



104 London Debaters

Annual Report 2023

The committee 2022-2023

The Toastmaster-year runs from 1st July to 30th June.
Below is the current committee 2022-23:



Renata Bailey-Sokol
Immediate Past President



M. William Hagerup
Club President / PR



David Sexton
VP Education



Sasha Kovyazina
VP Membership



Paul R. Carroll, DCM
Founder and Treasurer



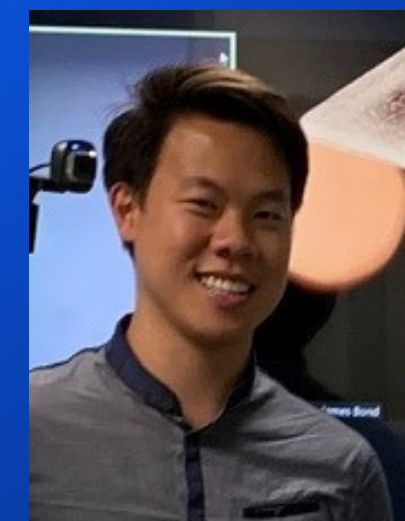
Camal Khan
Club Secretary/ Asst. membership



Ami Kotecha
VP Mentorship



Philip Corless
Sergeant at Arms



Li-Shing Ng
Committee Member



Kristina Bhuller
Committee Member

Meetings held so far in this TM year:

As of 3rd May we've held 20 debate meetings.

Stats recorded for 19 of these by Club Secretary Kamal:

