



District 91's District Leadership Committee 2016/17 Report

In order to ensure successful district elections, the district director appointed this district leadership committee, whose work is critical in ensuring long-term district success. The role of this committee role was to seek out prospective candidates; evaluate and interview candidates; nominate candidates; and provide this report.

Our District Leadership Committee members were chosen for their leadership abilities, commitment to the best interests of our members, coupled with their experience serving on District Teams. The committee members were;

- Andy O'Sullivan, DTM
- Bob Nisbet, DTM
- Chris Howell, DTM
- Coralie Frances, DTM
- Jean Gamester, DTM (Chair)
- Liz Hobbs, DTM
- Paul Walsh, DTM

Each of these committee members put in significant effort into a much more intensive process than we have had in past years. I would like to thank them for their diligence, integrity, and hard work in service of our members.

I would also like to thank District Administration Manager, Paul Rhys-Taylor, for his support in running the Interview / Presentation days.

The process for selecting suitable candidates for nomination was as follows:

1. The committee formulated suitable questions, scenarios and a presentation topic with leadership, experience, and performance content.
2. Candidates received pre-interview questions to return in advance of meeting the committee, allowing the committee to review responses prior to interview. They also received advance notification of a presentation topic to be delivered on the day.
3. The members of the committee were split between an interview and presentation panel. Each committee member saw each candidate personally.
4. In the interview, the pre-interview responses were reviewed and then they went through a further set of questions that the candidate had not seen before.
5. In the presentation session, the candidates delivered their presentation, then were asked questions about the presentation, and had an opportunity to ask questions of the committee. In addition, candidates for the District Leadership Team also responded to questions about scenarios relevant to the role they were seeking election to.
6. District Leadership Team candidates spent two hours in total with the panels on the first committee day, Division Director candidates spent one hour in total with the panels on the second committee day.

7. After all interviews and presentations were completed on each day, a further meeting was held at which the committee discussed and reviewed each candidate's suitability for the position sought.
8. Committee members exercised their independent judgments with respect to all prospective candidates, having in mind the best interests of Toastmasters International and the district, as well as the experience, abilities and qualifications of prospective candidates.
9. The committee then voted independently via online survey on the candidates to be put forward in nomination for each position.
10. In the case of district director candidates, each committee member also ranked the candidates as first, second or third. This was because the committee could nominate no more than two candidates for this role, which was less than the total number of candidates for the role.
11. Candidates who were nominated for office were notified. This discussion included reconfirming their willingness to be nominated and their commitment to fulfill the duties of office if elected.
12. Those candidates who were not nominated were also informed, and they were advised of their eligibility to seek office as floor candidates.

It is my honor and privilege, as chair of the District Leadership Committee, to present to you the nominations for positions on the District Executive Council for the 2017/2018 Toastmasters year.

District Leadership Team

Position	Candidate
District Director	Pedro Casillas
Program Quality Director	Andy Hammond
Club Growth Director	Florian Bay

For Division Directors:

Div	Candidate
A	Steve Vear
B	Joanna Szoska
C	Robert Wyatt
H	Arnaud Sartre
J	John Christie
J	Alison Morris
K	Tomasz Kropiewnicki
L	Simon Cooper
L	Seema Menon

Jean Gamester, DTM, District 91 Leadership Committee Chair

Nominated Candidate Information – District Trio

Candidate for District Director: Pedro Casillas

1. How long have you been a Toastmaster?

14 years

2. How have you served as a leader in Toastmasters?

- At Club level, I have served as:
 - VPM, VPE (twice), President (twice), Treasurer, Secretary, Webmaster, Club Sponsor, Club Mentor
- Area - I have served as Area Governor (A34, part of Division B)
- Division - Division B Governor
- District - Program Quality Director



3. What has been your greatest achievement in Toastmasters so far?

Helping to rescue my club (GSS) when it fell below 20 members and looked like ceasing to function as a viable TM Club

4. What has been your greatest challenge?

Organising District D91 Autumn Conference after original contest organisers had to withdraw from the process due to personal circumstances. In 3 weeks, I organised a new team and was able to put on, with the assistance of many willing helpers, an excellent conference.

5. Why are running for this District Leadership Role? Why now?

I have always been looking to help grow Toastmasters across our District. At club level, I have worked with my club to help establish good working practices to ensure we have a well-run club with, with a strong committee where everyone knows their role and works to provide an environment where all can excel.

During my time as PQD, I have sought to apply similar principles across D91. I have been looking to promote quality in all aspects of the district - from well run clubs, to well run Areas and Divisions, which will pave the way for future growth.

I am looking to continue this work at District level and believe I have the skills to assist helping our District to continue to grow and prosper.

6. What is your vision for the role?

- My vision is continue and contribute to the great work undertaken by current and previous DLT teams to promote growth and excellence across the District.
- A smooth transition with the introduction of Pathways
- Well run clubs, with opportunities for all
- Continued expansion of clubs across the District
- Opportunities for members to get involved in organising and running workshops
- Well run competitions from club to District level
- Greater transparency on District Finances

7. How will you go about achieving this vision?

- To support the transition to Pathways, I will ask the Pathways Ambassador to work closely with DLT and Division and Area Directors
- By continuing to promote excellent DOT, COT's and Competitions and workshops.
- Promoting educational workshops across the district delivered by passionate members who have been through the Speaker to trainer course, to those places where we currently do not have a presence. The aim being to be able to hold workshops near to where members live, so reducing travel.

