

Three year plan to shape WEA Curriculum

by Pete Caldwell, Regional Secretary for the West Midlands and Peter Templeton, Director of Education, Quality and Strategy

The WEA's National Executive Committee recently adopted a strategy paper entitled WEA Curriculum in 2008. We'll briefly cover the main points of the strategy and then dwell slightly longer on what it means for our 'liberal adult education' work. We hope this will encourage WEA News readers to join in the discussion and give views and suggestions.

The strategy sets out what we want the WEA's provision to look like in 2008, given the current internal and external environment, and with reference to the WEA's principles of reaching those that have missed out on education, working democratically with students and linking learning to citizenship and social purpose.

There will be 'streams' of related provision that relate to large groups of potential students; crucial partnerships such as those with trade unions that anchor our work outside the WEA as well as within it; a 'community of tutors', and an influential role for volunteers as active citizens - building the WEA but also campaigning for our educational vision in local and Regional communities. We will address the government's skills agenda by courses using our experience in developing confidence and broader educational and transferable problem solving skills amongst 'non-participating' adults in workplaces and communities.

In order to achieve this, the WEA's
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Restructuring for WEA in North East

Nigel Todd, Regional Secretary for the North East, announced plans for the restructuring of the Region to a meeting of staff on 18 April. The proposals have received full backing from the Regional Committee.

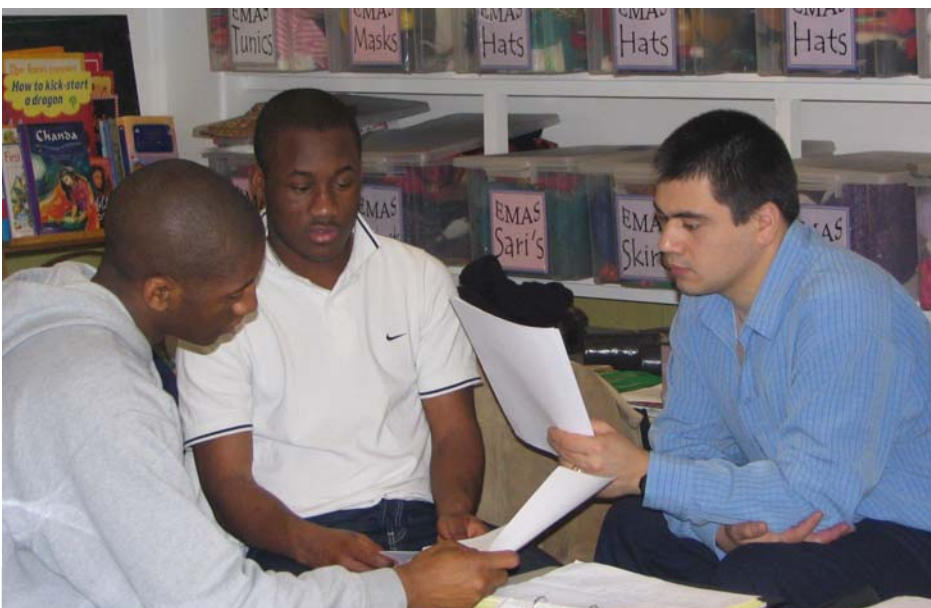
The necessity for radical changes in the Region was highlighted, partly drawn from a survey of staff views and experience. These shifts in direction include a robust response to inspection; a review of priorities, targets and job roles, and the need to embed balanced budgets.

Strengths were also identified, including course provision and its often dramatic impact on learners; interest from potential partner organisations, and staff commitment. As Nigel points out, "we do some brilliant things in the Region, and have creative staff, but the current structures prevent us from playing to our strengths as a Region."

The restructuring will enable the WEA in the North East to respond to local, regional and national priorities. As one example, there are plans to build up the WEA presence in Tyne and Wear and Northumberland — areas which contain around half the population of the Region and are likely to become even more important with the implementation of the government's Northern Way strategy.

