

Educational
Centres
Association



Annual Report 2005 — 2006



TEACh European Active Citizenship Training, Wedgwood Memorial College, September 2005

Annual Report

2005 – 2006

Educational
Centres
Association



Registered Charity No. 313302

Educational Centres Association

National Executive Committee

Current Trustees †

President	Prof. Brian Groombridge †
Chairman	Bernard Godding †
Vice Chairman	Alan Skinner MBE †
Hon Secretary	Vacancy
Treasurer	Naomi Godding †

Regional Executive Members:

North of England	Walt Crowson † (NW)
South & East of England	Doreen Barlow (SE) (to June 05)
	Chris Minter † (SE) (from June 05)
	Hazel Dunn (E) (to June 06)
	Graham Eldridge † (E) (from June 06)
	Sue Taplin (EM) (to June 06)
	Diane Branigan † (EM) (from June 06)
West of England	Paul Olver † (WM)
Wales	Vaughan Williams (S) (to August 06)
Co-opted	Chris Minter (to June 05)
	Jill Ward (from April 06)

Vacancies exist for Regional Members - London, NE, Yorks, SW, Wales S & N

European Projects Officer Administration & PA	Judith Robinson Perry Richens-Pyatt (to December 05) Kate Hodges (January to August 05) Karen Read (from February 06)
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Bankers Bank of Scotland, Queen Street, Norwich

Examiner of Accounts Sixty & Co, Norwich

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Structure, Governance and Management

The Charity was founded in 1920 as the Educational Settlements Association. It is a membership body governed by a written Constitution last amended in 2004 which prescribes the form of the National Executive Committee (NEC) whose members have Trustee status. The officers of the Charity are elected at periodic intervals by open meeting based on nominations from amongst all paid up members. Regional Committees and representative members of the NEC are elected at a local meeting open to all members in the designated Region.

Notice of nominations and details of elections are circulated in line with the Constitution. Where specific expertise or experience is sought this is identified in the supporting documents and may result in targeted recruitment to co-opted positions.

The Regional Committees are established under a separate section of the Constitution and operate under rules laid down by the NEC.

A revised Equal Opportunities Policy was adopted during the year as was a new Sustainability Policy.

The work of the charity is undertaken by volunteers from the NEC and Regional Committees supported by part-time administrative staff. In addition a freelance projects officer was employed to teach on an EU funded course.

The Association is in reciprocal membership with 'engage' and the National Institute for Adult Continuing Education (NIACE)

Objectives and Activities 2005/06

The Association exists to promote the education of adults.

In particular it seeks to encourage the development of **centres of adult learning** 'Educational Centres' through: -

1. enabling them to work in partnership
2. promoting active involvement of students and staff in their management
3. advocating that suitably equipped buildings are provided
4. offering advice on their organisation, management and finance
5. providing training and consultation events for the sector
6. organising conferences and publishing material about and in support of their work
7. undertaking educational experiments and research into the education of adults

In the period in question this has been achieved through: -

1. Continuing to play an active role in supporting the Rural Learning Partnership Network and had some contact with the umbrella National Learning Partnership during a period of constraint for these bodies.
2. Engaging the Lifelong Learning Minister at DfES on the issue of involving adult learners in the governance of educational provision in which they are taking part. Our discussions with Lifelong Learning UK in which we have stressed the importance of tutor training in both enabling teaching staff to contribute to the setting of institutional agendas but also their critical role in acting as the bridge between the institution and its learners.
3. Our expressions of concern and advocacy where possible over the loss of prime use building for adult learning and noted the progressive loss of facilities for residential adult learning. We have in addition taken increasing note of other resources & facilities such as museums that can be effective venues for the education of adults.
4. Our advice which was offered at a series of meetings of the Learning Partnership groups with regard to their sustainability.
The whole of the National Executive Committee was enabled to take part in the Lifelong Learning event held as part of the UK Presidency of the European Union.
The active engagement of Committee members in the Teddybear Grundtvig Project in the autumn of 2005 led to it migrating to the ECA's overall leadership & management for its third year. We were collaborating with colleagues in Finland and Italy as well as being in discussions with other potential European partners.
5. Our contribution to the work of Lifelong Learning UK has been through participation in general consultation meetings and the Community Development Learning working group. We have played an active role in the Active Learning for Active Citizenship (ALAC) group which has been devising a learning framework under the auspices of the Home Office. In addition the training of citizenship tutors has been undertaken through TEACH (see 7. below)
6. Conferences were organised at the Victoria & Albert Museum in June: 'Valuing Adult Learning in Arts & Crafts' and Birkbeck College in November: 'Citizenship'. We continue to publish a lively and informative newsletter and with our Editor Alan Skinner, have also brought out a book telling the story of Colchester Adult Community College's Greyfriars building, its people and their adult education work. We have added to our own range of more substantial documents by Dr John Payne and have also been developing a public website. A web-based 'tiki' has also been established for a closed user group in association with the TEACH project (see below)

7. The TEACH Grundtvig European Active Citizenship project was our major initiative of the year and involved collaboration with six other European organisations. We were engaged with the innovative training of some 30 colleagues from across Europe which involved an ECA trainer travelling to Copenhagen as part of this activity. The UK aspects of this initiative were co-sponsored by the DfES as part of our agreed Work Programme under the National Association Grants scheme. We now have the benefit of NIACE involvement in the negotiation and monitoring processes relating to the Work Programme.