8. How do you plan to achieve Distinguished status?

- Work with Division and Area Directors, to ensure everyone knows how to track DCP and where to find appropriate reports
- Establishing lines of communication where we can share experiences on challenges facing each Division
- Working with Divisions to understand why there are deadlines and to agree plans to achieve them
- Support for Divisions to put on TLI's and smaller workshops
- Work with Area Directors to assist them prompt COT across their Areas to encourage as many Club Officers to attend as possible

9. What is the greatest challenge you may face as District Leader?

Ensuring that all Division and Area Directors have an opportunity to contribute to the growth of the District and to have a voice

10. How will you work with others to achieve success?

During DOT and DEC meetings, ask for suggestions on how DLT can support them achieve their goals. Hosting regular calls with Division Directors to help support initiatives they may have. Share documentation to help support their goals.

Candidate for Program Quality Director : Andy Hammond

1. How long have you been a Toastmaster?

Since January 2001.

2. How have you served as a leader in Toastmasters?

Various roles – see attached biography. I have always served with integrity and humility, and I believe I have a track record of being successful.



3. What has been your greatest achievement in Toastmasters so far?

Starting and establishing County Communicators. It was particularly satisfying to see how the club has grown its leaders and achieved “Club of the Year” for 2015/16.

4. What has been your greatest challenge?

Dealing with a member whose approach, particularly in evaluations, was upsetting other club members. We have been able to moderate their behaviour and retain them as a member. My other greatest challenge was stepping into the Club Growth Director role in August!

5. Why are running for this District Leadership Role? Why now?

I stood for the Club Growth Director role last year as I wished to use the knowledge and experience gained as a Toastmaster for 15 years to continue to support the members in their development, and to enable even more people to benefit from membership of Toastmasters. Since joining the DLT I have gained even more experience that I wish to build on to further the mission of the District.

I have also gained valuable knowledge about the District and its unique characteristics, as well as the some of the key players and rising stars. I feel that knowledge and experience can be of greatest benefit to the members by carrying it forward to the next role.

The coming year has a new challenge for the PQD as they have the responsibility of appointing the Pathways Guides. In my other role as Chief Ambassador for Pathways I am more familiar than most with the new programme and have a team of Area Ambassadors who are already

providing a pool of potential volunteers. I believe this is the ideal time to support the District in the roll out of Pathways.

6. What is your vision for the role?

To have a coordinated Quality Improvement Plan that provides a focussed programme for the training for Division and Area Directors, Club Officers and members. The QIP will encompass the key development opportunities to be provided through formal training events, conference educational opportunities and Club Officer Training sessions.

7. How will you go about achieving this vision?

Working primarily with the DLT and Division Directors to identify the priority areas for development. Engaging with Division and Area Directors to produce the overarching programme, and agreeing on specific responsibilities for its delivery. Regular dialogue to track progress and highlight any areas where further support is needed.

8. How do you plan to achieve Distinguished status?

The support to individual clubs will be even more critical, as they are at the heart of our success. In addition to the usual focus on training Club Officers in their understanding of the DCP, they will need assistance with the transition arrangements relating to Pathways.

In theory it should be easier to for clubs achieve Distinguished status as Pathways should attract new members, and there will be two sets of DCP goals related to education awards. In reality it will place a greater burden on Club Officers to manage through this period.

The training of Division and Area Directors to ensure they have a full understanding of these issues is essential so that they can then provide support to Club Officers.

9. What is the greatest challenge you may face as District Leader?

There is a particular challenge this coming year with the roll out of Pathways, as previously mentioned. With the roll out scheduled around September it has the potential to be a massive distraction if not managed well. Having now had some experience on the DLT, and being Chief Ambassador for Pathways, I believe I am well placed to deal with this situation.

The other challenge is the apparent discontent being heard from some DEC members. I feel I have the trust and support needed to help address these issues.

10. How will you work with others to achieve success?

One thing I have learned this year so far is that I need to establish a support team early on. I would therefore be looking to appoint a number of key roles, including a Conference Chair and Training Coordinator. There would also be a new role of Chief Pathways Guide to oversee the management of the Pathways Guides once they have been appointed. This would enable the Program Quality Director to maintain focus on the core role and success criteria.

The other important factor is the relationship with the wider DEC and District Council. This requires an open and consistent dialogue to share the vision and plans, and to identify any potential problems as early as possible. A shared understanding of, and commitment to, the aims and goals is essential for the team to succeed.

Candidate for Club Growth Director : Florian Bay

1. How long have you been a Toastmaster?

I've been a Toastmaster member since April 2013 when I joined Cheltenham Speakers.

2. How have you served as a leader in Toastmasters?

- VPE – 2014/15 – London Olympians & St Paul's Speakers
- Club President – 2014/16 – London Victorians (Founder) & St Paul's Speakers (2015/16)
- Area 33 Director – 2015/16
- Division B Director – Current
- Club Treasurer – Current – London Victorians & St Paul's Speakers



3. What has been your greatest achievement in Toastmasters so far?

I consider my greatest achievement to have been fulfilling the founding vision for London Victorians which was to launch, charter and grow the club into one of London's best in every possible way. The best indication that this vision was fulfilled was the unanimous and keen vote by the members to become a weekly club. But equally by the passion of leaders that joined the club's committee after charter ship, to carry on building an excellent club that serves its members and lead by example.