A new staffing structure has been put forward, and a two-week consultation period is underway. The new structure will come into full effect from August this year.

Any staff or voluntary member in the North East who needs further information should contact Christine Foster in the first instance on 0191 4618100 or cfoster@wea.org.uk.



Students on a WEA course in London that trains people to become Community Interpreters. This course would now fall under the Community Development curriculum area.

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work has been organised into ten curriculum management areas, each with a curriculum leader in every Region supported by a national network. The intention is that the curriculum leaders and teams begin to actively shape the way we provide that subject area. We want to see sharing of good practice to make greater use of the creativity and initiative of WEA course tutors. We're also looking for Regions to think and plan in a much more structured way about how a student's interest in a particular subject area can be encouraged and developed. This means providing courses that lead on from each other, in depth and width, and building and consolidating links with other organisations such as universities, libraries and museums and local societies. None of this is new but the intention is for it to be much more systematic and thorough, and it is hoped that an exciting and creative tension will develop between local and curriculum perspectives on course provision.

A crucial part of the curriculum strategy is where we go with that part of our work variously described as 'general programme', traditional liberal adult education or the 'great tradition'. These terms summarise a century of educational activity stretching back to the early three-year tutorial classes. The WEA remains a substantial provider of short, non-certificated courses in subjects like history, archaeology and literature, whilst other government-funded providers including university extra mural departments, Local Education Authorities and Further

Education colleges are providing less of this type of work than ever before. Government policy is actively re-shaping adult education and training towards vocationalism and qualifications, although student demand for more liberal 'learning for learning's sake' remains strong.

Within the curriculum strategy we talk about a 'revived great tradition'. This will involve concentrating on subjects within the broad 'humanities' curriculum area and reviewing our commitment to some other curriculum areas (such as health and fitness, or visual arts) where they are not part of a widening participation or 'first steps' route back into education. Within the humanities curriculum we need to re-connect – in an interactive way - with student experience in the way that iconic figures like Tawney did with social history and Richard Hoggart with popular culture.

We also need to tackle the issue of 'standards' or quality assurance. These are not the same thing as qualifications, taking examinations or necessarily undertaking written work. They are about ensuring that students are provided with a challenging learning experience in which we develop their understanding of the subject as well as their skills in learning. It is also about encouraging students to develop their interests through other courses (and a potential partnership with the Open University is a hopeful sign here), through membership of a group or society or through further individual or informal study, increasingly making use of the internet. Few readers will balk at this; the challenge will be to use the

contemporary methodology of the 'staged approach' to structure and record these processes.

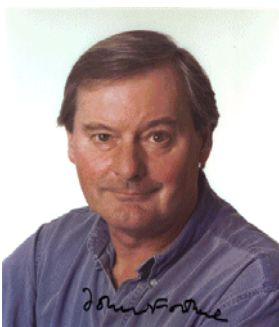
Hopefully we have conveyed the idea that, whilst the curriculum strategy sets out the broad line of march, it also offers an opportunity – and indeed a responsibility – for us all to review, scrutinise and develop our educational work. And that ought to be in the best tradition of the WEA and adult education.

Curriculum areas

The WEA curriculum is now divided into the ten areas listed below. Every Region has a member of staff who is responsible for each curriculum area; staff can find out who these are on the Curriculum Management section of FirstClass.

- a. **Foundation and Access Studies**
Skills for Life (literacy, language and numeracy) and access to HE studies
- b. **Information and Communications Technology**
- c. **Schools and Parenting**
Including Family learning and Helping in Schools
- d. **Visual, Performing Arts and Media**
- e. **Health, Fitness and Personal Development**
- f. **Humanities, Languages, Literature and Social Studies**
- g. **Community Development, Citizenship and International Studies**
- h. **Trade Union Learning**
- i. **Professional Development**
- j. **Environmental Studies and Science**

Win tickets to see a satirical masterclass with John Fortune



To celebrate Adult Learners' Week this year, London Region has enlisted the help of humorist and actor John Fortune for an evening of light-hearted learning and discussion on the subject of adult education and government funding.

