

September/October 2005: Issue 7

## Look back in wonder: WEA 2003-05

October 2005 and it's the month of WEA National Conference, the first after the troubled National Centenary Conference of May 2003. Hard times continue with voluntary members, tutors and staff feeling the pressure after two and a half years of upheaval, restructuring and redundancies. But the records show we've come a long way on the road from crisis to recovery.

As the WEA headed towards National Conference of 2003, the feeling was one of tension and troubled times with signs of greater problems down the line. In October of the previous year the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) had been asked to make an emergency payment of £3m to the WEA to ease financial pressure created by inadequate financial reserves. One month later and the annual LSC Performance Review had placed the WEA in the 'serious concerns' category with management performance cited as an area of critical concern.

With the arrival of 2004, early plans for financial recovery were underway and monthly meetings with the LSC were

scheduled to help move plans forward at the necessary pace. In April, a sum of £3m paid to the WEA as an advance against future LSC funding for 2003/04 satisfied auditors that the WEA was a 'going concern' and in consultation with the LSC the appointment of a Change Manager was underway.

The intervening months between May 2003 and today's National Conference in Manchester must be considered as some of the most turbulent and miserable months in the Association's history. Times are still tough for the WEA and 'change-fatigue' inevitably sets in for everyone actively involved in the work of the WEA. Yet, in terms of time and sheer determination, the contribution of staff and voluntary members over the last two years has yielded enormous steps forward and real achievements have been made in short spaces of time. On the following pages to remind us of an incredible, mutual experience, from the WEA's National Conference in its unfortunate centenary year to the current day, is a look step-by-step at what happened next.



### Carry on learning with the WEA 2003-2005

We know that successful learning isn't just about qualifications and certification but receiving a certificate is a proud moment as these cheerful photocalls in Halifax, Wiltshire and Leicester show.



**Regionalisation:** The restructuring affected all Districts as alignment with Government regions required boundary changes in them all. The biggest changes were the mergers between CMWL and North Western, South Eastern and Thames and Solent, and Yorkshire's North and South. The move anticipated the increasing importance of the regional tier in English governance - a fact brought clearly to light last week with press coverage over 1300 likely job cuts at the LSC.



**Joyce Connon, Scottish Association Secretary:** Awarded the OBE in the New Year's Honours list 2004.

- Appointment of David Plank originally under the title of Change Manager, soon to become Interim Chief Executive.
- WEA Centenary Conference held at QEII Centre in London. Temperatures rise as delegates challenge management over poor financial performance.
- National officers appointed at Conference. Re-elections to posts include David Lanch as President, Janet Racklyeft as Deputy President, Peter Cooper as Honorary Treasurer, Colin Barnes as Vice President. Eddie Conway is elected to Vice President.
- Ann Walker, District Secretary Yorkshire North appointed as lead in a project to develop the WEA Forward Plan, a single national plan for the Association, to incorporate all other recovery plans and replacing the Association's traditional strategic and operational plans.
- The Association Management Team is formed from the previously-termed Large Senior Management Team. Membership includes all District Secretaries and the senior staff at WEA National Office.
- Resignations among NEC as members' concerns rise about trustee liability and the WEA's status as an unincorporated charitable trust.
- Year end figures confirm that the WEA is running a deficit of over £3m.

- Mel Doyle, Acting General Secretary retires.
- NEC adopts Association Forward Plan 2003/06 which incorporates a plan to 'regionalise', bringing the structure of the Association's twelve Districts in line with the nine government regions for England, a strategy to 're-balance' the WEA curriculum to better reflect the WEA's mission, a financial strategy to return the WEA to full financial health and an exercise in restating the WEA's original mission and commitment to liberal education in the form of a contemporary Vision and Values statement.
- It is announced that in order to achieve cost savings there are to be redundancies at National Office.
- The constitutional issue of incorporation is considered by the NEC, in particular trustee liability.
- WEA National Office is renamed WEA Corporate Services
- WEA Regionalisation project begins with John Williams, District Secretary London appointed as project manager.
- Post of WEA General Secretary is advertised.
- Redundancies at WEA Corporate Services.