4. What has been your greatest challenge?

My greatest challenge early on in my Toastmasters journey was to learn to delegate and empower others to carry out tasks on their own. I had a tendency of wanting things to get done and if I saw that others couldn't do them I would simply do it for them instead. Over time I've learnt to step back and how to best empower others through supervision, providing guidance if they need it and delegation. This is why my first initiative upon becoming Division B Director was to create a strong team around me so that more could be done.

5. Why are you running for this District Leadership Role? Why now?

Since being actively involved in Toastmasters leadership from 2014 onwards. I've been lucky to benefit from the many opportunities it gave me and I'm consequently highly desirous to give something back to others and the wider organisation. I've also observed that far more could be done to raise the profile of Toastmasters further to reach out to new people and demographics. With this in mind, I decided to stand for Club Growth Director this year to build up on the skills learnt in my previous role.

6. What is your vision for the role?

My vision for the CGD role would be to transform club creation from an ad-hoc process into a systematic process that would almost see D91 interacting as a business to potential new corporate clubs. I.E to transform club creation into a "B2B" transaction for launching new corporate clubs. For community club, I envision club creation to become much easier through the implementation of "club in a box" tools and by creating new support networks of mentors, sponsors and guest speakers/functionaries to support new ventures in local communities.

7. How will you go about achieving this vision?

I will achieve this vision firstly by creating a club growth team around me, made up of a London based club extension chair, a non-London based club extension chair and a demo meeting coordinator (with associated team of available helpers). Finally a new "stakeholder manager" role would be created whose sole mission would be to build better awareness of TMI in the business world with other organisations. This team would support district leaders whenever necessary all over the district. Additionally, I would with the help of the DEC and DLT create all the necessary tools and procedure needed to support new clubs. Including the investigation of grants to be used for marketing materials.

8. How do you plan to achieve Distinguished status?

Achieving Distinguished status in number of paid clubs will be attained by building new clubs and ensuring that no current club falls behind in payment or becomes suspended. All solutions would be explored incl. re-creations of clubs (such as transforming a struggling corporate club into a community club) to prevent any club from being suspended. With regards to membership growth, this will be achieved by promoting the benefits of having a larger club membership and techniques to enhance membership retention. Part of this could be through specific training & guidance for club VPMs created with inputs of fellow district & club leaders.

9. What is the greatest challenge you may face as District Leader?

I see my greatest challenge as acknowledging that every single fellow member of Toastmasters has his/her own priorities and that these may not necessarily match with mine. With regards to club creation for example, there can sometimes be resistance from leaders of current clubs regarding the launch of new clubs due to fears that they would “compete” with them. Additionally, all of us have other engagements outside of Toastmasters and these can sometimes impact on our roles as leaders within the organisation. These must be understood and acknowledged accordingly.

10. How will you work with others to achieve success?

I will seek to delegate responsibilities extensively to the relevant members of the club growth team, but also to fellow DEC & DLT members when needed. In the case of DEC members, I will endeavour to set my expectations early on and to guide and coach them if necessary so that no misunderstanding occurs. The District PRO will be invited to sit on the club growth team, due to the close links between our roles and I will also liaise extensively with the PQD to identify the need for any training for either new clubs or potential club leaders. I see the CGD role as being one of the key links in the chain of success for the district. Therefore, I consequently expect to be challenged by others if the need arises so that more can be done and delivered.

Nominated Candidate Information – Division Directors

Candidate for Division A Director : Steve Vear

1. How long have you been a Toastmaster?

3 years in January 2017

2. How have you served as a leader in Toastmasters?

In many ways. First of all as VP PR of Wessex Speakers, doubling up as Secretary. I then followed with a year as VP Education and currently President.



Since January 2017 I am also serving as Division A director and have been an active pathways ambassador. I like to think that I have served as a role model, demonstrating leadership in helping to ensure successful meetings, and stepping up very early on to contest chair for the club and the District.

3. What has been your greatest achievement in Toastmasters so far?

Being able to take the Tech Data Toastmasters (my corporate club) from concept to charter in only 5 months and to see this club continue to be successful and grow.

4. What has been your greatest challenge?

I have willingly taken on the position of Division Director, six months into the Toastmaster year. I have had a lot to learn in a short period of time. This is the biggest challenge but one which I find very exciting. At the club level, the VP Education at Wessex was unable to commit to the responsibilities of the role almost a month into the new year. This was a challenge to balance what needed to be picked up while serving as President

5. Why are running for this District Leadership Role? Why now?

I would like to serve a full term as Division Director. Initially I was considering running for Area Director, but though all of my other voluntary responsibility I have a very strong sense of service and helping out where I can. Before taking on a district leadership role I wanted to ensure that I had established a good level of experience of leadership at the club level, which has culminated in serving as President at two clubs during this Toastmaster year.

6. What is your vision for the role?

There are three pillars to my vision.

- a) Support
- b) Growth
- c) Innovation

7. How will you go about achieving this vision?

Supporting of the area directors through regular communication – both as a group via calls and individuals via fast response and calls, and a commitment to visit the AD home clubs. Clubs will be supported by ensuring quick response to correspondence, regular communication from the Division and the provision of quality speech contests at the Division level.