Achievements and Performance

Developing Citizenship Education for Adults

The principal successes in the year related to our work concerning citizenship education where we coordinated the first TEACH pilot course at the Wedgwood Memorial College with an attendance of fifteen participants recruited in the UK and three from the wider areas of Europe.



This work was supported by the innovative use of ICT resources and involved a tutorial team from all of the partner agencies including tutors from; Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, France, Hungary and Italy as well as ourselves. Judith Robinson, one of the graduates from the pilot course, progressed to being a mainstay of subsequent course teams and contributed to the second offering in the Danish capital, Copenhagen.

The relationship between TEACH and 'ALAC' the Active Learning for Active Citizenship project sponsored by the Home Office developed during the year and our last AGM was held in conjunction with Birkbeck College from which Professor John Annette chaired the ALAC group.

Allied to this members of the NEC took part in events which formed part of the 'Together We Can' initiative which crosses all the English branches of the civil service and looks forward to more active collaboration between citizens and the agencies which provide them with security and services.



As 2005 was designated the 'European Year of Citizenship through Education' we were especially delighted that the General Secretary of the European Association for the Education of Adults was able to join us from Brussels to speak at this event.

Also concerning citizenship education Sue Meyer of NIACE was reported in the Newsletter as saying, with regard to the Association's funding from DfES, that she 'fully accepts the ECA's credentials in this field'.

This view was endorsed when senior members of the NEC were engaged in extensive pre-Christmas discussions with educationalists from across Europe at a Berlin conference on citizenship and human rights.

An Aging Population & Intergenerational Learning

Through our membership of the Education and Research Group of the North Sea Commission we have advocated for more effective approaches to the education of adults during a period of marked demographic change affecting all the constituent regions.

Our involvement with the Teddybear Project, which commenced through Paul Olver's service with the Herefordshire authority, then led to a request that we manage the third year of this very successful Grundtvig activity. Teddybear operates in the West Midlands and its associated relationships are with partners in Finland and Italy. We have been successful in securing the funds from the British



Council to take the work through its final dissemination year.

Bob Short, another graduate of the TEACH course, is one of the Herefordshire Teddybear tutors. His report on the work in one rural village this year includes notes on an enquiry by elders and children into the ingredients of washing-up liquid, which has a clearly environmental dimension.

In addition we have been in consultations with a Norfolk charity concerning developments in the education of young parents.

Keeping Up With Curriculum Trends

The Association was again represented at the annual Salzburg Talks where the topic of 'reluctant' learners was addressed over three days. Material from the UK was presented by our delegates and there were substantial discussions around the continuing and emerging needs for basic skills education in European communities. The Austrian association announced that it was setting up an internet 'Knowledge Base' while our German counterparts are developing online learning resources for basic skills.

As reported in the late- spring, Euro Edition of the Newsletter

Highly Recommended

The ECA has been actively involved by being featured in recent content of the BBC's online support to language tutors, and, by using and promoting the site as an excellent way of keeping in touch with Euro-centric teaching developments. Lots of interesting stuff on <http://www.bbc.co.uk/languages/tutors/index.shtml>

Partnership Working

Following two spring conferences in the rural West Midlands we continued our engagement with the Rural Learning Partnerships. From this position we noted with regret that these bodies appear to have been receiving less commitment and resources from the Learning & Skills Council.

Staff Development and Central Resources

Our contribution to the staff development agenda has been valued by Lifelong Learning UK and we have taken part in the initial meeting of one of the strands which is determining occupational standards for workers in a branch of adult learning.



In addition we were pleased to support the training of our own PA, Perry Richens-Pyatt, through the use of a COIN ESF bursary to advance her computer skills.

The National Office invested in a new and more powerful computer system and instituted networking of its machines.

This was achieved under considerable pressure prior to Perry's departure for a new post.

Sustainability

Two members of the NEC were guests at the 'bassac' AGM in Brighton where they attended a presentation on environmental issues and were involved in discussions around the public education requirement if any degree of sustainability is to be achieved. This led to involvement in negotiations within the Community Sector Coalition to achieve a consensus and ultimately build a consortium that would bid for resources which DEFRA had announced were becoming available.