- Posts of Regional Secretaries are advertised and the first impact of regionalisation is felt in an announcement stating that six District Secretaries will be assimilated to the relevant new regional post, with others invited to express an interest for those three regions formed from the merger of two existing districts.
- Joyce Connon, Scottish Association Secretary is awarded the OBE in the New Year's Honours.
- Peter Templeton is appointed as Director of Education and Quality at WEA Corporate Services.
- Peter Caldwell, District Secretary of West Midlands is appointed Project Manager for the WEA's forthcoming Curriculum Review, described by David Plank as "the most important project the Association will undertake this year".
- Preparations are underway for the forthcoming March inspection from government regulator, the Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI).
- Following interviews, appointments for all Regional Secretaries are announced: Eastern, Carolyn Daines; East Midlands, Mike Attwell; London, John Williams; North East, Lesley Gillespie; North West, Greg Coyne; Southern, vacant (due to the earlier departure of South Eastern District Secretary Vernon Hull); South West, Liz Weightman; West Midlands, Peter Caldwell, Yorkshire & Humberside, Ann Walker.

- First monthly meeting of District Chairs (to become Regional Chairs).
- Interim Chief Executive David Plank takes his departure from the WEA.

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- New WEA General Secretary, Richard Bolsin takes the reins.
- David Webber is appointed as Head of Human Resources at Corporate Services and later to Director of Resources.
- The ALI inspection is in progress across the Association, running alongside the LSC's annual Provider Financial Assurance review.
- A new three-year financial strategy outlining a plan for the Association's recovery is considered at NEC alongside a reserves policy which will see the level of WEA operating reserves return to a secure level.

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- The Adult Learning Inspectorate's report on its March inspection of the WEA is published. The Association's provision is deemed 'inadequate' and the WEA faces a re-inspection over the subsequent 18 months and it's £18m government grant is threatened. As a result of the Inspection findings, the WEA remains in the LSC's 'serious concerns' category.
- In a letter to Branches and Regions, General Secretary Richard Bolsin advises that the Constitutional Conference planned for October is postponed. He describes the WEA's accepted priorities for the two years ahead as securing the Association's full financial recovery; improving educational performance and completion of the structural changes related to Regionalisation.
- Negotiations take place with the LSC for re-payment of its £3m loan. The WEA sets to work on a Post-Inspection Action plan in response to the Adult Learning Inspectorate's report.
- Dennis French, committee member of Farnham Branch is awarded the MBE for services to adult education.
- Hilary Lawson, Tutor Organiser and Community Learning Manager is awarded the MBE for services to adult education for the WEA's Scottish Association.
- The WEA's Post-Inspection Action Plan is submitted to the LSC.

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- The WEA's annual statement of accounts shows a net operating surplus of £544k for 2003/04.
- The WEA commences repayment of the £3m LSC loan at a rate of £100k a month.
- As a result of the WEA Regionalisation plan, nine new WEA Regions are formally established. John Williams is appointed as Regional Secretary for Southern Region.
- Scottish Association boundaries are re-drawn and seven new Local Area Units are created.
- The new WEA News is published.

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- Liz Weightman, South West Regional Secretary retires and applications are sought for a replacement.
- Applications are sought for the post of Regional Secretary for North East Region after the retirement of Lesley Gillespie is announced for end of year.
- NEC approves the Association Plan 2004/07, described as the 'overarching document for a suite of plans to take the Association forward.'
- Simon Beer is appointed as Interim Regional Secretary for London Region
- WEA Ilford Branch runs a campaign to target government ministers and local MP's challenging the government's stance on the funding of adult education.
- WEA North West Region relocates from Bluecoat Chambers to Liverpool's Cotton Exchange Building.

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- An Association-wide consultation on the process of incorporation starts in South West Region, concluding in April in London and Southern Regions.
- Steve Martin joins the WEA as Regional Secretary for South West Region and Nigel Todd joins as Regional Secretary for North East Region.
- It is confirmed that the WEA has 'over-performed' against the LSC educational performance target for 2003/04 resulting in a payment to the WEA for over-production. In future years over-production will be at the expense of the WEA.
- Plans are announced for restructuring in North East and South West Regions. Several factors are cited as driving the need for radical change including the ALI inspection and changing priorities at regional and national levels. Redundancies are forecast.
- In line with reductions in operating costs, a proposal to share management resources between London and Southern Regions is endorsed by NEC and becomes known as the Southern Hub project. Redundancies are likely.

February-April  
2004

May-July 2004

August-October  
2004November 2004 - January  
2005

February-April 2005



**Mum makes grade to get dream job**



NEW CAREER - Paula Smith, who is about to start her job as a writing assistant after qualifying with Workers' Education courses.

