

ASPRA Magazine – Ad Manager’s Report

June 2018

The May (Summer) issue ran to 40 pages – and was made fatter by the quality of the paper. It felt good. Flicking through the magazine it looked good, too, with colour spread all the way through the magazine. New advertisers pushed the issue size up, not least of all because maintaining a decent advertisement/editorial ratio meant that editorial paging increased too.

This will become a problem for us. Increasing the advertisement volume is fairly straightforward, but the revenues generated will not completely cover the accompanying increases in editorial pagination, issue sizes, and printing costs. One solution would be to put up the advertisement rate again. Spring Park Residents’ Association charges roughly 65% more than we do (£104 for a full page ad), which makes their SPAN magazine self-funding.

The modest subscription price increase put forward by the Chairman at the AGM in April was voted down by a disappointingly significant majority of attendees. The two main arguments against an increase seem to have been that the magazine was looking better than it had been, so it would naturally attract new members. And, second, that ASPRA’s bank account was also looking better. We decided not to raise the price by £1, the cost of a packet of crisps. We kept the price at £4, the cost of a pint of beer.

As the membership report (Item 11, later) dated 10 June shows, 254 members had paid up so far. A year ago, on 5 June 2017, 291 members had paid up. This might not be significant, but as a response to the full-colour 40-page magazine that went out with the subs envelope it’s not particularly encouraging.

Our bank balance looks healthy, but the figures are a little misleading. Nearly all our advertisers have opted to pay for three issues upfront. This means that without bringing in more ad revenue (and the consequences of this – see above) the apparently healthy balance will reduce with every issue we publish.

New advertisers are in the pipeline. The revenue created, though, may not cover the increase in printing costs as things stand. It is a great shame, in our view, that members chose not to put up the subscription price when they had the opportunity.

Colin Gamm
11 June 2018