA. My intention was always to establish the concept and pilot, then enable specialists within the neurodiversity field to take it forward. I am therefore delighted that **Sam Warner has stepped in to lead the Community through the remainder of its pilot**, which concludes in October, supported by the founding team and with the full support of the Board. This has allowed me to step back from the operational leadership of the Community as planned while the pilot continues to test, learn and develop.

Behind the scenes, I continue to contribute to Board discussions and decisions where the historical context of previous strategy, governance and activity is useful. As ever, considerably more happens in the background than is visible to members, and I continue to support the Board wherever my experience and organisational knowledge are helpful.

Alongside this, my own business is developing rapidly, including the continuing evolution of my work as a Human Behaviour specialist and the recent addition of **Oracle** to my Essence Analysis, which explores the deeper drivers at the source of behaviour rather than only its visible expression.

I remain on the Board until October and will continue to support the Chair, Board and PSA during that period - so Stuart's bunting must remain in the cupboard for a little while longer.

Denise Fay

Vice-President / Marketing Director

denise.fay@thepsa.co.uk



Another Year of Lots Done...with Still More to Do

Last year, I finished my AGM report with the words “*Lots done, more to do.*”

Twelve months later, I could probably say exactly the same thing. Marketing is continual, there is always another event to promote, another email to write and another idea we could be trying.

But when I look back over the past year, I think there has been an important shift.

While marketing resources remain limited, we have continued to do the operational work that keeps the PSA visible and members informed, while also starting to put stronger foundations underneath it. We've created more consistency in how we communicate, we've increased our visibility, and we've built marketing assets and processes that can be used again rather than reinventing the wheel every year.

At Board level, we've also begun looking at the bigger strategic questions facing the PSA, including the important question of our identity, who are we, who are we for and how should we communicate that? That work isn't finished, but I believe it will be fundamental to our future marketing.

As I prepare to hand over the Marketing Director role, I'm particularly pleased that there is now a stronger foundation for the next Director to build upon.

The Podium

I had wanted to do this for a while and finally, in January, I introduced *The Podium*, The PSA Weekly Pulse, our new weekly member communication.

Previously, much of our email communication was necessarily event-led. I wanted *The Podium* to give us an opportunity to go beyond that and communicate with members more regularly, but also give them something useful, something of value.

Since January, *The Podium* has gone out every week, (with the exception of one week). Open rates have ranged from **27% to 37.5%**, with click-through rates between **2% and 8%**.

The numbers matter, but I've particularly appreciated feedback from members who have told me they like the more personal approach to the emails.

We've also started using *The Podium* to give members access to useful content, including videos from the Speaker Hub. That is something we will restart after the summer, with the

intention of adding new videos and continuing to find ways to make the communication more valuable.

Because ultimately, while getting people into rooms is important, our communications should also remind people of the value of belonging to the PSA.

Putting People in Rooms – Our Annual Flagship Events

Speaking of putting people in rooms, a considerable part of the Marketing Director role continues to be promoting our two annual flagship events - Speaking Business Summit and IMPACT!

Over the past year, this has included Speaking Business Summit 2025, IMPACT! 26 and Speaking Business Summit 2026.

There is a lot behind those campaigns that members don't necessarily see - developing the event messaging and positioning with the President of PSA UK & Ireland (Michelle Mills Porter and Alastair Greener), emails, programme highlights, speaker and panel promotion, Facebook and LinkedIn content, graphics, reminders and all the other pieces that turn an event programme into something people want to attend.

The '*I'm Attending Speaking Business Summit 25*' was a highlight of last year. It was a test the year before and now is a firm favourite event asset. It created engagement among attendees before they even stepped foot in Telford and it continued throughout the event.

IMPACT! 26 was a particular success. Attendance exceeded our expectations, which was a lovely marketing problem to create, even if it brought a few logistical challenges with it!

Work is also well underway on Speaking Business Summit 2026. With this year's theme of *The Art of Connection*, our marketing has extended beyond simply promoting the two main conference days to highlighting the wider opportunities for members to connect before and after the Summit.

Putting More Focus on Our Regions

Our regions are the lifeblood of the PSA, so increasing their visibility and supporting Regional Presidents with their marketing has been another focus this year. Again, lots done, more to do!

We began by recognising and thanking our outgoing Regional Presidents through individual LinkedIn posts and have introduced a regular Monday regional spotlight, promoting a different region each week through our main PSA channels.