**Speaking out:** In the last two years the WEA has seen something of a return to form in making it's presence felt as a campaigning organisation. Work to increase positive media coverage, regionally and nationally has shown results, and in the storm surrounding cuts in the funding of further education provision, voluntary members and staff alike are registering their protest to government representatives in the form of letters, email and in person.



**New faces:** Top to bottom Nigel Todd of North East Region, Soraya Patrick of London Region and Steve Martin of South West Region.

■ Following submission of the WEA's Financial Strategy to the LSC, the WEA is moved from the LSC's 'serious concerns' category to that of 'some concerns'.

■ WEA students and staff take their places for Adult Learners Week (ALW). Yorkshire and Humber's 'Ripon Project' are National Group Award winners and from the same Region, student Carol Nicholson wins a Neighbourhood Renewal Unit ALW award. Scottish Association student Mike Buchan of the 'Reach Out' project is the overall individual winner of the Scottish Adult Learners' Week Award.

■ Comedian John Fortune gives a satire master class for London Region Branches and students, taking the subject of 'government funding of adult education' as his subject.

■ Ian Pearce is appointed in the temporary position of Company Secretary as the WEA moves towards incorporation.

■ A paper to the NEC describes the impact of Regionalisation on Yorkshire and Humber Region. The closing of the Region's Rotherham office and plans for staff restructuring indicate the need for redundancies.

■ WEA General Secretary writes to Mark Haysom LSC Chief Executive to propose a 'new' working relationship between the two organisations for 2005/06 in which WEA Regions have a greater say in annual planning with respective LSC regions.

■ The WEA educational programme areas known as Community, Workplace and General are discontinued, and replaced by ten new WEA Curriculum Areas. Curriculum Area Leaders are appointed in all Regions.

■ Provisional figures for the WEA's Education Performance against the LSC's Funding Agreement for the academic year 2004/05 show that the WEA is slightly under target with an estimated final figure of 97%. The LSC's historical practice of 'retrospective clawback' now at an end, the WEA is not required to make a repayment against the grant.

■ In a letter to Phil Hope, Under Secretary for Skills and Vocational Education, Richard Bolsin describes the costs of the inspection. He states that for each day of his employment as General Secretary an average of three Adult Learning Inspectors have inspected the work of the WEA, with the WEA subjected to 1000 days of inspection by the end of 2005.

■ Soraya Patrick is appointed as London Region's Regional Secretary. Acting Regional Secretary Simon Beer takes up a new post at NIACE.

■ A third round of inspection by the Adult Learning Inspectorate is in progress at Regions.

■ Temple House, Bethnal Green home of WEA National Office for 13 years is sold for £800,000 with those staff remaining rehoused at London Region's Luke Street offices.

■ Provisional re-inspection reports indicate that the Association is continuing to demonstrate progress, and in some cases good progress, against all the weaknesses identified in the first inspection report of March 2003.

■ WEA National Conference votes on incorporation. If the motion to incorporate goes through, the WEA will move from being an unincorporated charitable trust to a charitable company limited by guarantee.

# GCSE first in Halifax for women returning to learn with the WEA

This Autumn two groups of women have started studying for GCSEs with the WEA in Halifax. Most of the women are drawn from a community whose origins are in Mirpur in Pakistan, and one group is studying for GCSE English, the other GCSE maths. Both groups will take their exams next summer.

As far as the GCSE English is concerned this is the second time the WEA has run such a programme in Halifax, the first being in 2003/4 (see picture below of some of those students with their certificates). For maths this course is not only a first for Yorkshire and Humber Region , but it would seem for the WEA as a whole.

How and why did this come about? For over ten years now the WEA has been working in

Halifax's Mirpuri-origin community - delivering a variety of courses - mostly for women and mostly in the area of family learning and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL). Over a number of years some of students have come to us saying they wanted to study GCSEs. As part of our guidance responsibilities we always directed them to the local college (which happens to be situated in the heart of the community). However most declined to take up the GCSE opportunities the college offered. This was not the college's fault; they of course have many 16-19 year olds attending programmes on their site and this alone throws up various cultural barriers for many of the women in this particular community .

What some of these women told us was that if the WEA offered

GCSEs in a suitable community setting (which included crèche facilities) they would come. And so it turned out to be. In this the WEA has been immensely helped by Calderdale's Adult and Community Learning Service who have agreed that the students should take their actual exam through them - the WEA not being a registered GCSE exam centre.