Safia Mohamud, another TEACH graduate, has already shown the way by developing a course which has been trialled by the Brighton and Hove Learning and Skills Team.

The Association, in pursuit of its own policy, extended the use of teleconferencing and advanced communication tools to reduce travel requirements and resultant CO² emissions.

Policy and Political Perspectives

Although the Association is apolitical it does benefit from opportunities to meet senior politicians. There were two occasions when we met Bill Rammell the Lifelong Learning Minister, firstly in his own Harlow constituency where he met the Regional Committee for an exchange of views. The second instance was when the Mayor of Brighton and Hove was hosting the Minister in the official 'parlour' during the Labour Party Conference; representatives of the NEC were invited to be present and to join in discussions.

The UK Presidency of the EU was another opportunity, this time for the whole NEC, to meet senior people from DfES and other British agencies as well as to contact and share perspectives with key adult education decision makers from across Europe.

We were pleased to welcome, as our after-dinner speaker at the TEACH event in Barlaston, Ann Williams Chair of the Staffordshire LSC who spoke both personally and in her role as a senior decision maker in the post-16 sector.

The Arts and Adult Learning

The Victoria & Albert Museum was again the venue for the South & East Region's annual meeting. On this occasion it coincided with a major exhibition on 'The Arts & Crafts Movement', which has been a significant influence on the UK's arts education programmes for adults throughout the 20th Century. Hazel Dunn's analysis of the

evaluation forms was again systematic and shrewd; we are pleased that her findings support the view of continuing success of our professional programme.

The concerns of members about the future of the arts and creative studies in Adult Education have been increased by successive announcement of the funding bodies. The NEC is now engaged in extensive consultations about the best ways to address the challenges that this is presenting for institutions and learners alike.

Archives

Although we were disappointed over the failure to secure a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund to conserve and interpret our archive we are pleased to report that Ronald Wilson's papers are now in the custody of the London University archivist. We remain hopeful that a collaboration with a Glasgow based academic may still enable us to make progress with our own historic records.

The last piece of work by Ronald Wilson was a biographical record of Mabel Tylecote who was a major figure in Manchester in the middle years of the last century. This document was worked on by North Region colleagues during the year, in the hope that it can be published in the foreseeable future.

It was important to re-establish links with the Edinburgh University Settlement in its centenary year and to learn of current developments in its work, particularly in the use of ICT by learners with special needs.

Financial Review

Policy on Reserves

The Trustees seek to maintain a balance of £25K as a reserve. Reserves are held on deposit with the COIF Charities Deposit Fund.

Trustees' Expenses

Expenses were only paid to Trustees during the year to reimburse them for travel and subsistence in connection with and purchases made on behalf of the charity.

Trustees' Indemnity Insurance

No charitable funds have been used to purchase insurance to indemnify the Trustees against the consequences of any neglect or default on their part.

Accounting Policies

The Educational Centres Association is a registered charity and as such is governed by the Charities Act 1993. Under this Act and the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2000, it is classified as a small charity since it has gross income or total expenditure of not more than £100,000 per annum. Section 42(3) of the Act therefore entitles this charity to take advantage of the more limited and simplified presentation of its financial statements. As a result of this and to be consistent with prior years, only a Receipts and Payments Account has been prepared and presented.

Regional Accounts

In consultation with the External Examiner, Charity Commission and Chairs of the Regional Committees, the number of small subsidiary bank accounts has been

reduced. This will improve Trustee accountability in the management of all finances and simplify the end of year procedures.

Progress Trust

The outstanding balance due under grant from the Progress Trust was received early in the year.

Funding from the European Commission

The Association has participated in a partnership project funded by the Commission under a contract with the Vastra Nylands Folk Highschool, Finland. It is the nature of this 'Socrates' funding that up to 61% of approved expenditure will be reimbursed through the agency of the Folk Highschool subject to the conditions of the grant being met.

Further Financial Review Details

The principal sources of funding are an annual grant from DfES, which had remained constant from 2003/04 at £11,900 per annum and Membership subscriptions. The latter reduced on the year partly because of the previous success of our new database which brought in receipts before the end of that financial year but also because staffing changes in December delayed the issuing of invoices until later than planned in 2006. Considerable effort was expended on a bid in conjunction with the Forum Trust in Norwich to conserve and interpret the ECA archive through a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund. Regrettably despite earlier positive indications this bid failed. A further bid was submitted to DEFRA under the Community Action 2020 initiative, which has later been re-titled 'Every Action Counts'.

Support for Key Objectives

The move towards project type activity and reduction in the number of conferences offered reflects the fact that the Association is becoming better known and has a higher profile in its chosen fields. It also reflects the changing nature of the grants from DfES to the National Associations. The NEC has therefore decided that externally funded project activity will be its preferred option. Key areas for our engagement are citizenship, inter-generational learning, adult learning in culture, creativity and the arts, sustainability and the uses of ICT related to the foregoing.