I've also developed Canva event templates for Regional Presidents and started creating a more centralised Canva brand kit, with a new brand palette with new colours, fonts, graphics and templates. The aim is simple - make it easier for our volunteers to create professional, consistent PSA marketing without having to reinvent the wheel every time.

There is still lots more to do with regional marketing, but we've made a start and there is now a structure that can be developed further.

Growing Our Visibility

LinkedIn continues to be an important channel for raising awareness of the PSA, our members, regions and events.

During the past 12 months, we added 1,084 new followers, bringing the PSA LinkedIn audience to 5,852.

Our content generated 25,556 impressions, an increase of approximately 30% on the previous year, alongside 585 reactions, 244 comments and 21 reposts. The PSA LinkedIn page also received 3,881 page views from 2,263 unique visitors.

Numbers aren't the whole story, of course. But they do give us an indication that more people are seeing the PSA and choosing to find out more about us.

Across my last two reporting years, more than 2,200 new followers have joined the PSA's LinkedIn audience. That gives the next Marketing Director a considerably larger audience with which to communicate and build relationships.

Asking a Bigger Marketing Question - Who Is the PSA For?

One of the most interesting areas I've been involved in this year has come from the Board's wider strategy work. As a Board, we began a strategic review of the PSA and, as part of that process, one of the key areas that emerged was our identity.

That work is **not finished**. We don't yet have all the answers and I certainly don't want to suggest that we do. But we have started asking some important questions.

Who is the PSA for? What does *professional* mean within the Professional Speaking Association? Who do we want to attract? And how do we ensure experienced speakers, trainers and experts recognise that the PSA is a professional home for them too?

For me, this is fundamental marketing work. Before we decide what to say, where to advertise or what content to create, we need to understand who we are, who we serve and why that matters.

I've enjoyed contributing to that work and believe it has the potential to give future PSA marketing a much stronger strategic foundation.

Leaving Something to Build On

As I prepare to hand over the Marketing Director role, one of the things I am most pleased about isn't a campaign or a set of statistics.

It's that the next Marketing Director won't be starting with a blank page.

Over my time in the role, I've built a bank of Canva templates, event graphics, promotional assets, email campaigns and reusable marketing materials. We now have established approaches for promoting our annual flagship events, *The Podium* provides an established weekly communication with members, Regional Presidents have marketing templates they can use and our LinkedIn audience has grown substantially.

And perhaps most importantly, the wider strategy work has started a conversation about PSA identity that should eventually give our marketing an even stronger sense of direction.

There will always be things that could be improved, documented better or developed further. I certainly haven't finished the marketing of the PSA, and I don't think any Marketing Director ever could.

But I do believe I am handing over a stronger marketing foundation than the one I inherited, with assets, audiences and processes that the next person can take, improve and make their own.

And that matters to me.

Looking Ahead

My role within the PSA is changing and I look forward to serving as President of the PSA UK and Ireland, the first to come from PSA Ireland.

Last year I said *"Lots done, more to do."* There is still more to do. There always will be. But this year, as I write my last Marketing Director report, I'm proud to be leaving a much stronger starting point for what comes next.

Phil Ingle

Finance Director

phil.ingle@thepsa.co.uk



Financial Report for year to 30th June 2026

	30 th June 2026	30 th June 2025	30 th June 2024	30 th June 2023
Revenue	255185	312274	250530	281665
Cost of Sales	112234	179691	164252	175974
Gross Profit	142951	132582	86278	105690
Overheads	131591	135913	184806	155775
Operating profit	11360	(3330)	(98527)	(50084)
Profit After Interest	12288	(489)	(95256)	(48159)

The overall position is '**not bad**', on a scale:

Great	Good	Not Bad	Bad	Oh S***
Reserves Policy exceeded x2: Foundation donation	Reserves policy met	Able to fund cash requirement next 12 months, reserves policy not met	Unable to fund cash requirement in next 12 months	Unable to fund cash requirement in next 3 months

Key points from the accounts in the year two 30.6.26:

- The P&L for 12 months to June26 shows a profit £12,288, after 3 years of losses.
- This was after a profit on SBS 25 of around £22,000 and Impact 26 of around £750.
- Overheads exceeded Membership Income by £131591 to £103965: (membership income after accounting for accrued income).
- Income from regional events exceeded overall regional costs by around £14,000.
- On the Balance Sheet our Reserves at 30.6.26 are £15703, up from £3415 at 30.6.25.
- During the year, the PSA Foundation Limited was established as a separate entity, and the balances previously held by the PSA for the foundation were transferred to new accounts. The change in reserves from 30 June 2025 to 30 June 2026 reflects this change.