Interestingly the core of both student groups are women in their 30s. Many of them were educated in Britain, but left school without taking their GCSEs or without the grades they felt they could have achieved. Now some 15 or so years later they are resuming those studies.

by **Julian Harber**,  
WEA Tutor Organiser for  
Calderdale and Kirklees



## Founding staff member leaves 101 Hinckley Road



The WEA Centre at 101 Hinckley Road, Leicester (pictured), lost a founder member of staff when Wendy Gent retired at the end of September. Wendy joined the WEA in 1979 as a part-time secretary at Vaughan College.

The 101 Centre was established from Urban Aid funding in 1980 to provide an innovative learning centre in a deprived area of Leicester and Wendy initially provided secretarial support there too.

101 Hinckley Road has been different from other course venues used by the WEA since its first days in that the WEA actually

owns it and the branch has a significant input into the programme and local community.

The young and vibrant branch threw itself wholeheartedly into pioneering community development work, and over time a substantial centre-based and outreach programme built up to include Second Chance to Learn, Women's Education, Basic Skills and Personal Development. People from disadvantaged groups, including the rapidly expanding minority ethnic population and those with special needs, began to use the centre in increasing numbers. With the active involvement of the voluntary branch all of these courses were encouraged and developed, including providing a home for a group of elderly Asians who wished to meet socially - and this continues to the present day.

The centre and branch also

responded enthusiastically to computerisation, establishing an IT teaching suite in the late 1980's. Over time this has expanded to two teaching suites with UK Online and learndirect status. This is not only supported by the branch but, through the initiative of Wendy, a team of trained volunteers who regularly assist in the classroom

101 Hinckley Road continues to successfully re-introduce many people to education, some of whom have moved on to professional training or university. Wendy Gent herself was a beneficiary - she gained a BTEC in Public Administration in 1991 and then went on to take a degree in Business Studies and Social Science at De Montfort University, gaining an Upper Second. This enabled Wendy in 2003 to take on the organisation and development of the whole programme run from the centre.

## New website for WEA Citizenship Project



The ALAC (Active Learning for active Citizenship) project, a Home-Office demonstration project based in Sheffield, has now published its web-site, which can be found at [www.alacsy.org.uk](http://www.alacsy.org.uk)

Staff and volunteers have contributed to the creation of the page and it is a place where news, developments, ideas, images and writings can be posted. The page will also be a platform for learners to develop their own skills and for groups to build their own web sites.

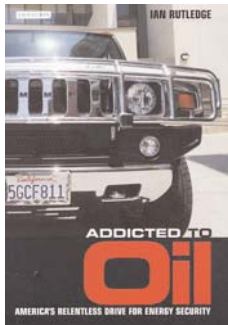
The site has been created using mambo free-ware and features an effective image (Citizenship) by the Mexican artist/muralist, Rafael Lopez. Any comments or contributions are welcome, please send these to [thartley@wea.org.uk](mailto:thartley@wea.org.uk)



Danish Member of Parliament Kim Mortensen asks a question during a recent study visit to WEA London's Luke Street offices by the Executive Committee of the Danish Trade Union Congress. The Committee met a number of Union Representatives on a WEA course, as well as Regional Secretary Soraya Patrick and Peter Norfolk, Area Learning Manager for Trade Union provision. Last year, London Region delivered nearly a third of all the WEA provision of Trade Union Learning in England.

## Published authors with WEA connections

Two people with strong WEA connections - a tutor and a recent tutor organiser - have had recent books published on very different aspects of environmental issues:



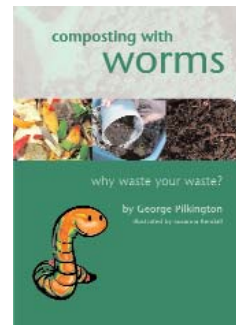
Ian Rutledge was until recently WEA tutor-organiser in Chesterfield and North-east Derbyshire and was a co-founder of energy consultancy organisation SERIS.

Ian's book *Addicted to Oil* argues that America's dependence on the car has created a lifestyle leading to oil needs which have heavily influenced US foreign policy in the modern era. It has been published by respected academic publisher IB Tauris, who describe it as "the first book to undertake an in-depth analysis of the motorisation of US society which explicitly links it to America's foreign policy adventures past and present."

A review of the book can be found in the 'news' section of the ALAC South Yorkshire website at [www.alacsy.org.uk](http://www.alacsy.org.uk)

*Addicted to Oil* is priced at £19.99 and can be ordered online or over the phone from <http://www.ibtauris.com> or 020 7243 1225.