Growing the District will come from assisting with the knowledge transfer on what it takes to open new clubs, we can share experiences by creating prospective club forums and communication within the district. Identifying those that would like to sponsor/mentor clubs within the next couple of years as we transition to pathways will be helpful.

Innovation will come initially via the offering of online workshops and discussions, to remove the distance or travelling challenge around the Division. It is also back to the supporting of clubs by

playing an active part in their new initiatives, and driving awareness from info in visit reports and from AD's to the wider Division

8. How do you plan to achieve Distinguished status?

Having an awareness of the various bits of information available to track progress is important – to use this as indicators to try and identify where an area/club needs particular support and flagging this to the AD. Club growth is also important (see comments around new clubs).

But the Distinguished status should come as a natural by product of creating a great team that communicate well, educating and supporting the division and making all parts of the Toastmaster experience as valuable as possible.

9. What is the greatest challenge you may face as District Leader?

Life can get in the way. Not just for me, but we are a voluntary organisation – so it is all about influence and support, not about control or commanding.

10. How will you work with others to achieve success?

Relationships with the DLT/DEC and AD are all key to success, I have been a regular to many District and Division events. This helps to build and maintain relationships. It is also important however to identify and encourage those who are willing and able to take on leadership positions in the future so we have good succession planning.

Candidate for Division B Director : Joanna Szoska

1. How long have you been a Toastmaster?

3.5 years

2. How have you served as a leader in Toastmasters?

I have served Toastmasters as a secretary, VPE, VPMentoring also I was instrumental in the formation of a new club. I led London Public Speakers as president from 1st July 2015 till 30th June 2016.

In my role, I concentrated on education through organizing a series of workshops run on a monthly basis. I also set up a mentoring program to enhance members; progress, development and proficiency. My objective was to support, train and educate existing members to allow the club to grow and achieve its goals through highly motivated members.



3. What has been your greatest achievement in Toastmasters so far?

Toastmasters program allowed me to overcome my greatest fear of speaking to newly met people and speaking in public, which is something that I'm trying to help others with as a VPMentoring. Since joining, I grew as a person, developed new skills and realized where my strengths are.

4. What has been your greatest challenge?

At the beginning of my Toastmasters journey everything I did for the first time seemed like a great challenge. Every new role, unexpected circumstance or last minute change could be seen as problematic but with time and experience I learnt that it's a hidden opportunity to develop new skills, practice existing ones and achieve something new for the club, personal development and the organization.

5. Why are running for this District Leadership Role? Why now?

Overcoming my fears through undertaking projects allowed me to realize what my skills are, I enjoy problem solving and helping others. I feel that serving as a Division Director would give me an opportunity to utilize my existing skills as well as enhance personal growth and development.

This year I'm serving as a Division Director assistant I believe that the role will allow me to utilise existing skills, knowledge and experience in leading, mentoring and setting up new clubs.

6. What is your vision for the role?

I hope that, after getting to know the clubs and areas in the Division, I could learn about the challenges that they are facing and assist them with my skills, knowledge and expertise. I want to empower and help with the development of the existing members to allow the clubs, areas and the division to expand. I can use what I have learnt from the remarkable success of our club to help other clubs achieve comparable growth rate and members engagement.

7. How will you go about achieving this vision?

After assessing the initial situation, I would like to run a number of trainings and workshops to empower the members and allow the clubs to grow and expand.

8. How do you plan to achieve Distinguished status?

I'm already working with LPS to charter a new club, in the role I would like to continue to drive clubs to achieve their goals and work with the area directors to identify opportunities.

9. What is the greatest challenge you may face as District Leader?

Different personalities and passionate people, we are all driven to make Toastmasters great. My role is to do this by engaging others and to help them to feel part of it.

10. How will you work with others to achieve success?

LPS clubs could be an example; I have helped to build it to one of the biggest in Europe.

Candidate for Division C Director : Robert Wyatt

1. How long have you been a Toastmaster?

Joined TM in December 2009 so just over 7 years. My first meeting was in Croydon and I participated in TT where the Topics Master was Dave Longley. Then I migrated to Purley Speakers when it opened in 2011.



2. How have you served as a leader in Toastmasters?

Since July 2014, when I became the President of Purley Speakers. Followed by my term as Area Director of Area K59 from July 2015 to June 2016. Since July 2016 I have been Assistant Divisional Director of Division C (Programme Quality).

3. What has been your greatest achievement in Toastmasters so far?

At Club level taking Purley speakers from <18 members to Presidents Distinguished during my Presidential year of 2014/2015. The achievement was based upon recruiting new members plus the breadth of Educational awards across CC,CL, Advanced Speaking and Advanced Leadership roles. Further, the handover to 2015/2016 included 3 x Members who had almost completed their Awards as C.C. (x2) plus 1 x C.L.

Beyond Club level, the achievement as Area Director of Area K59. Two AD achievements are

1. Coaching LEWISHAM committee to convert guests into members
2. Mentoring CITICRIERS through various sessions as the G.E.

4. What has been your greatest challenge?

Installing a sense of 'momentum' with those corporate clubs which met too infrequently and with too few members.

Their lack of momentum contributed to an insular atmosphere – which meant the clubs were not participating in the ‘wider world’ of Toastmasters.