- In 2024 we raised a provision for bad debts of £9701 and during the year we wrote off £9183 of long standing amounts - mostly accounting queries - within this provision
- On behalf of all members, we heartily thank Will Kintish and Derek Cheshire, who have scrutinised these figures on your behalf. A full audit has not been undertaken. We also thank Mike Ogilvie for his continued support throughout the year as our accountant and Company secretary.

Board actions

- We continue to closely monitor overheads, which were close to our budgeted figure and the lowest they have been for five years.
- The overheads include the cost of the Sport80 membership and event booking system. We are currently in discussion about how this system is used in the future.
- RPs have gone to great lengths to encourage attendance at regional meetings and control costs. We are very grateful for their work and the resulting overall positive financial contribution. We will review individual region financial outcomes with RPs.

In summary:

- We have made a profit this financial year after three years of losses.
- SBS 2025 was a significant financial improvement over 2024 and accounted for most of the profit.
- Regions collectively are making a positive financial contribution
- Our overheads were close to budget forecast but significantly above our membership fee income.
- For the current financial year to June 2027, we need to continue our regional performance, make a profit on SBS 26, and manage our overheads to within our membership income. Resolving the Sport 80 issue could have a significant positive impact on overheads, but we should also seek to increase membership numbers and consequent membership fee income.

Leon Bamforth

Membership Director

leon.bamforth@thepsa.co.uk



My Role in the PSA

The PSA exists to help members Speak More and Speak Better. As Membership Director, my core focus should be on driving member value—ensuring new joiners find their footing, experienced speakers grow, and every member sees tangible value from being connected with our wonderful community. That value is proven only when your speaking business and craft advance because of the PSA.

The Reality This Year

Straightening out legacy systems is rarely quick, and this year demanded intensive operational triage to transition onto Sport:80.

- **Platform Transition & Data Integrity:** Moving an organisation's entire history onto a new platform is demanding when records have historically been fragmented. We completed the heavy lifting to reconcile our member records, renewal flows, and core directory; now our focus is ensuring those systems actually work for us.
- **Operational Containment:** A significant portion of my time was spent mitigating platform friction, developing workaround processes, and ensuring day-to-day operations continued with minimal disruption to the community.

Actions Taken

- **System Deployment & Stabilisation:** Managed the migration to Sport:80, actively resolving issues as they arose and working with their team to build an operating setup that fits our needs.
- **Operational Support:** Worked closely with our amazing part-time admin team to ensure member upgrades, transfers, and applications were resolved as quickly and accurately as possible.
- **Systematising the Fellows Pathway:** Jackie Barrie did a phenomenal amount of work to systematise the new Fellows rules and make them work in practice. I oversaw their operational rollout, which successfully saw many new Fellows achieve their designation this year. Work continues to make this entire upgrade process as slick as possible.
- **Expanding Member Support:** To ensure new joiners receive proper attention despite the technical noise, we brought in additional volunteer support. I am

delighted to announce that Rachel Maunder has stepped up to help lead and run our New Members Days.

Looking Ahead

We are not out of the woods yet. We still have significant work ahead to reach a truly stable technical footing so we can focus on what matters most: member value.

My priorities for next year are:

- **Platform & Architecture Review:** With our data cleaner and centralised, we are conducting a pragmatic evaluation of our long-term technical stack to ensure our software aligns strictly with the PSA's operational needs, agility, and cost profile.
- **Reducing Administrative Overhead:** Streamlining self-service tools for members and Regional Presidents so managing membership requires minimal manual intervention.
- **Returning to Member Value:** With the baseline data stabilised and operational continuity secured, redirecting focus entirely toward member retention, Associate-to-Professional progression, and commercial value.

Patrick Mercie

Commercial Director

patrick.mercie@thepsa.co.uk



Over the past year, much of the work on the Commercial side of PSA has been about strengthening the foundations from which a more sustainable commercial future can be built. One of the realities we have identified is that our ability to develop meaningful external commercial relationships is closely connected to the size, strength, and engagement of our membership. Our current scale, particularly within our Fellow and Professional membership, limits the range and value of some of the external commercial partnerships available to us. Strengthening the core organisation needs to be an important part of creating greater commercial opportunities in the future.

This connects closely with the identity and strategy work undertaken by the Board during the year. Having contributed extensively to those discussions, particularly around who PSA is for, who we want to attract, how we attract and retain them, and the role our regions play in the organisation, I strongly believe that our regions need to sit at the foundation of the PSA experience. During the year I attended more than 15 regional meetings outside my own region, which provided valuable opportunities to see different regions in action, listen to members, and understand both the opportunities and challenges across the association.