In addition to the direct ordering details above, both books are available now through your local bookshop: the ISBN numbers to quote are 1850436746 for *Addicted to Oil* or 189923313X for *Composting with Worms*.



George Pilkington has written a complete guide to composting using worms. Three years in the researching, editing and writing, the book is full of practical suggestions as to how household waste can be turned into soil enriching vermicompost.

George is a WEA tutor in Warrington teaching gardening and environmental courses. All George's current courses are community based provision for people with mental health difficulties, delivered in partnership with local centres and charities.

The book is published at £7.95 by ethically run company Eco-logic Books - who are currently promoting it as their book of the month.

For further details on *Composting with Worms* and other Eco-logic books, or to order your copy, see their website at <http://www.eco-logicbooks.com> or phone 01225 484472.



Elizabeth Yarnold, from Mill Hill, produced this mixed media painting in 2004 - it is part of the gallery of students work available as part of the new WEA London website at [www.london.wea.org.uk](http://www.london.wea.org.uk) (or from a link on the national website [www.wea.org.uk](http://www.wea.org.uk))

## Change to charity number

Advance warning to Branches and Regions that the WEA Charity Number will change if Conference approves the incorporation measures to be put before it on the 15th October. Business stationery (letterhead and compliment slips but not business cards) and formal publications will need to carry the full company name (which will remain Workers' Educational Association), the new registered charity number and new company limited by guarantee number (once advised).

Unfortunately we will not know the new numbers until formal registration begins, however current stationery featuring the charity number 314001 will be fine for use until January 2006. WEA News and [www.wea.org.uk](http://www.wea.org.uk) will keep you posted on developments and inform you of the new numbers once available.



# Arrivals, departures and exchanges

## Southern and London Hub

Several appointments have been made to the cross-regional hub based in Rochester.

**Scott Wise** joined as Hub Payroll Administrator on 26 September and **Frances Paulding** will join as Hub Administrator - Accreditation Team Leader on 17th October. **Joanne Baker** will join as Hub Administrator on 10 October, and **Brian Bate** will join as Hub Administrator - Tutor Recruitment and Support on 24 October

## Southern Region

**Colin Lloyd** will join as Area Learning Manager - Employer Engagement on 19 October.

**Tim Arnold**, currently working for London Region, has been appointed as Events Officer for the Hampshire Jeffery Machin bequest fund.

**Grace Keal** joined as Project Development Worker - Slough on Monday 10th October.

**Linda Dawe**, who was Tutor Organiser for Buckinghamshire, left the WEA on 5 October

## Eastern Region

The Eastern Region are pleased to welcome **Ann O'Toole**, who succeeded **Clare Hawkins** as the Essex General Programme Manager on the 1st September, and **Helen Goucher**, who joined us as the Management Information Systems Officer on the 5th September in place of **Bridget Giles** who left in July.

Regional staff were also pleased to offer warm congratulations to **Bev Wratten** (nee **Nicholson**), who married Dave on the 10th September, followed by a honeymoon in Rome.

## London Region

**Massimo Biglia**, Finance Officer, left on 30 September.

Two new Family Learning Tutors joined in mid-September: **Akhita Benjamin** and **Jasmine Dawson**.

## Sale of Temple House

Following unanimous agreement at the September meeting of Trustees, Temple House, home for Corporate Services (formerly National Office) since 1992, has been sold for £800,000. It has been bought by the Young Foundation, a charity working in the East End of London, who own and occupy the adjoining building.

The then General Secretary and his staff moved to Bethnal Green from Marble Arch in London's West End and the name Temple House (after Archbishop Temple, former WEA President and a vital figure in the history of the Association) travelled with them. It was a significant step for the WEA who purchased the East End premises to accommodate nine staff. It soon became apparent that high maintenance costs and a building which lacked meeting room facilities following staff expansion no longer met Corporate Services' needs. Additional premises were rented in the City of London, and almost all staff gradually moved to Quick House during the last three years.

The last remaining members of staff in Temple House, the IT Support team, handed the keys to their neighbours and set up shop in the WEA's Luke Street premises at the end of September.

## North East Region

**Rosy Winsor** has joined the Region as co-ordinator for the fivearts cities project in Newcastle and Gateshead this autumn. Rosy has been a WEA arts tutor in the past and has also worked for the Open College of the arts, as well as having previously managed an arts centre in the North East.

## Corporate Services

**Anne Casey** joined the Education Strategy Team as Manager for Employer Engagement and Trade Union Partnerships with effect from 12 September 2005.