We have two free tickets to give away to one lucky reader. The event takes place at the Abbey Community Centre in Westminster, London on Wednesday 25th May from 6.30pm. To enter the draw for a pair of tickets please send your name, address and a daytime telephone number by Tuesday 10th May to Tim Arnold, 'No Laughing Matter' prize draw, WEA London Region, 4 Luke Street, London, EC2A 4XW.

The sender of the first card out of the bag will be notified accordingly as the winner.



Richard Crisp, Branch Secretary for Exeter, on planning provision and plans for a volunteers' handbook

publicity can have is provided by Maidenhead Branch of Southern Region, where Branch Secretary Liz Crathorne and the Branch Commit-

In the last issue of WEA News, I suggested that an unvarying role of Branch Members is to keep in touch with the wants of local students. I then went on to comment on poor class sizes. Could it be, I wonder, that the fact of the latter in many areas is due to blinkered thinking in the former? Do we have poor class sizes because we are offering the wrong product to the wrong customers?

How do Branches choose what courses to run? A recent Awareness Day in Birmingham threw up some interesting points. Course subjects may typically be chosen by Committee members due to their preferences or because a (new) tutor presents their offerings impressively. No wonder we don't reach new or potential new students! Where do their views come into that consideration? Branch members will need to think more inclusively and less inwardly in future.

An opportunity is offered by the reclassification of our educational programs from the historically arisen Community, General and Workplace divisions to the ten new WEA Curriculum Areas. With the appointment of Regional Curriculum Area Leaders, the talents of existing tutors may be applied to any student group, across the old divides.

Another factor resulting in poor class sizes is insufficient or ill-timed publicity. Be under no illusion, the more effort you put into advertising and publicity, the greater the student numbers you will recruit. We know that our product is good, and there are people out there who would like to take part. Who better to do the legwork to find these people than Branch members? It does take effort however.

A good example of the effect that

tee invest annually in producing and distributing 3,500 copies of their course brochure at a cost of about £500. This year, Maidenhead has so far enrolled 491 students, of whom over 150 are completely new to the WEA, and the Branch is thriving.

We know the failure rate and cost of new start-up class topics is high, so why not try a half-day lecture during the spring or summer to test the popularity of the idea and to recruit for a follow-up course? Such one-day workshops can be financially profitable for Branches and should perhaps be more widely promoted. With a popular tutor, a topic of wide appeal, targeted advertising and a suitably accommodating venue, profits of many hundreds of pounds can be achieved. It can also help promote the WEA to a wider audience. Branches can be and feel much more in control of such events and reap the rewards. With perhaps one or two big efforts a year, volunteers are perhaps at their most effective.

Please contact me for input on Branch issues for the next WEA News at rcrip@wea.org.uk or via the postal address of Quick House on the back page.

Campaigning for liberal education

WEA Ilford Branch has co-ordinated a campaign to defend funding for the WEA's open-access (General programme) courses, which offer opportunities for self-improvement and intellectual engagement to tens of thousands of learners each year.

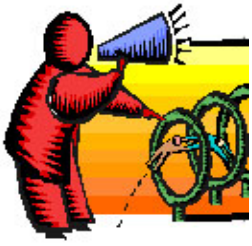
The Branch Committee, led by Secretary Christine Poutney, sent letters to the local Learning and Skills Council (LSC), to local MPs of both main parties and to WEA classes in the area in order to encourage individual students to pick up the trail. Letters were also sent to two government ministers: Kim Howells (who is Minister of State for Lifelong Learning, Further and Adult Education) and Ivan Lewis (who is Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Adult Learning).

The letters pointed out that the contract that gives the LSC its funding asks it to make available "study which does not lead to qualifications" and "personal interest" programmes—as well as the vocational and first steps learning that is recognised as essential and fits the current government agenda. WEA open-access courses have long provided exactly the sort of lifelong learning that is intended, but the Branch letter raises concerns that the LSC's current strategies do not value lifelong learning highly enough.