Another significant area of focus for me has been our Professional Members meetings. During the year, I continued to lead our dedicated online Professional Members meetings and the Professional Members element around IMPACT and SBS. The purpose has been to create additional opportunities for experienced professional speakers to connect, share expertise, learn from one another, and develop their speaking businesses. Growing and engaging this part of our membership is important both to the value we provide members and to the longer-term strength of PSA.

There has also been considerable practical commercial activity throughout the year. This has included working on securing and developing sponsors, suppliers, and partners for SBS; undertaking new commercial negotiations intended to create better opportunities and arrangements for our regions; and contributing to wider supplier, event, and commercial discussions. I also developed a standard PSA Business Case template so that new ideas and initiatives can be considered more consistently in terms of their purpose, costs, resources, benefits, and expected outcomes before commitments are made.

Alongside this, I have contributed to work on developing better KPIs and measures around membership, retention, regional activity, events, and commercial performance. Good commercial decisions require good information, and having greater clarity about what is

working, where members are engaging, and where opportunities exist will help us make better choices about where PSA invests its time and resources.

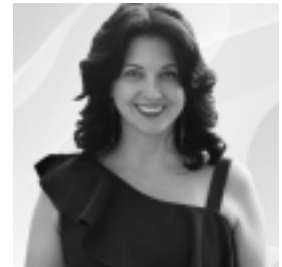
Looking ahead, there are opportunities for PSA around membership growth, stronger regions, Professional Member engagement, events, partnerships, and sustainable commercial income. However, the next stage of our Commercial development needs to be aligned with the wider PSA identity and strategy work currently underway. Once we have greater organisational clarity about who we are, who we serve, and what we want PSA to become, we can translate that into clearer commercial priorities and determine which opportunities genuinely support that direction.

My view remains that sustainable commercial growth should come from building a stronger core organisation first. If we strengthen the membership proposition, grow and engage our membership, support thriving regions, and demonstrate clear value to our members, we strengthen PSA's proposition to potential external partners. That gives us a much stronger foundation from which to develop the right commercial relationships and opportunities for the future.

Olga Geidane

Director of Regions

olga.geidane@thepsa.co.uk



Things I've worked on

It has been another busy and rewarding year working with our Regional Presidents, Vice Presidents and regional committees across the PSA.

I have continued to hold regular Regional Presidents' meetings, supported by our WhatsApp community, alongside individual conversations and one-to-one support whenever needed.

It has been particularly impressive to see the commitment, creativity and resilience of our RPs. Running a region is a significant volunteer commitment, involving venues, speakers, event organisation, marketing, members, finances, committees and, increasingly, commercial considerations. I am incredibly grateful to everyone who continues to give their time, energy and expertise to make our regions thrive.

Strengthening regional leadership

This year I have continued to develop our approach to leadership and succession.

Regional Presidents have been encouraged to identify and involve their Vice Presidents much earlier, allowing them to shadow their RP, attend Regional Presidents' meetings and gradually take on more responsibility before their formal induction in November. This has already strengthened succession planning in a number of regions and, importantly, has allowed incoming RPs to gain confidence and familiarity with the role before formally taking it on.

I am particularly pleased that many regions now have their next Regional President identified well in advance, with some already thinking beyond the next leadership cycle.

I have also been keen to reinforce that Regional Presidents do not have to do everything themselves. Strong regional leadership is not about carrying every responsibility personally, but about building a committee, delegating effectively and knowing when to ask for support. Creating that culture will be particularly important as we continue to develop our regional leadership pipeline.

We have also continued to provide additional support to RPs facing challenges, whether around attendance, venues, speakers, committees or general workload. My aim has always been to create an environment where asking for help is seen as a strength rather than a weakness.

Regional competitions

One of the major achievements this year has been the continuation and development of the PSA speaking competitions.

Following the successful introduction of the Emerging Speaker of the Year competition, our regions once again embraced the opportunity to provide members with a platform to compete, develop and gain visibility.

We also continued with the Professional Speaker of the Year competition, giving our Professional members another opportunity to challenge themselves and showcase their speaking ability.

The real value of these competitions goes beyond the competition itself. They give members an opportunity to challenge themselves, gain confidence, receive feedback, develop their craft and gain visibility within the PSA community.