Following the selection process for the Development and Diversity Manager, **Liz Cumberbatch** has been appointed to

this role with effect from 1 October.

**Ben Audsley** was promoted to the post of Senior Support Analyst with effect from 1 September following a competitive interview process.

In order to further her studies **Ruth Gould**, Education Strategy Manager for Learner Support, began working part time (2 days per week) from 1 October.

**Venera Krsteva**, Finance Assistant, began maternity leave on 3 October; **Beverley Okere** will be covering Venera's post for the duration of her maternity leave.

**Dan Olnor** joined the ALAC Project team as 0.4 E-Citizenship Development Worker on 1 September.

**Alper Bardak** will be joining the IT Support Team on 24 October as Support Analyst.

**Poroshi Paul**, IT Administrator, left the WEA on 28 September, whilst **Dave Kennedy**, Communications Systems Coordinator, will be leaving us on 31 October.

## About WEA News

WEA NEWS is produced for WEA staff, tutors and voluntary members. Many thanks to all who contributed to this edition, including: **Angela Clark**, **Julian Harber**, **Ted Hartley**, **Andy Jurgis** and **Frances Pollard**.

If you have an item for inclusion or would like to comment on the newsletter please let us know. It is not always possible to include all items submitted but every effort will be made to do so. Correspondence should be addressed to:

WEA NEWS,  
c/o WEA Corporate Services,  
Quick House, 65 Clifton Street,  
London, EC2A 4JE.  
or emailed to [news@wea.org.uk](mailto:news@wea.org.uk)  
Views expressed are not necessarily those of the WEA.

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# developing our people



Liz Cumberbatch and Chris Mollan welcome you to the first edition of *Developing our People*, which will be issued termly.

This newsletter is to keep you up to date with what's happening regarding development and training, and to share ideas and experiences across the Association.

This edition focusses on tutor qualifications and includes an article from Eastern Region about their positive experiences of tutor training.

Future editions will cover staff and volunteer training and themes such as team building.

If you have any ideas or experiences you would like to share, email them to [traininginfo@wea.org.uk](mailto:traininginfo@wea.org.uk) or call us on 020 7426 3491.

## Opening doors for tutors

**Ruth Barber**, Essex Community Programme Manager for WEA Eastern Region, on a successful introduction in adult teaching for tutors and would-be tutors in the county

Often I am contacted by people with subject expertise who think that they may want to teach, but have no teaching qualification and no teaching experience. However when you dig a little deeper into their CV you often find that this is not quite the case. They may have delivered training in previous employment, have given talks to local community groups, or acted as volunteers in Basic Skills classes; some have experience of managing and supporting teams of people. They have the basics and may even be natural teachers.

We have been extending our community based provision in South Essex and Hertfordshire. In Essex we contacted potential partners in the Voluntary and Community sector with some success, but we quickly realised that our existing bank of tutors was not large enough to support a growing programme. We advertised for new tutors and received responses from some experienced people, but also from others with specialist knowledge of the subjects required but no teaching qualifications.

In spring 2005, we offered them, along with some existing tutors wishing to develop their skills, the opportunity to take an introductory course in Chelmsford. Thirteen tutors and potential tutors took up the challenge and twelve have now just about completed the course, which incorporated WEA initiatives such as the Observation of Teaching and Learning (OTL) process, the "staged process" and filling in new learning Records and Course Evaluation forms as well as the fundamentals of teaching adults.

The tutors themselves reported on their growing confidence, speaking of how nervous they were about starting the course, how they thought it would be very academic and how

surprised and pleased they were by the informality of it all. Two were very clear that they would not have had the confidence to go to college to take a course like this, while a third said that it was this newly acquired confidence which enabled her to start a Certificate in Education this autumn term.

"I didn't realise..." is a remark that has peppered my conversations with these tutors. "I didn't realise I wasn't involving students enough", "I didn't realise how long some students take to absorb information", "I didn't realise how useful a written plan for the session would be". One tutor mentioned "death by Powerpoint" - although in her case she felt it was her large collection of OHP slides that was overpowering the students. As a result she now makes sure that the students are much more involved in their own learning.

Two of the tutors who had originally been recommended for their subject experience both told me that before they had been approached to teach for the WEA they had not considered teaching. They both now feel that this is where they belong. One of these tutors now feels that taking the course has opened doors for her into other areas including on-line learning and teaching ICT.