Volunteers' Handbook on the way

In the last WEA News, I highlighted the then main activity of the Voluntary Participation Group (VPG) - namely the running of WEA Awareness Day events. Whilst these continue, the Group will now work on the compilation of a national Handbook for Volunteers. However, the VPG does not expect to have to 'reinvent the wheel'. I feel sure that lurking in various WEA offices or Branch members' homes, there are examples of such handbooks. Perhaps due to our recent turbulent history good examples of local, district or regional documentation have been suppressed or forgotten.

The VPG would welcome sight of any relevant documents either electronically or in hard copy, even if they are not best current practice. Please contact Christine Mollan (on cmollan@wea.org.uk or via the postal address of Quick House on the back page).



Speakers' Corner

In this edition, **Audrey Stewart and Frank Evans** exchange views on quality procedures in the Association

Dear Frank,

I read your article in the last WEA News with interest and as you raise some important questions I'd like to respond to some of them.

The Association has been able to claim 'different from other adult educational organisations' status for some time. This has been helpful in many ways – although we've never really been pinned down to saying just WHY we are different. Certainly our origins are different, and our relationship with our body of learners through structures like the Branches is different – but how do these really impact on the delivery of the courses we offer? What our protected status did do however was shield us from many of the developments that affected other educational providers. If we have existed in a rather special bubble, the inspection last year well and truly burst it!

So what have been the changes and what are we now doing about it?

Firstly, our funding comes in a different way to a few years ago. The LSC, responding to government policy, identifies areas of work that it is willing to buy from providers. We put forward a plan of what we are willing and able to do and agree a contract on the basis of this. Quite rightly, they want to know on a regular basis that we're spending the money effectively and that we're attracting the learners that we said we would. Increasingly this means our course organisers have targets for their areas and that we need to know precisely what is going on at any time. Inevitably, this leads to a certain amount of bureaucracy but £19m is a considerable amount of money. Our relationship with the LSC has been positive and every effort has been made on their part to enable us to do the work we think is important.

The second major development area affects the way we work – and that is the area of quality. You ask, Frank, should we be judged by those criteria that have been applied, in the name of quality, to most other educational organisations? The criteria are fairly general and should pose no problems for us really. The issue for the WEA is more 'what are the standards we wish to set ourselves'? The recent inspection told us that whilst a lot of what we do is undoubtedly good, as far as many areas of quality are concerned our standards were simply not as high as those of other providers, including other Special Designated Institutions like ourselves, and furthermore they were not high enough to satisfy the minimum requirements. Surely we want to be with the best in our field?

A huge amount has now been done to move the Association forward. It's sometimes been painful, sometimes bewildering and often frustrating. The good news though is that after the first round of re-inspection, we know that we're going in the right direction.

Our history has moulded us and our future will always be in our own hands.

Of all organisations, through our experience as a movement, the WEA is able to develop, be innovative and become cutting edge as an educational provider. Let's accept this challenge.

Audrey

Dear Audrey,

Many thanks for your letter. It was good to have a response from someone with a view from the inside.

Of course, we all want the WEA to be an efficient organisation, and the best in the field, but which field? Many of us are simply questioning the assumption that the strategy implied in all the LSC's quality assurance methodology is going to achieve that. The WEA is not only different in the ways you suggest but also in the fact that our 'customers' are basically students not learners. One learns to ride a bicycle but one studies history, as one of my correspondents points out. It is clear that all the concern with outcomes and skills has come about not because they are appropriate to our work, but because we have, almost by mischance, fallen under the LSC umbrella. Ideally, if we are eventually to offer various types of teaching, we shall be able to obtain funding from different sources. I see that happening, not only because we may be teaching some skills, but also as we become nearer to university education in some sectors, as we used to be in the days of greater extra-mural activity.

