



National Association of
NFU Group Secretaries

**AGM
2021**



Chairman's Annual Report

from NAGS Chairman, Gemma Heal



Report from NAGS Chairman Gemma Heal to the AGM 2021

Sitting down to pen this on a very Autumnal evening my first thoughts are that I don't know where this report will go.

Nick has covered the ALG year brilliantly, Rupert has tied up the membership and Peter has covered the numbers.

So what do I need to tell you?!

I guess my year has been very weighted to what traditionally was ALG work and I can talk for hours on that subject. It was always my ambition to have the two bodies of representation working closer together and whilst we kicked that off with a bang in 2020 I'm delighted we have now firmly cemented that way of working as business as usual.

Whilst all officeholders have met with Nick Watson individually in our agencies our first structured meeting is the 24th November so we are all looking forward to that. I am nervous of the brief that will have been provided to him about NAGS however reassured at the same time that he will review all things presented to him.

Nick Turner and I parted company disagreeing on the worth of NAGS communications in the pandemic (which I am not bitter about at all!) but Nick W and I have so far bonded over common topics such as silos, internal comms, transparency to the network and speed of messaging.

We also have our first face to face ALG since 2020 so an opportunity to demonstrate the value in engaging with agent representation with the body of agents that have done so much and given many many hours of consultation. We need to continually step up our ability to react in this forum for favour of choosing a test and learn environment which may circumnavigate the work and message that ALG have delivered.

The Mutual have not and will not admit they have had a scare on the "self employment" front with the likes of the Pimlico plumbers and uber cases however what I feel is more evident that ever is the very distinct change in language from all Mutual staff that we deal with. A colleague challenged the T & C scheme just last week with regards to the prescriptive nature of the ICC's and we were again assured it had been checked with the legal team.

We continue to watch this very closely and make reference to the legal counsel we sought in 2020 regarding agency law and FCA with regards to our relationship. It cites very clearly that the NFU M have to have a well-structured system of control over us to reduce the level of risk. The FCAs guidance justifies a reasonably close supervisory relationship between the NFUM and each of its ARs for policyholder protection however the regulatory framework must not be used to justify aggressive performance management of agents.

I'm pleased to report that other than one example we have not had to assist any colleagues as we have in the past with any element of their performance.



I can also report that again with the exception of very few isolated cases we have had reason to support less colleagues regarding their welfare following NFUM induced situations. This is a great position to be in right here and now but conscious that anything could change for anyone of us at any time.

There is a huge amount to come in 2022 so please be honest with yourselves and your partners and colleagues about your expectations, abilities and desires for the year as resilience may momentarily waiver.

With Rupert leaving the fold at the AGM we are losing a very skilled diplomat from the team that has over his two tenures helped resolve some dire situations with compassion and great ability. Thank you Rupert, you will however be retained to ground me when I'm angry and looking for a fight!

I'm delighted to be working with Nick, David and now Jo as your officeholder team for another year (if you'll have me) and need to thank them for their commitment.

All that remains is to say I hope to see you in Tortworth Court (home of the best NAGS conference ever in 2014) and then in Wales for the real deal in May 2022.

Have a great Christmas and don't worry, Bridge will fix it all!

Many thanks, Gemma

NAGS Chairman