I want to give a particularly big thank you to our RPs and committees for supporting these competitions. Organising heats and competitions alongside normal regional activity is not always easy, and their willingness to make these opportunities available to members has been fantastic.

Sharing best practice and creating stronger regions

Another important focus has been encouraging regions to learn from one another rather than every RP having to reinvent the wheel.

We have seen some fantastic examples of regions experimenting with different event formats, Showcase Bonanzas, venues, speaker line-ups and ways of engaging members. I have been keen to encourage this creativity while also identifying where successful ideas can be shared across the PSA.

We have also continued conversations around regional commercial sustainability, including venue costs, event pricing and the importance of regularly reviewing whether the current regional model remains financially and practically viable.

Our regions should have a recognisable PSA identity while retaining their own personality, community and creativity. **Regional consistency does not mean regional sameness.**

I also want to continue encouraging regions to share what works, learn openly from what does not, and feel empowered to experiment with new approaches where this can improve the member experience.

Regional structure, sustainability and development

We began 2026 with 14 regions, following the decision to separate PSA Scotland into Scotland West and Scotland East. This has provided valuable learning around regional structure, geography, membership density, leadership and long-term sustainability, and has highlighted the importance of ensuring that each region has the right foundations to thrive.

Together with the Board and Membership team, we have also started looking more closely at whether our regional structure continues to reflect where our members actually are.

In most cases, the current structure continues to serve members well, but we are also identifying opportunities to rethink how certain areas are covered and where different approaches or additional regional opportunities could potentially better serve our members.

One of the key learnings for me has been that there is no single model that will work equally well for every region. Our regional structure needs to remain flexible and responsive as our membership, geography and the needs of our speakers evolve.

This thinking has also extended to regional venues and event formats. Several regions have reviewed and changed their venues, in some cases significantly reducing ticket prices and making events more accessible to members. Others are now exploring whether a different venue, location or event model could better serve their members and support future growth.

I see this willingness to review and adapt as a very positive development. We should never continue doing something simply because *“we have always done it this way”*. What worked for our members five or ten years ago may not necessarily be what works for them today.

Regularly reviewing our venues, locations, pricing, formats and ways of working allows us to respond to what our members actually need, while ensuring that regions remain both financially and operationally sustainable.

As the PSA continues to evolve, I believe flexibility, adaptability and a willingness to learn from what works - and what does not - will be essential to building stronger, more sustainable and more relevant regions for the future.

Looking ahead

My focus for the coming year is to move beyond simply supporting individual regions and towards building stronger, more sustainable systems that enable every region - and every Regional President - to thrive.

This includes developing clearer RP onboarding and training, strengthening succession planning, improving access to regional resources and best practice, supporting stronger committee structures and delegation, and creating clearer pathways for RPs to access help when challenges arise.

I would also like us to develop better ways of understanding regional health - not simply looking at attendance numbers, but considering engagement, member retention, upgrades, event quality, financial sustainability and the overall member experience.

I want to continue encouraging regions to share what works, learn from what does not, and feel empowered to experiment with new approaches where appropriate.

Ultimately, I believe our regions are one of the greatest assets of the PSA. They are where members build relationships, develop their speaking, find opportunities and experience the community of the association.

My ambition is for every Regional President to feel supported, empowered and equipped to lead, while giving every member the opportunity to engage with a region that delivers genuine value.

A huge thank you to every Regional President, Vice President and committee member who has contributed this year. You are volunteers, but the level of professionalism, commitment and care you bring to your regions is anything but voluntary in spirit.

Thank you also to Hazel, Sarah Beth, the PSA office, my fellow Directors and the Board for everything that happens behind the scenes to support our regions.

There is still much to do, but I am excited about what we can build together - stronger regions, stronger leadership and, ultimately, greater value for every PSA member.

PSA Foundation

Aoife Gaffney, Cat Williams, Mike Pagan, Susan Heaton-Wright

foundation@thepsa.co.uk

Part One: Pastoral Support

Aoife Gaffney, Pastoral Lead

Since January 2026, a new PSA Foundation Lead has overseen the Foundation's confidential, compassionate and practical support for PSA members and, in some cases, their families. To date, 33 instances of support have been provided, including four membership grants; support towards Impact 2026 and SBS 2026; 16 gifts, cards or care packages; an event ticket; and other individual assistance not all financial. Three requests were considered but declined. A larger one-off purchase was also agreed by the Foundation Board and made on behalf of a member, in line with the Foundation's new processes.