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Your phrase that the LSC identifies areas of work that it is willing to buy from providers sums up the difficulty – 'identifying areas of work' epitomises the whole culture that is being thrust upon us. Do you really want that? No mention of quality but only 'what' they will buy, and is this to be the same in every Branch? Is there to be no space for the passion and enthusiasm that many WEA tutors can bring from a lifetime's experience, which can never be constrained in some quality assurance strait-jacket?. To be more constructive, I would like to see the role of tutor-organisers far more central to the way the WEA operates. They could, in my view, provide the vertical communication that we desperately need within the organisation. They should be people of wide experience of non-vocational adult education, in constant contact with the centre and with the Branches, and aware of good and bad practice in their patch (or subject area), and able to act on that and recommend action.

To build up good reliable data on tutors, talents, availability, subjects, by this sort of more intimate contact would, I am sure, provide the WEA with a wealth of information on which to operate more effectively. I would like to remind you that one of the Principles (4.2), stated in the draft Memorandum and Articles of Association is 'The Association believes that the individual and social outcomes of good educational processes cannot always be subject to quantitative measurements'. I am sure that every one of the few contacts I have made from Speakers' Corner would say that this is central to our disquiet – the fact that it is not being upheld more vigorously.

Thanks again for writing.

Frank

Dear Frank,

You raise some valuable educational issues that we need to be discussing. I wonder if making a distinction between learners and students is helpful. I remember studying the local history of my village – in the process I developed the skills to read census records and learned how to piece together the extended family trees of several of the families still living there. Learning skills is often just one point on a continuum of learning that may enable us to carry out more involved (more studious?) learning activities. I hope we can agree that they do all result in learning though. Where I do agree with you is that the term 'skills' has been rather taken over by others and limited to mean employment skills. This is not the position of the WEA and we are actively challenging this.

You asked in the last newsletter, 'if the classes recruit well, and hold their attendance, does anything else matter?' Well yes other things do matter – has the course recruited new learners, do they reflect the range of backgrounds and educational experience in the area, will new, unconfident learners feel the course addresses their needs too? If the answer to any of these questions is 'no' then it does matter.

Many of our learners do find the acknowledgement of their progress a valuable boost to their confidence and development. Concern for outcomes is central to our work rather than an intrusion. It can help many learners who have a thirst for learning but a negative experience of education to re-engage in an active and manageable way. Some groups, particularly in more traditional branches, do find change unsettling and to them unnecessary, but this may inadvertently prevent others, with different expectations and motivations, from joining.

One question that occurs to me Frank is how we harness that passion and enthusiasm that you obviously have and that is out there, for the benefit of all of our learners. Some of our learners who really are hesitant and do need to develop the skills for learning in a supported way, would value the knowledge and experience of many tutors like yourself. This can be challenging though: learners really are at different starting points and will progress at different paces. Many of the processes we have introduced provide tutors with the tools to deal with this.

Too many of our tutors have worked for years with minimal intervention and little consistent guidance and we are now trying to address this. We need tutors like you on board and so I hope this dialogue helps to do that.

Audrey

About Speakers' Corner

Speakers' Corner is a regular column which aims to give voice to the opinions of WEA tutors, members, students and staff on current issues affecting the Association. If you have a view that needs attention, want to agree, disagree or expand on something you have seen in the pages of WEA News you can contact Frank Evans at Speakers' Corner. Correspondence by post to Frank Evans c/o WEA News (address on back cover) or by email to fevans@wea.org.uk

Audrey Stewart is a WEA Education Strategy Manager. She leads on the quality of teaching and learning across the Association.

Frank Evans is a long-standing WEA tutor working in Southern Region.

learners.org.uk pilots free courses

The Greater Manchester Community Grid for Learning is a WEA project set up to create a website providing easy access to e-learning courses and resources for adult learners. One of its aims has been to attract people who haven't previously engaged with the world of computers and the internet. The team, based at the WEA's offices in Manchester, developed e-learning content from scratch as well as pulling together existing resources from elsewhere.