All the students enjoyed the course and gained a strong sense of group identity - valuable as working for the WEA can be an isolating experience. As a Programme Manager I have gained from this course a group of excellent tutors who have not only developed their teaching abilities but also now have a thorough knowledge of the workings of the WEA, and are ready to move on to teaching qualification courses in preparation for gaining Qualified Teacher Status in 2007.

## Tutors: will you be 'licensed to practice'?

The Department for Education and Skills (DfES) policy document 'Equipping our Teachers for the Future' outlines reforms in teacher training which mean that from 2007 all tutors who want to teach in the LSC-funded adult education sector in England will be expected to hold a 'licence to practice'. To hold this, a tutor will need a recognised teaching qualification and also regularly update through continuing professional development (CPD).

The WEA is aware of the reasons that prevent many of our tutors doing a course to obtain a teaching qualification - things such as geography, amount of teaching delivered or the way that these courses are often organised. The Association is also aware that tutors will need to access continuous development opportunities, particularly valuable if these could also build towards a qualification. With this in mind, we are developing with City and Guilds (C&G), a course designed to fit in with the needs of tutors working in the adult and community learning sector. The course consists of modules which can either be taken as stand-alone CPD or built up over a period of time and certificated as C&G 7407 Stage One 'Certificate in Further Education Teaching' that is part of a recognised teaching qualification.

Our course will be delivered flexibly through a series of nine five-hour modules, which can be accessed over a period of time as CPD, and will be open to staff cross-regionally. It can also be completed in a relatively short timescale. The course develops good professional practice and is built around 'The Staged Process' and the requirements of the WEA course file.

In addition there will be support available through a VLE (Virtual Learning Environment) providing guidance for the modules and support for planning and delivering teaching and learning. This web site will be available for all tutors and staff even if not registered on the C&G programme and will allow tutors to keep up-to-date with the requirements of teaching in the WEA and adult education sectors.

### Modules on the WEA course for tutors will include:-

- Assessing learners' needs
- Planning learning programmes
- Teaching and learning activities
- Resources for teaching adults
- Providing learners with support
- Assessment of learning and achievement.

Guidance on how to access and make use of the VLE will be available shortly. We anticipate that the range of modules available will expand to provide a variety of CPD opportunities, as this will not only become part of the new initial teacher training programme but a requirement for all teachers working in this sector from 2007.

There will be no fee for current WEA tutors attending the new modules although when candidates are ready to go forward to the assessment stage a C&G registration fee will need to be paid.

This programme will be starting this Autumn in some Regions and be extended across the Association during the year. The materials and CPD modules can also be adapted for use by the Scottish Association. To see if your Region is providing this programme please contact your organiser or the Modular CPD Project Manager, Phil Coward at [pcoward@wea.org.uk](mailto:pcoward@wea.org.uk)

### A Message from Dave Webber, WEA Director of Resources

I'm delighted to see the first issue of *Developing Our People* a development and training newsletter for the WEA, which is indicative of the way we are seeking to refresh this whole area.

Among the actions we're taking to achieve this have been the appointment of a new Development and Diversity Manager, Liz Cumberbatch, the provision of more and more relevant development opportunities and improving collaboration across the Association and beyond to bring in and share new ideas and initiatives. We've also, this year for the first time recently, devolved much of the budget traditionally held centrally to Regions for them to be able to use this in a focused way to meet the particular needs of their staff.

I'm excited by the work that's been done to date on the new WEA Development and Training Zone, which will offer access to a wide range of events, resources and materials and it's really encouraging to see the progress we've made on tutor development and our plans to improve this still further.

It's important for each of us, in our careers, that we continue to develop ourselves, keeping up to date with changes in our field, learning new skills and acquiring new knowledge. All of us involved in Development and Training in the WEA would welcome your ideas on how we can help you do this effectively - please email these to [traininginfo@wea.org.uk](mailto:traininginfo@wea.org.uk) or phone Chris Mollan, Development and Diversity Support Officer on 020 7426 3491.

# New FirstClass Training and Development Area

The Development and Training team are in the process of redesigning the National Training Zone, which is now called the Development and Training Zone. All FirstClass users will have access to the area.

We hope you'll find it a useful Zone to enter, with training materials, details of internal and external events and resources being stored here for your use. The Association Development and Training Programme for 2005-2006 can be found in the Training Events and Materials folder and will be updated as we secure dates and venues throughout the year. This will also include Regional events which are open to staff and volunteers from other regions.