5. Why are running for this District Leadership Role? Why now?

This opportunity comes at an appropriate moment to take advantage of my ‘incremental’ (and successive) experience of previous roles from Club President / Area Director / Assistant Divisional Director. In addition, I have the experience of three International conferences to share with Clubs and Members.

6. What is your vision for the role

Inspire people to ‘speak out’ by acquiring communication and leadership skills.
In other words, we all have a ‘voice’, but not all us make use of it !

7. How will you go about achieving this vision?

- Emphasise the impact of a memorable ‘Member Experience’
- I call this ‘Fun with Focus’
- This helps to keep the ‘Toastmasters Promise’ prominent
- Convert Guests into Members more quickly
- Which will shorten lifecycle to completion of CC and CL manuals.
- Supported by increased inter-accountability between Club members

8. How do you plan to achieve Distinguished status?

Distinguished Division requires 50% of club base (1st July) to achieve Distinguished plus 1 x new club (whilst care not to lose any Clubs during the year). My plan will be

- Target of all Clubs to achieve Distinguished
- One new club per Area
- Clinical identification of ‘vulnerable’ clubs at start of year = potential losses
- Encourage ‘variety’ in format per club to stimulate loyalty and retention

9. What is the greatest challenge you may face as District Leader?

Corporates which fail to ‘engage’ // and any club with < 20 members.

Specifically, a Division will be challenged when Clubs ‘try to do their own thing’ and /or have too few members to maintain their momentum.

10. How will you work with others to achieve success?

- ‘Best practice’ : Collaboration / Cohesion / Communication
- Highlight the best items of best practice from frequent collaboration between the Area Directors and Assistant Divisional Directors,
- Put these into ‘action’ through disciplined Cohesion
- Share the results and impact with appropriate Communication.

Candidate for Division H Director : Arnaud Sartre



1. How long have you been a Toastmaster?

I joined Toastmasters almost 4 years ago in April 2013, out of interest from members who invited me to attend.

2. How have you served as a leader in Toastmasters?

Almost upon joining, I was offered a role as Sergeant At Arms for my Club (The Toasted Sandwich); having only attended meetings for about 3 months, I had little idea this would be the start of a great learning curve.

The following year (2014/15), I was propelled to Club President; an honour given that year saw the Club reach an important milestone, 10 years! The following year, I took charge of the online PR for the Club. This was also a chance as Immediate Past President to coach new committee members and share what I had learned. I am currently Area Director H37, and appointed Assistant Division H Director.

3. What has been your greatest achievement in Toastmasters so far?

My greatest achievement so far is no doubt being President of my home Club that achieved President Distinguished for the first time. It was really exciting to be part of a team achieving so much in a year, and on our 10th anniversary. This accomplishment also cemented the idea and clearly demonstrated that a focused group of individuals can deliver more than the sum of its parts.

4. What has been your greatest challenge?

This is an ongoing challenge, coaching a struggling Club. I have to admit the challenge is greater than I was expecting and is definitely requiring a lot more hands-on activities than originally envisioned. Now this is learning, and I hope to turn it around in the coming period.

5. Why are running for this District Leadership Role? Why now?

I have so far enjoyed my Area Director role and wish to expand my understanding of the organisation further to benefit a wider range of members. I genuinely believe Toastmasters changes people's lives; in fact, I received a letter from a past member with this quote "it has undoubtedly changed my life". The effort we put in as members and leaders in developing others makes a difference and a difference that matters.

6. What is your vision for the role?

Excellence across all Areas

7. How will you go about achieving this vision?

Multi-faceted approach: building effective relationships with District leaders and Area Directors; Encourage cross Area interactions and identify growth opportunities for aspiring leaders.

8. How do you plan to achieve Distinguished status?

Set goals early and revise periodically, seek regular feedback from Area Directors and support Area needs. Understand baseline from each area and identify opportunities for excellence. This is not a sprint but rather a marathon, good pacing throughout the year will deliver results.

9. What is the greatest challenge you may face as District Leader?

I expect the coming year to bring a fair share of challenges, from the introduction of Pathways to retention of members. As a role renewing yearly, as well as all other district leadership roles, a priority will be to build effective communication channels to avoid unnecessary challenges early on.

10. How will you work with others to achieve success?

I will bring my enthusiasm and laid back yet focused approach to the role. Understanding individual's priorities and aligning with the District goals will be key to success early on. Firm believer of human interactions, I will endeavour to meet key stakeholders in person regularly.

Candidate for Division J Director : Alison Morris

1. How long have you been a Toastmaster?

Since February 1998

2. How have you served as a leader in Toastmasters?

Yes I have been on the Club Exec a number of times, as President, SAA, Membership, Treasurer and currently Area Director, I have organised and run Club, Area and Division Comps and been on the organisation team of a couple of District Conferences



3. What has been your greatest achievement in Toastmasters so far?

Staying In and meeting and marrying my husband! And being a charter member and sponsor for a new Club.

4. What has been your greatest challenge?

Keeping motivated and motivating others

5. Why are running for this District Leadership Role? Why now?

I never thought I would be suitable for this but I wanted to complete my DTM and thought I would do the Area role but having got more involved and being given positive encouragement to go further I feel there are more things I would like to achieve.