The Community Grid team is happy to share its resources and experience with all WEA staff, so to tutors or field staff who want to use courses from www.learners.org.uk: help yourself! If you can't find subjects relevant to your curriculum area, the team plan to create a directory to signpost you to existing resources elsewhere on the internet and to simple toolkits for the creation of online learning materials.

All of the work has been publicly funded through the European Regional Development Fund, the lottery New Opportunities Fund and the Northwest Development Agency so the resources are available free of charge. To date, over 700 individuals and organisations have registered on the website. The Community Grid team hope to work with tutors and managers across the WEA to develop new and interesting ways that technology can be integrated into teaching and learning—for instance, they are involved in piloting the roll-out of online tests for Skills for Life. The team is also involved in supporting the e-guides programme and in assisting Learning and Curriculum Managers with the incorporation of Information and Learning Technology (ILT) into the self-assessment and Observation of Teaching and Learning (OTL) processes.

WEA Learning managers and tutors can use courses on www.learners.org.uk:

- As stand-alone courses
- As complements to existing courses
- As an added extra for students with a particular interest in computers or e-learning

Resources available at www.learners.org.uk currently include:

Skills for Life: Parenting Online, literacy, numeracy and ESOL

Hobbies: Gardening Online, Essential Spanish, Digital Photography, Family History

Computing: Whiz around the Internet (an introduction to the Internet themed around Greater Manchester); Whisk around the Internet (internet introduction themed on food and catering)

Professional Development: Study Skills, Sewing Skills, Life Skills for people with learning difficulties

Games and quizzes: the Manchester Quiz, Wired for Learning, the Memory Game

For a comprehensive user guidebook, course-specific leaflets, or any other information, please email Tracy Burrell at tburrell@wea.org.uk or phone the team on 0161 277 5460.

Grundtvig offers opportunity for European visits

WEA tutors and other educational staff may be interested in a new opportunity offered by Grundtvig, which is the lifelong learning part of the European Union education section known as Socrates.

Grants of up to 1500 Euros (£1,040) are being offered to staff working with adult learners to improve practical teaching, coaching or counselling skills and to gain a broader understanding of lifelong learning across Europe. The grant will normally cover travel, subsistence and language preparation costs where needed.

Grants are available to work-shadow counterparts in another

European country or attend a training course.

For further information visit www.socrates-uk.net or contact Ted Hartley of the WEA (thartley@wea.org.uk) or Bridgette Laws of the British Council (bridgette.laws@britishcouncil.org or 020 7930 8466).

Courses

A list of suggested courses across Europe that this scheme could be used to pay for is available at the following internet address:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/programmes/socrates/grundtvig/overview_en.html

Are you involved in adult education ... and would like to travel to another European country?

Why not apply for a Grundtvig grant ...

An opportunity for staff working with adult learners (including teachers, trainers, managers, counsellors, mentors and other learning representatives) to improve practical teaching, coaching or counselling skills and to gain a broader understanding of lifelong learning across Europe. Grants are available to work-shadow counterparts in another European country or attend a training course. UK participants should apply to the British Council, the agency in the UK which manages Grundtvig, part of the Socrates programme, on behalf of the European Commission.

The following are examples of some of the courses on offer:

- Gaining Competence in Modern Participatory Methods of Adult Education and in Making Project Proposals for EU-Financed Education Programmes Germany, 3-10 April 2005
- e-Learning for Interactive Training Methodology, Tools and Best Practices Italy, 4-10 April 2005
- Strategies for Teaching Maths to Adults Norway, 14-18 April 2005
- Sensitisation Training about Migration, Racism, Discrimination, Culture and Diversity Iceland, 16-22 May 2005
- Learner-oriented Adult Education Denmark, 22-28 May 2005
- Regional Studies (Grundtvig) for Trainers of German as a Foreign Language in Adult Education Germany, 3-14 July 2005

What next?

- identify a training course or a potential work-shadow partner in another country
- complete an application form; this can be accessed immediately via the Socrates website or a copy can be posted to you.