Internal Regional Programmes will still be available through your Regional Office and Line manager.

There will be a site map available to enable you to navigate the Zone more easily.



If you would like to contribute with regard to materials and resources, we would be happy to hear from you.

Please bear with us - the Zone is in its developing stages - but any comments or suggestions from you will be happily considered.

## Time management / work-life balance exercise



**This exercise is designed to encourage you to reassess how you spend your time during the day. It ought to give you a clearer picture of what actually takes up your time, and how you might cut out some unnecessary wastage, perhaps freeing up some more personal time and improving your work-life balance!**

This is a fairly complex task, but one which might well reap significant rewards. Pick a typical day to undertake this task. In the morning bring a logbook and a reliable clock with you. From the minute you begin work, record your first activity and the time you start it (e.g. check email - 8.15 am). When you finish your task or switch to a new one, record the end time and the new start time (e.g. check email - 8:15 am - 9:00 am, staff meeting 9:00 am). Continue this for the entire day, and include everything, i.e. telephone calls, meetings, lunch, chats with colleagues, etc.

At the end of the day, review your log.

Ask yourself the following questions:

- What takes up most of my time?
- Am I wasting time?
- Are there any activities that take too long?
- Am I paying too little attention to some activities?
- How could I free up time?
- Are there any activities that might be better undertaken at home or in a different environment?

Use the results of the exercise and your answers to make future days more efficient and pleasant.

## A professional body for further education tutors

**Lee Davies**, Manager of the Institute for Learning, describes the benefits membership of the Institute can bring for WEA tutors

For a number of industrial sectors in the UK the notion of a 'professional body' and structured Continuing Professional Development is well defined. Who among us would not look for the comfort of CORGI registration when employing a Plumber to service a boiler or not want the protection of the Law Society when engaging the services of a solicitor. Even night club bouncers have the requirement to achieve a qualification and be registered before starting work.

The notion of 'professionalism' in terms of its relationship to a professional body and ongoing personal development linked to a 'Licence to Practise' has become an important facet of not-for-profit sectors, and is a growing issue for post-compulsory education and training. The Institute for Learning (IfL) is the established professional body for practitioners in all forms of post-compulsory learning - Adult & Community, Work-Based and Further Education. The IfL offers lecturers, teachers, tutors, trainers, instructors, facilitators (the titles are many and varied) the opportunity to have their professionalism recognised and to have a voice in shaping change in the sector.

For WEA tutors the Institute offers a number of benefits of membership;

- Through the application process potential members have their skills, experience and qualification assessed against defined criteria leading to the award of Fellow, Member or Associate status.
- All members receive the periodical 'Update' and 'On the Agenda' - the definitive guide to current issues in post-compulsory learning.
- The Institute is in the process of developing member networks, enabling cross-sector discussion and debate of learning, teaching and curricula themes.
- The Institute is at the forefront of the Government's agenda to reshape teaching and learning in the post-compulsory sector, and members have an active voice in the emerging framework leading to Qualified Teacher (Learning and Skills) and the mandatory 'Licence to Practise' (Sept 2007).

Having worked with the WEA over a number of years I know how fiercely proud tutors are of their professionalism. I am also aware how attuned tutors are to the raft of initiatives which impact on the sector and how prepared tutors are to engage in constructive and critical debate. The IfL needs a proactive membership, prepared to analyse and campaign in order to make much needed improvements, the IfL needs the breadth of experience offered by WEA tutors. Please take the time to visit our web-site [www.ifl.ac.uk](http://www.ifl.ac.uk) or call the membership team on 0870 757 7894.

**Stop Press:** new discussion forum set up on  
[http://www.ifl.ac.uk/members\\_area/discussion\\_forum.html](http://www.ifl.ac.uk/members_area/discussion_forum.html)

### Do you deliver training within the WEA or for other organisations?

The Development and Diversity Team are looking for experienced trainers willing to help us deliver training and other staff and volunteer development across the Association and in some cases to outside organisations.

We are often asked for people to help Regions or Corporate Services Directorates to deliver training and it can be expensive and not always appropriate to contract external trainers. We also wish to draw on the expertise we know is around the Association to help us deliver at Association level. We are keen to have a diverse group of trainers and so particularly welcome interest from people from ethnic minority backgrounds or with a disability.

If you are interested in being added to our list of trainers please contact Chris Mollan at Quick House on 020 7426 3491 or [cmollan@wea.org.uk](mailto:cmollan@wea.org.uk) and she will send you further information.