2022: Transition from Zoom only to Zoom and hybrid at Russell Square

2023: Transition from hybrid to Zoom and in-person only at The Windsor Castle

Average attendance at meetings

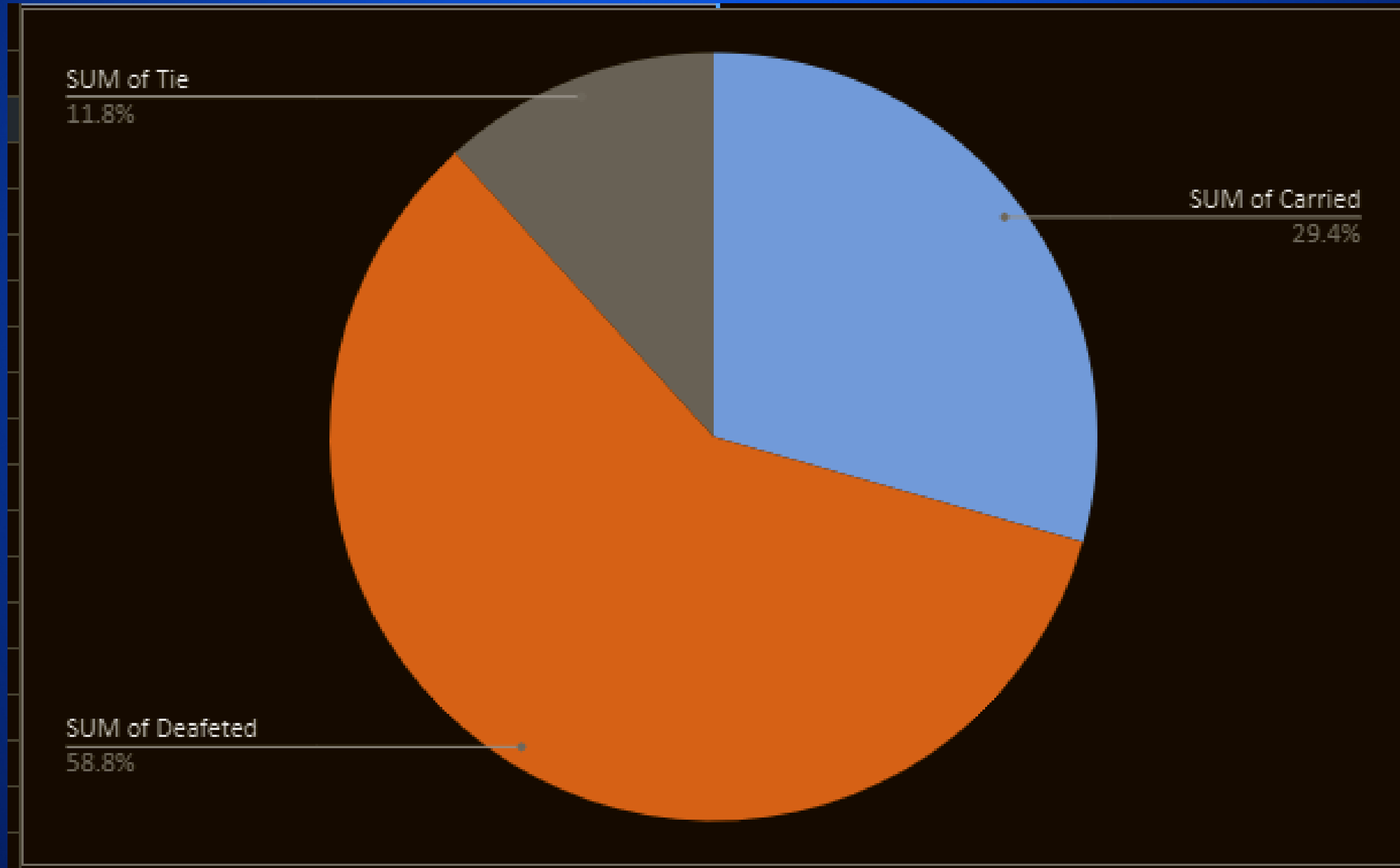
Zoom: 16

Room: 19

Total: 25

First non-hybrid meeting 25th April: 29 people, so well above average

Stats on debate results - motion Carried or Defeated



Goal for the period 2022-2023

To increase and stabilise membership at between 35-40 members
(from 27 members in July 2022).

On target (34 at present)

To achieve this we needed to:

- 1 - **recruit** through more active marketing
- 2 - **retain** through increased focus on the quality of the learning/debating experience



Toastmasters Educational Programme

I am proud to report that our club has achieved Distinguished Club status by earning five Distinguished Club Program (DCP) points this year. Given our focus on debating this is a solid achievement and a testament to the hard work and commitment of our committee members. Furthermore, I am delighted to inform you that our members have earned 5 educational awards (1 level 1 Pathway, 1 level 2, 1 level 3 and 1 level 4 and 1 level 5 Pathway). These awards signify their dedication to personal growth and development, and I am proud of all of our members who have invested their time and effort into enhancing their public speaking and leadership skills.

David Sexton -
VP Education

- **5 Distinguished Club Points**
- **5 Educational TM awards**
- **TT Competition win Area -
Paul Carroll**
- **Evaluation competition
wins Area & Division -
Sarah Beckwith**

Additionally, I am thrilled to share that Sarah has made it through to the district evaluation contest. This is a fantastic accomplishment and a great representation of the talent and dedication that we have in our club.

We have faced some challenges in filling certain meeting roles (particularly the functionary roles such as the Timekeeper, Zoom Master, and Sergeant at Arms), we were able to successfully fill these roles for the most part thanks to the support of some members going above and beyond. I'd encourage a more broader set of volunteers next year to help spread the load (ideally people will do at least 4 functionary roles a year to help spread the load).

Overall, I am proud of our club's accomplishments and I look forward to continuing to work with all of you to achieve even greater success in the future.

Membership

To make it easier to turn visitors and interested people into members, an online form was created by William and Sasha, and linked to directly from the website.



Sasha Kovyazina, VP Membership

Current membership as of 3rd May: 34
Up from 27 as of July 2022

- 29 people have applied through the Online form set up last year.
- Of ALL applicants, 60% have never been a Toastmaster:
- 13 of these have so far followed through and paid and of these:
- 11 have never been Toastmasters
- 2 are current or previous Toastmasters (this does not count previous members of 104 coming back).
- So in terms of NEW members, we are getting around 90% from outside TM (discounting returning 104 members).