You can apply at any time. Placements/courses usually last about a week but can be from two days to four weeks. The grant awarded will not normally exceed £1500 (about €1040). This is intended to help with the following:

- **travel costs** normally 100% of economy fare travel and insurance costs will be covered
- **subsistence costs** A contribution will be awarded based on the subsistence rate of the host country (see the application form)
- **preparation costs** A contribution towards the cost of language preparation will be awarded, where appropriate.

For further information please visit www.socrates-uk.net or contact Bridgette Laws (e-mail bridgette.laws@britishcouncil.org; Education and Training Group, British Council, 10 Spring Gardens, London SW1A 2BN).



The British Council is the United Kingdom's international organisation for educational co-operation and cultural relations with other countries.



Joint working for WEA and Ruskin

Discussions are underway on potential partnership working between the WEA and Ruskin College Oxford.

Ruskin is an independent residential college that aims to provide educational opportunities to adults who are excluded and disadvantaged, and to transform the individuals concerned along with the communities, groups and societies from which they come. As Principal Dr. Audrey Mullender says, "our courses often change the lives of people who want to return to learning because they missed out the first time round, are stuck in dead-end jobs, have been made redundant, or simply want to find out their true potential". Grants and bursaries are available for many students attending courses at the College, enabling learners from extremely disadvantaged backgrounds such as poverty and homelessness to participate.

There are many factors common to Ruskin and the WEA that make the partnership appropriate. Both organisations have 100 year track records of contributing to lifelong learning, widening participation and social inclusion. Both are committed to providing access to education for people with few prior educational achievements and for helping them to progress to higher educational levels. There are also shared historical links with the labour and trade union movement and with local communities.

The partnership is likely to concentrate on three main areas of work:

1. Promoting Ruskin summer schools and short residential courses to WEA learners as progression opportunities.
2. The possible joint development of summer schools at Ruskin specifically for WEA learners. In many cases this may provide learners with a first taste of residential learning.
3. Staff development work potentially including part-time subject based qualifications such as Certificate of Higher Education and first degree and masters programmes including History, Labour and Trade Union studies, Women's studies and Youth and Community Work, as well as teaching of the City and Guilds 7407 tutor training qualification to both WEA and Ruskin tutors.



This building on Walton Street, Oxford, has been home to Ruskin College since 1912

Partnership work is already in evidence thanks to Phil Coward, a WEA tutor organiser from East Midlands Region. Phil has previously organised a history workshop that was delivered by Dr. Hilda Kean of Ruskin, and the duo will be jointly teaching a three-day residential course at Ruskin entitled "Introducing History—Writing Interesting Family History" in July this year. Phil is also on the organising group for the first International Public History Conference to be held at Ruskin on the 16th and 17th September 2005. Please contact Phil at pcoward@wea.org.uk or 07989 422945 for further details of either event.

For more details of courses available at Ruskin College, from short courses and three-day residential schools to first and masters degrees, see their website at www.ruskin.ac.uk, email to enquiries@ruskin.ac.uk or telephone 01865 310713.

Late arrival...

Apologies to everyone who entered the competition to suggest a new name for WEA News and win a bottle of champagne and a £50 book token into the bargain.

You've probably worked up a quite a thirst given that we forgot, in the last issue, to update on the revised date that the NEC will be judging all the entries received after our second reminder of the competition. The next NEC meeting takes place on 9th July when the competition will be judged and the winner announced accordingly. Thanks to all those who responded with suggestions.

Year-end financial report released

The WEA Report of Trustees & Financial Statements for the year ended 31st July 2004 are now available.

The financial statements show that the Association made a surplus of £544k for the year, whilst the Trustees reported that over 155,000 enrolments were recorded on nearly 14,000 WEA courses.

75% of enrolments were from women, whilst 10% were from people who declared that they were from an ethnic minority. Almost a third of the WEA's learners lived in postcodes that are designated as disadvantaged by the Government—this represents about twice the proportion of the national population who live in these areas.

The report is available either by email or hard copy; anyone who requires a copy should request one from Sidney Milambo (smilambo@wea.org.uk or 020 8983 2651).