6. What is your vision for the role?

To improve the Division by giving more support to the Area Directors, even now I don't feel the Area Directors are given enough help and support to do the job to the best of their ability

7. How will you go about achieving this vision?

To try and have division area training and to hopefully get the support of the District to have a set session for Area Directors at the DOT which will help and guide them specifically. A couple of pages in the District guidebook is not enough, as far as I am concerned, I have mentioned this to District exec members.

8. How do you plan to achieve Distinguished status?

To get the Area Directors on board, set agreed goals to promote club growth in their Areas and Area growth within the Division. It all has to come from Clubs and to do this we need the Area Directors on board. If this means I go and visit every AD on a one to one basis this is not a problem

9. What is the greatest challenge you may face as District Leader?

Probably not getting frustrated at people who look on the negative side of things without looking at the possibilities but I have had a lot of practice with getting the best out of people working in a volunteer environment where money is not the leading factor.

10. How will you work with others to achieve success?

Find out what they need help with to succeed and do whatever I can to help them achieve what they want to do.

Candidate for Division J Director : John Christie

1. How long have you been a Toastmaster?

I have been in Toastmasters since 5 January 2008 – 9 years.

2. How have you served as a leader in Toastmasters?

I have served in leadership positions from Sergeant at Arms, VP Education, President, Immediate Past President at Voice of Wales Toastmasters Club. Area 62 Governor (before split) Ambassador Revitalised Education Program leading to the current Pathways program - Area 62. Sponsor, VP Membership – Porthcawl Speakers.

Assistant Division J Director 2016 – 2017 with Rick Cooper as Divisional Director I have had a steady rise in Toastmasters getting a solid grounding in the necessary roles to lead a Club to success. My Club was Select Distinguished when I was President and my Area was Presidents Distinguished. I have organised a successful Divisional Conference having a specific vision and values. for delivery. The team of members from a variety of Areas and Clubs contributed to the success under my leadership and direction.

3. What has been your greatest achievement in Toastmasters so far?

My greatest achievement so far is the sponsorship of Porthcawl Speakers Club and working with team colleagues to find 22 members in ten meetings which is good for a Community Club. We are in the process of finding and training members to take over from the four person start-up team. I was Best Toastmaster of the year in 2011 and Best Mentor and several other Mentoring Awards.

4. What has been your greatest challenge?

My greatest challenge has been juggling roles in the two Clubs that I belong to. The candidate for Club Treasurer was unable to proceed with the role and we need to appoint another member, train them and hand over the accounts so there are three signatories.

5. Why are running for this District Leadership Role? Why now?

I wish to use my experience within and outside Toastmasters to help to make District 91 very successful in the UK and in the world. I have been on the Board of Young Enterprise in Gloucestershire since 2007. I also served as a business advisor to Boards of Directors in Year 12 companies in a range of schools for ten years. I am a Gloucester Harbour Trustee on their Board and I am a trustee for Lydney Yacht Club. Growing my capabilities with this senior role for my benefit and in my other Board level volunteer roles will help my development. I was Young Enterprise Business Advisor of the Year in 2009 for the South West region – out of 350 advisors. I wish to help direct the success of Division J to further the aims of the District in order to provide more opportunities for members and new members to benefit from the confidence building aspects of Toastmasters in speaking and leadership. This will be a challenging role with the introduction of Pathways into Clubs in September 2017 according to the current timetable. Now is the right time to bring my experience to serve the District. I am available, not fazed by travelling and committed to serving in the role.

6. What is your vision for the role?

My vision is to lead, supervise and support the Area Directors and through them the Club Officers to obtain support for their goals leading to District goals. My primary goal is to ensure that each Club sets and achieves their Missions and serves their members for the greatest good. I shall be setting Divisional goals, coordinating Divisional activities such as Conferences and Contests with Area Directors and assisting with the training of Area and Club leaders. I shall be liaising with the District Director and the District team to aid the setting of goals and to implement them.



7. How will you go about achieving this vision?

I will achieve the Vision by serving the District and the Area Directors. My focus will be to keep knowledgeable about events and policy and methods of delivery. My style will be proactive in predicting possible problems the team may encounter. Vision and Values will be communicated early in the Toastmasters year. Direction from me and from the District team will be communicated to Area Directors. There will be persuasion to reinforce the vision and values. Support will be provided where there are challenges. This support will be indirect or direct. As far as possible and for those who are interested – we will form a development team. There will be personal and group recognition and appreciation. I am good with facts and figures. I like to gather the facts listening to points of view and then make a decisive decision where appropriate. I wish to be a role model and practice the core values of respect, integrity, service and excellence, personally and as a team.

8. How do you plan to achieve Distinguished status?

I plan to achieve distinguished status by setting this as an early goal for Area Directors and Club Presidents and communicating how the Division can achieve this goal. This process starts in the Clubs with Moments of Truth; setting as far as possible, a great, consistent, member experience. Clubs should be serving their members in the best ways with helping members achieve Club and Members goals. We will be working as a Divisional team to have no net Club loss, 40% of the Club base at Distinguished at least for Distinguished Division and will be aiming for Presidents Distinguished Division with 50% of Clubs and a net growth of one club. Areas will also be encouraged to set goals for the Distinguished Area by working through the Divisional Success Plan.