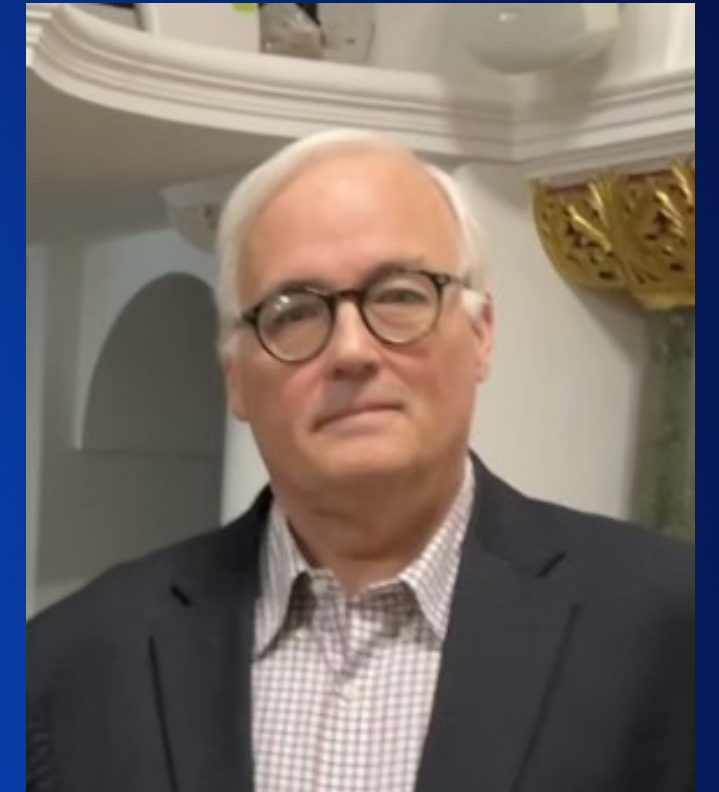
Club Accounts

Assets:

- **Balance as of 8th May 2023: £3461**
- £1050 recovered from Blue Orchid Hotel (deposit paid to former venue just as lockdown struck)
- We have been paying £750 per quarter for the venue at Russell Square
- Current venue, Windsor Castle do not charge us for the room, provided we spend around £200 on average at the bar

Liabilities:

- Toastmasters International is putting up its subscription fee, so for now we are keeping our membership fee at £70 to be ready for that and to have a reserve for other expenses - new committee to review
- Zoom to pay
- 2 x TM subscription fees for new members
- Windsor Castle may charge in future



Paul Carroll, DTM
Treasurer

Club Mentorship Programme

11 members have mentors
7 members are mentors

- All those who wished to have a mentor have been assigned one.
- We've had positive feedback on the usefulness of mentoring from several members
- Members who would like to have the Mentorship training can let Ami know



Ami Kotecha -
VP Mentorship

Mentoring is especially useful at 104, as we don't give individual feedback in meetings – as such the mentor can help with that and assist your individual progress as a debater and public speaker.

PR Work

The main task for the club's PR work has been to support the goal of growth by reaching out to a wider audience



William Hagerup
Club President / PR

- Building on Kamal's work in 21/22, we expanded the use of MailChimp to send out general invitation emails to all contacts.
- We grew the mailing list by harvesting email addresses from Zoom, where people had ticked a consent box to be sent emails - but many had not been transferred to the database