Arrivals, departures and exchanges

South West Region

Alice Tanner has retired after more than 27 years of service, during which time she worked for no less than five District/Regional Secretaries and endured three office moves. Colleagues both past and present wished Alice all the best for her retirement at a bash in Hanham.

Josie Brown, Tutor Organiser in the Gloucester office, has also left 23 years after first teaching for the WEA. Chocoholic Josie said goodbye to colleagues over a farewell chocolate lunch.

Julie Parr is the new part-time finance assistant in the Exeter office.

Congratulations to WEA field staff member **John Kirkaldy**, who will add script consultancy during the production of BBC TV series *History Detectives* next year to his existing WEA workload.

Yorkshire and Humber Region

Staff and officers in Yorkshire and Humber were greatly saddened by the tragic death of recent colleague **Hayley Jackson**. Many of Hayley's friends from the Region were present at her funeral.

Three new staff have started work in Yorkshire and Humber: **John Barker** and **Lee Shillito** have joined the Course Processing Team, whilst **Jaimie Jarratt** is a new member of the General Team.

Corporate Services

John Nixon started work as WEA Head of IT on 21 March 2005. He brings with him over 30 years experience in the IT field, 23 years of which was in his previous post of Head of IT for the Dalgety Group. John is based in the Bristol office.

National Training Manager **Catherine Russ** left the WEA on 24 March after four years service. **Liz Cumberbatch** will be picking up Catherine's responsibilities on an

interim basis as Training Manager, whilst also retaining her substantive post of Equality and Diversity Manager. Liz will be covering both posts until at least 31 July 2005, at which time the Training function will be reviewed.

Sarah Hatton has been appointed as PA to Director of Finance Linda Acquaye; she will start work on 9 May.

Kay Jackaman, who had been on an external secondment for some time, left the WEA on 31 March.

Two weddings involving Corporate Services staff have taken place since the last WEA News, so congratulations go to **Sohail Akram**, and **Claire May** (née Gray).

Southern and London Regions

Dave Wilde has left Southern Region to take up the post of Tutor Organiser for the GMB programme on 11 April 2005. In his new post, Dave will be working across both London and Southern Regions

Southern Region

Jo Davis, Tutor Organiser in Bucks, left on 15 April to pursue a career in science research with the Open University. Jo will be missed for her efficiency, sense of humour and ability to run meetings to time with the aid of an egg timer! Colleagues wish her luck and whilst science research is her first love, they hope she will continue teaching volcanoes and rocks for the WEA.

Cheryl Osborn left on 15 April. She had been a Basic Skills tutor working with the probation service.

Kate Joyce, Volunteer Development Worker, left on 31 March.

Deborah Rensburg took up the part-time position of Project Worker, Women and Health in West Sussex on 17 March.

Shagufta Faud has been appointed as part-time Outreach Worker for the Women's Learning

Centre in Reading, and **Amreeta Aujayeb**, who also works at the Centre, took on extra hours from 14 March.

Katherine Abrahams has been appointed part-time Community Development Worker for the SureStart Central Southampton project, whilst **Angie Corcoran** took on extra hours to cover the post of ESF Project Worker for Reaching out to Women in Brighton & Hove

London Region

Lois Carew Doyley joined London Region on 4 April as the Tutor Organiser for Family Learning. Lois replaces **Deborah Birkett**, who left this post on 23 March.

Nita Karia joined London on 1 April as the Tutor Organiser for IT.

WEA NEWS is produced for WEA staff, tutors and voluntary members. Many thanks to all who contributed to this edition, including: Peter Templeton, Peter Caldwell, Danielle Lowy, Audrey Mullender (of Ruskin College), June Diegan, Phil Coward, Audrey Stewart, Nigel Todd and Linda Acquaye.

If you have an item for inclusion or would like to comment on the newsletter please let us know; items of interest and comments can be e-mailed to news@wea.org.uk.

It is not always possible to include all items submitted but every effort will be made to do so.

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