9. What is the greatest challenge you may face as District Leader?

The greatest Challenge will be communicating effectively with busy, volunteer Area Directors and working beneficially with the District Leadership team to set the goals and to deliver the goals to achieve success.

10. How will you work with others to achieve success?

I will chair the Divisional Council to set the Vision and Values for the year. I will delegate the direction and tasks to the Area Directors. I will participate in District Training of the Divisional and Area Directors. I will set out the best ways and times to contact me and be available when necessary. Divisional Conferences will be planned through the Area Directors as early as possible and marketed effectively to have as many attendees as possible.

Candidate for Division K Director : Tomasz Kropiewnicki

1. How long have you been a Toastmaster?

Since December 2011

2. How have you served as a leader in Toastmasters?

Yes, from early on, but in terms of offices

2012/2013 – Club Secretary

2013/2014 - Club VP Education + Assistant Area Governor

2014/2015 - Area Governor + Chair of the district alignment committee

2015/2016 - Club Secretary + Assistant Area Director + Member of the district alignment committee

2016/2017 – Club Secretary + Area Director



3. What has been your greatest achievement in Toastmasters so far?

- Discovering and learning servant leadership as a model that is aligned with my own values and I can be used in all the leadership situations I face
- Successful D95 Alignment in 2015
- Wonderful friendships I made all across Europe and the ease I can make them now
- Chartering 3 clubs as the AG and sponsoring two other clubs in the charter process

4. What has been your greatest challenge?

- The perceived temporary nature in Toastmasters, people come and go
- Aligning the German speaking divisions (A,F,I) in D95 – thou I was warned and prepared for the late night negotiations on the conference

5. Why are running for this District Leadership Role? Why now?

- The D91 team is a bunch of great and friendly people that I enjoy working with
- As stated in point 3 I lead by serving and I want to have a more strategic role to grow myself further

6. What is your vision for the role?

- Focus on leadership, on the club and area levels so that we will not struggle with filling the offices. I would like to do it by handing out leadership opportunities and focusing providing them the opportunities to grow (organising events, marketing communication, chartering clubs) I also want to promote the club committee membership and continue in training/promoting the proper club elections/AGM
- Bring DivK to select distinguished

7. How will you go about achieving this vision?

- Get the Area Directors to be a part of the vision, it's their division, and their members (so the vision may change). I will conduct a vision/mission workshop with them
- Coach Area Directors and offer a helping hand with my experience and internal drive/energy

8. How do you plan to achieve Distinguished status?

- Building true awareness and starting early

9. What is the greatest challenge you may face as District Leader?

- Finding leaders to become the ADs, as Wole did I will probably be asked to help filling the missing AD slots.
- Short lifespan of the office in which I will have to quickly build an effective team

10. How will you work with others to achieve success?

- Frequent and direct communication
- Use of technology to aid the process above
- Visit significant occasions (councils, contests, AGMs) ad much as I can

Candidate for Division L Director : Seema Menon

1. How long have you been a Toastmaster?

I have been with Toastmasters for 2 years and 8 months (Joined in May 2014).

2. How have you served as a leader in Toastmasters?

I was a Treasurer at Harrovians in the first year (Jul14-Jun15) of joining toastmasters, then President of Harrovians in the 2nd year (July15-Jun16) followed by Area Director in the 3rd year (from July 2016).



3. What has been your greatest achievement in Toastmasters so far?

Personally, giving my Ice Breaker speech at Harrovians and winning the Best Speaker award that evening has been a great motivation. Coordinating with MIND (Harrow) on a Speechcraft initiative in Area 61, however, tops my list at present. There are people undergoing training to rehabilitate themselves into the community and secure full time work; I am immensely satisfied in being able to help them by introducing them to toastmasters. I intuit this would provide the Speechcrafters the requisite confidence to go and share their stories whilst helping others in the process. I acknowledge the unwavering support from experienced toastmasters (like Steve Brewer, David Phelops, Warren Sheng, Indra Sikdar, amongst others) from various clubs in Area 61 who contributed their valuable support towards the initiative. The larger goal and objective is to form a new club within MIND Harrow where members can support and handhold each other in their journey at their own pace.

4. What has been your greatest challenge?

Collaboration between all the clubs within Area 61 and engender an environment where they learn from each other in the process has been my greatest challenge thus far. It has taken time and effort and I began testing this while being President at Harrovians concurrently doing jointly organized competitions with Watford Speakers. Transferring the vision to each club committee, keeping people enthused to the idea has been an incredible challenge which I reckon is bearing fruition. The clubs have started sharing ideas and some activities in this direction includes:

- Introduction of Tall Tales Competition within the 4 clubs in the Area,
- Jointly organised Speechcraft sessions,
- Area newsletter,
- Jointly organised Socials like barbeque, Christmas dinner, etc.

5. Why are you running for this District Leadership Role? Why now?

I was apprehensive when I accepted the role of a Treasurer initially and could never visualise the kind of confidence it would instill in me to take up higher responsibilities and challenges. I can see the improvement in terms of Leadership attributes and people skills within me and feel I can negotiate bigger challenges after having worked as an Area director. Galvanising a team, particularly in a voluntary capacity, without the members having any hierarchical allegiance to me such as that of a corporate structure, I believe I have delivered my role with solidity of intent, execution and pride in accomplishment. Introduction of 'Pathways Education' this year would make us experience newer challenges and I would like to be associated with this mission as a catalyst towards its implementation. I see the Division Director role as an opportunity for change and further growth. I would also apply to Toastmasters, my learning imbibed through a couple of transition projects at my work place.