1st June 2022: 174 contacts

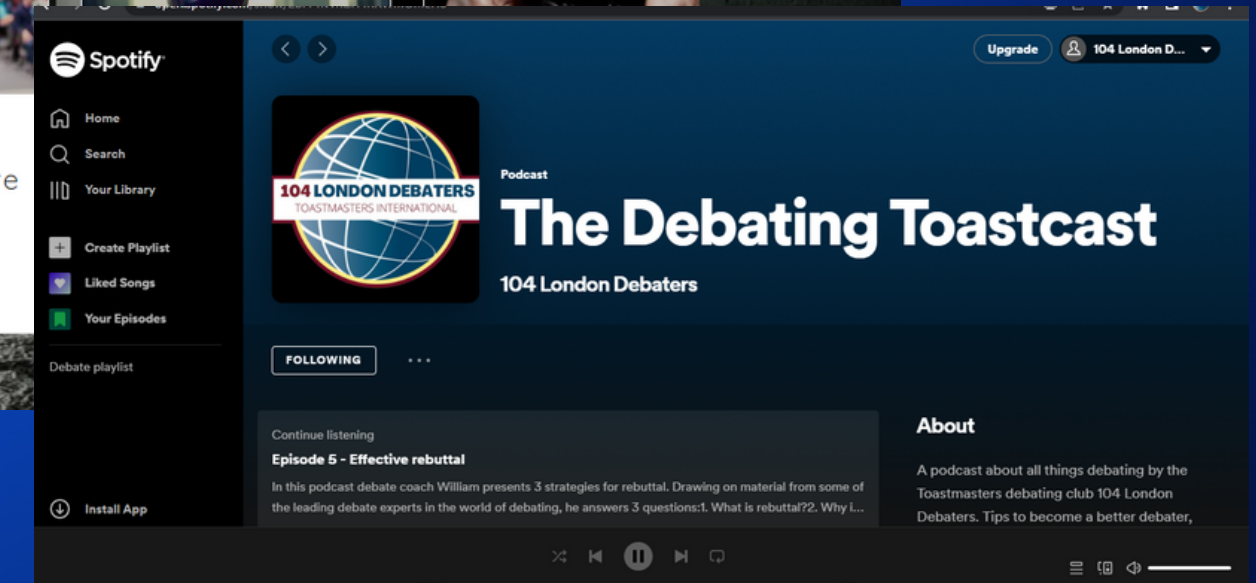
2nd May 2023: 557 contact



Li-Shing Ng
VP PR July-Dec 2022

1 – Recruiting new members/PR work

- **New club website** using a GoDaddy template created (tech help from former debater Rory Graves)
- **Club blog** (to increase Google hits) – Google ranking up from 8th to 3rd!
- Using **Evenbrite** to market our events to a broader audience
- Using **LinkedIn** to increase awareness among professionals
- Using **YouTube** to enable us to share videos
- In addition we continued to use MeetUp, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.
- In January we started the club podcast, **The Debaters Toastcast**; (as of 2nd May it's had 470 plays - 23 followers)



2 – Retaining members

To achieve the second part of the goal - to retain members - we continued our efforts to improve the quality of debates and directly linked to that the quality of the **educational experience** at 104. In particular to make all our collective knowledge and experience available to all members.

This we have tried to do through:

- An onboarding presentation/document created to introduce members to the most important aspects of 104 and Toastmasters
- Making sure everyone who wanted one got a mentor
- Creating Debate Coach guidelines to ensure a consistent approach and to make everyone aware of the resources available – the coach can direct debaters to these.
- Expanding pool of coaches
- Giving workshops
- Creating an Opening Speech template for Proposition
- Other helpful resources on club's website: Documents and Resources section
- Making sure that members who take roles such as Table Topics Master are introduced to the Club Wiki, and given a proper briefing about the role and what is required.
- Different debating formats have been tried to make meetings interesting and provide fresh challenges.
- We have sought interaction with other clubs for variety and for the social aspect.
- Club socials have been held/planned
- We have worked towards making workshops more regular and to ensure they are relevant for our debaters' needs.
- The club blog and podcast are also part of the educational efforts, creating easy-to-access repositories of knowledge and experience gained in the club

Workshops

Held:

- Paul Carroll on Preparing for Proposition
- Lo Luong Lo on Preparing for Opposition
- William Hagerup on Effective Rebuttal



Our founding member, Paul Carroll, DTM



Debate Coach and former Club President,
Lo Luong Lo

Planned:

- Lo Luong Lo on Logical Fallacies (30th May)

Further topics to come:

Use of rhetoric
Voice projection



Club President William Hagerup

Club Activities Survey

A questionnaire was sent out in March to all members; 70% of active members responded.

Key findings:

69% happy with current meeting format

25% have Prepared Debate as their favourite part

65% happy to exchange Table Topics for a **Q&A session** during a Prep. Debate *sometimes*

52% wanted special format debates twice per quarter

64% wanted voting to be secret (electronic or with paper slips)

78% happy with how debate topics are selected

78% wanted to attend one (56%) or two (22 %) **workshops** per quarter

52% wanted to attend more club social (30% don't know) preferably on a Saturday afternoon/evening)

Follow-up from these results:

- Workshop held on Effective Rebuttal - William
(recorded version on podcast now)
- Workshop planned on Logical Fallacies - Lo (30th May)
- Special debate with extended Q&A planned
- Club social on Saturday 20th planned (Speakers' Corner)
- Other special formats and events being planned
- Practice of electronic voting continued

Other activities



Bill Moss competed in the Humorous Speech category and Paul Carroll won the Table Topic Speech Competition in the Area Competition, Autumn 2022

Our club was visiting Opposition at Debate London, debating whether salaries should be disclosed - it was a draw



And then Debate London was visiting club with us, opposing the motion THW end military aid to the Ukraine. The motion was defeated, but with a swing to the Proposition (us!).



Sarah Beckwith first won the Area Evaluation Competition, then went on to win the Division B (D91) evaluation competition, Spring 2023



December Social – or Advent Tide Party, if you prefer – at Casa Madeira in Vauxhall



President William was guest debater at Debate London, defending the motion that 2023 will be better than 2022 - it was a draw

Nomination Committee 2023

AKA "Leadership Committee" within Toastmasters



Dr. Christopher Walker
Previous President 104
and current District Chief Judge



Renata Bailey-Sokol
Immediate Past President



Joann Walsh
Previous President 104



104 London Debaters – May 2023