Future Plans

Realising the potential of the Teddybear Project will be a significant development for us as we move from being an active partner to taking the lead in an EU funded project. It will call for different patterns of accountability and it is important that we have the staffing and trustee support to manage such increasingly complex agendas.

There are ongoing discussions regarding the shape of any possible successor to the Teddybear project at the European level. This or any development from TEACH would have to take account of the new funding regime established by the EU for the next seven years.

We intend to work through external agencies to secure core funding which will enable the charity to grow and build on the achievements of recent years.

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS' REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF
THE EDUCATIONAL CENTRES ASSOCIATION**

We report on the accounts of The Educational Centres Association for the year ended 31 March 2006 which are set out on pages 11 and 12.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 43(2) of the Charities Act 1993 and that an independent examination is required.

It is our responsibility to:

- examine the accounts (under section 43(3)(a) of the 1993 Act);
- follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners (under section 43(7)(b) of the 1993 Act); and
- state whether particular matters have come to our attention.

Basis of independent examiner's statement

Our examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently we do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with our examination, no matter has come to our attention:

1 which gives us reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements

- to keep accounting records in accordance with section 41 of the 1993 Act; and
- to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and to comply with the accounting requirements of the 1993 Act

have not been met; or

2 to which, in our opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

**124 THORPE ROAD
NORWICH
NR1 1RS**

**SEXTY & CO
CHARTERED CERTIFIED ACCOUNTANTS
AND REGISTERED AUDITORS**

DATE : 9 October 2006

**EDUCATIONAL CENTRES ASSOCIATION
RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT
For the year ended 31st March 2006**

	£	2006	£	£	2005	£
Receipts						
Voluntary Sources						
Subscriptions	2,170			6,611		
Donations	50			730		
DfES	11,900			11,900		
Miscellaneous	567		14,687	889		20,130
Conference fees						
National	340			8,565		
Regional DfES - Bassingbourn 2004	-			1,100		
Hereford 2004	-			970		
Manchester 2004	50			1,450		
Nottingham 2005	90			1,110		
Great Malvern 2005	845			1,260		
V & A 2005	530			-		
Other	-		1,855	445		14,900
Projects						
Progress Trust (NEARIS)			5,830			4,170
International (including TEACh)			3,320			1,059
Investment income						
Interest received			1,184			1,236
Total receipts			<u>£26,876</u>			<u>£41,495</u>
Payments						
Direct charitable expenditure						
Conference fees						
National	-			13,517		
Regional DfES - Bassingbourn 2004	-			480		
Hereford 2004	-			1,404		
Manchester 2004	-			2,273		
Nottingham 2005	1,238			2,027		
Great Malvern 2005	-			3,377		
V & A 2005	816			-		
Harlow 2006	295			-		
Other	-			330		
Telephone	566			491		
Salaries/fees	4,423			4,478		
Information services	1,106			917		
Bursaries	-		8,444	200		29,494
Projects						
Progress Trust (NEARIS)	2,660					6,366
International (including TEACh)	9,328					4,275
Other expenditure						
Stationery and photocopying	371			768		
Printing and publications	251			1,646		
Postage and telephone	1,045			903		
Travel and subsistence	2,766			2,946		
Information services	1,106			917		
Miscellaneous	27			25		
Meeting expenses and room hire	300			453		
Representation	46			-		
Insurance	266			-		
Accountancy	593			643		
Legal fees	-			881		
Gift (from donations received)	-		18,759	294		9,476
Total payments			<u>£27,203</u>			<u>£49,611</u>
Net payments for the year			(327)			(8,116)
Bank balances brought forward			28,496			36,612
Bank balances carried forward			<u>£28,169</u>			<u>£28,496</u>

EDUCATIONAL CENTRES ASSOCIATION
STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES
at 31st March 2006

	31 st March 2006		31 st March 2005	
	£	£	£	£
Monetary Assets				
COIF Charities deposit account		25,301		24,218
Bank balances - Central Office	1,445		1,474	
Wales	342		342	
Mable Tylecote Fund	113		113	
South and East	641		1,923	
North	191		247	
West	136		179	
		2,868		4,278
		£28,169		£28,496

Other Assets

Held for functional use by the charity

Computer equipment costing £1,616 in 2005 and several small items of office equipment purchased over a number of years.

After date receipts/payments

It is anticipated that approximately £1,700 will be received after the year end in respect of expenditure incurred during the year.

Bernard Godding
 (Chairman)
 On behalf of the Trustees

Date: 7 October 2006

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

For the year ended 31st March 2006

1. Accounting policies

The accounts are prepared on a receipts and payments basis as permitted under section 43(2) of the Charities Act 1993.

2. Funds

Total funds are all unrestricted.