6. What is your vision for the role?

- To work with the Area Directors and other Division Directors collaboratively to provide the best possible member experience, enhancing member retention by reducing the churn % and building membership within the division.
- To ensure inclusivity and support communities to set up Toastmaster Clubs tailored to their needs.
- To fulfil the District 91 mission and achieve recognition in the Distinguished Club and Area Programmes.

- To work towards making the transition to Pathways as smooth as possible.

7. How will you go about achieving this vision?

- Acclimatise myself with the present situation after consultation with the outgoing Area Directors and Division Director. I would confer a meeting with Area Directors to discuss their goals and expectations that would provide me with clarity about the resources needed. I intend to formulate a Division Goal sheet with specific and mutually agreed timelines which would be periodically reviewed by the team.
- I would like to set up a mentoring team of Area directors who would be able to brainstorm and share their experiences to creatively solve the challenges (especially with Pathways transition) that others may face during the course of the year. This will augment the process of skill building necessary for higher roles within the Division for the next year.
- Provide avenues for setting up inclusive clubs and explore opportunities for setting up specialised clubs focussing on debates, etc, with the team. This will also help with fulfilment opportunities for HPL projects.
- Support intra and inter division opportunities as much as possible. Encourage and empower the Area directors to work collaboratively on various projects.
- Get an understanding of the speech slot demand and capacity of the current clubs (just like my predecessor did) and evaluate if there is need to introduce new clubs, add additional meeting dates, etc
- Proactively share information about Pathways to encourage ease of transition within the Areas and clubs.
- And all this while having fun.

8. How do you plan to achieve Distinguished status?

I inexorably believe, it is possible to achieve Distinguished status if the team cohesively works towards a unified mission. I intend to regularly discuss with Area Directors while empowering them to work with their clubs on the gameplan that they have agreed upon. When the Pathways education programme is introduced, I will work with the Area directors to select the education programme they would like to continue with for the year and support them to achieve that.

9. What is the greatest challenge you may face as District Leader?

Redundancies in corporate clubs within the Division and Implementing Pathways.

10. How will you work with others to achieve success?

- Provide high-value experience to each toastmaster member by supporting each Area Director to in turn support the Clubs, while empowering them to make decisions to achieve their Area goals.
- Provide dynamic support and have regular reviews to understand any new challenges especially during the transition phase of introducing Pathways.
- Develop communication network with other Division Directors to learn best practices and share with the team.
- Organise avenues for Speechcraft, HPLs, Tall Tales competitions, etc
- Try to retain same ethos, passion, spirit from before and take the Division to the next level.

Candidate for Division L Director : Simon Cooper

1. How long have you been a Toastmaster?

October 2004. Now a member of 3 clubs in London Division L.

2. How have you served as a leader in Toastmasters?

President of 2 clubs northern lights speakers and Excalibur advanced speakers club. Area governor in 2010-11, and assistant Division L director this year.



3. What has been your greatest achievement in Toastmasters so far?

On leadership as Excalibur president (see next question). In speeches getting to the Division level in all 4 speech contests in 2014-15 – within 2 years of the break-up of my marriage which inspired me to perform better.

4. What has been your greatest challenge?

As president of Excalibur in 2012-13. Moving the club out of a tiny room above a pub to Fitzrovia community centre where the membership grew. Turned a declining club into a dynamic group which has since enjoyed 5 years of uninterrupted growth under high profile presidents.

5. Why are running for this District Leadership Role? Why now?

The time is right. My marriage broke up in 2013 and I spent a few years adjusting to a new life. I feel I have now passed this stage and am willing to take on a fresh challenge especially as I have work more under control. I am also keen to assist during the transition to the new pathways programme for which I am an ambassador in Area L47.

6. What is your vision for the role?

Both helping to set up new clubs and helping struggling clubs which I believe should also have more prominence. Helping to raise awareness of the new educational program.

7. How will you go about achieving this vision?

By working with a team of area directors and club officers and encouraging mentorships for struggling clubs.

8. How do you plan to achieve Distinguished status?

Motivating my team of area directors and through them the club officers to make them more aware of the relevance and beneficial effects of their clubs achieving DCP status. My experience as Area governor also speaks for itself, as under my direction Area 47 achieved presidents distinguished area, and we set up 2 new clubs and helped a struggling one turn round it's fortunes.

9. What is the greatest challenge you may face as District Leader?

Dealing with Area directors and the personalities involved in this. This was a challenge I have dealt with from time to time in the organisation successfully. As area director I had to deal with 2 clubs with presidents not too keen on cooperating with my vision at first and they attained DC status. One year I was sergeant at arms on the committee of a club and worked with a very challenging president during the year – again around the time of my marriage breakdown – and I believe I helped this president have a successful year and achieve SDC status.

10. How will you work with others to achieve success?

Regular contact with my team of area directors - but to obtain their cooperation in working with them on a 'consultative basis' and listening to their suggestions and not a 'directional basis' which I feel doesn't work. I have worked with 2 Division directors who have been an inspiration and whose example I will follow – especially Andy O'Sullivan who was Division governor when I was Area governor, who continues to mentor me unofficially today.