During 2026, pastoral support and fundraising were separated into distinct roles, allowing each area to receive appropriate focus. Procedures and confidential record-keeping have been strengthened, with requests recorded on a restricted Trello board accessible only to the Foundation Lead and PSA Operations. This helps ensure that requests are handled discreetly, consistently and promptly, while keeping the Foundation focused on making life a little easier for members facing difficult circumstances.

Part Two: Fundraising

Cat Williams, Fundraising Lead

I had the privilege of becoming Foundation Fundraising Lead in January 2026 and my first focus for fundraising was the Impact! conference where the Foundation ran a successful prize draw, receiving plenty of prizes donated by PSA members, and raising over £700 for the Foundation.

We now look ahead to the Speaking Business Summit and I am working hard to gather prizes from PSA members, external speakers, and national brands for the prize draw, silent auction and live auction. I will also be seeking volunteers to help with ticket sales and auction bids at the conference itself.

Looking further ahead, once the annual summit has passed, I will be communicating with the regions to encourage regional and individual fundraising efforts to keep the Foundation at the front of people's minds throughout the year.

I look forward to growing further into this role as the year progresses.

Part Three: Foundation Board Update

Mike Pagan, Foundation Director

The Foundation Board currently comprises four directors, each giving their time entirely on a voluntary basis: Peter Roper, Mike Pagan, Lee Jackson, and Susan Heaton-Wright. Between them they bring a significant depth of PSA experience, and since January 2026 each has taken on a defined area of responsibility — finance, governance, member support oversight, and general board operations. That structure has brought clarity and pace to how the board functions, and we're grateful to each of them for the commitment and care they bring to the role. We are doubling our efforts to creatively use this money for the benefit of our members this year within the usual checks and balances

The Foundation's relationship with the PSA remains central to everything we do. As an organisation that exists solely to support PSA members, we're focused on making that partnership work as well as it possibly can — with regular communication, shared processes, and a genuine commitment to being there when members need us. We're also looking beyond the obvious. Financial support matters, but it isn't the only way the Foundation can help, and the board is actively exploring more creative ways to reach members earlier and through channels that don't always require a formal application. If you have ideas, know of a member who might benefit from a quiet conversation, or simply want to get more involved, please do get in touch. Everything we do is confidential, everything is handled with care, and we're always glad to be asked.

Part Four: Financial Position

Susan Heaton-Wright, Finance Director

Funds held on 1 January 2026	£58,076.83
Distributed to good causes	£4,213.60
Funds remaining on 31 July 2026	£54,314.54

On 1 January 2026, the PSA Foundation held £58,076.83 across its current and savings accounts. Between 1 January and 31 July 2026, the Foundation distributed £4,213.60 to support individuals and good causes.

On 31 July 2026, the Foundation held £54,314.54 across its accounts. The closing balance also reflects interest earned, additional income received and routine bank and administration costs during the reporting period.

We are very thankful to the PSA accounts team who have worked hard with the Foundation team to ensure a smooth transition to the Foundation being an independent organisation.

PSA Fellows Community

David Hyner, Jane Gunn, Lynda Shaw and Jackie Barrie

fellows@thepsa.co.uk

After a lot of outreach and market research last year, we created a smaller diary for Fellows but focused on delivering what they asked us for:

- More time to network with peers.
- External expertise.
- Deeper dives on content.

In October 2023, the new criteria were launched for Fellowship upgrades after at least four years of work (nod to Andy Lopata for that). However, the number of applicants notably reduced. After 18 months' more work (led by Jackie Barrie), the upgrade process was clarified, redesigned, and went live in 2025.

Since then, we have welcomed four upgraded Fellows and one Honorary Fellow. The good news is that the upgrade process is now understandable and clear. It's scheduled for review in the new year in case any changes are required.

However, many members have mentioned their frustration at the slow processing of applications, and indeed I know that we have lost one association member who was in the process as he left, due to this (and other) frustration. This has now been addressed for future applicants.

We are looking forward to a great and very high value content Fellows event at convention this year and thank the board and the admin team for all their support and hard work this last year.

There is a sense of the ship slowly turning around.

Fellows co-president David Hyner will be stepping back in October after a few years of supporting the group, and is happy to announce that to help Jane Gunn (Current co-president of Fellows) run the group moving forward, that our good friend Dr Lynda Shaw will be joining the leadership team of the Fellows. David is happy to help ongoing if needed or wanted.

In addition to the planned Fellows live meeting at convention, we have one other event planned for 2026 - an online learning and social in December.

Jane and Lynda will inform the board of dates for 2027 at their earliest convenience.

Thanks again for your support.