

## WEA ESSEX FEDERATION

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> October 2016 at 10.15 a.m.  
Venue: Keene Hall, Watchouse Road, Galleywood, Chelmsford CM2 8PT

### Present

#### Branches

Ardleigh, Billericay, Braintree, Brightlingsea, Chelmsford, Coggeshall, Colchester, Danbury, Dedham, Felsted, Great Bardfield, Halstead, Hatfield Peverel, Holland on Sea, Kelvedon & Feering, Loughton & Epping, Maldon, Mersea, Rayleigh, Silver End, The Maplesteads, Tiptree, Tollesbury, West Bergholt, Wickford, Writtle: 47 Delegates.  
(26 out of total of 36 branches)

#### Volunteer Federation Officers

Chairman: Ron Marks; Vice-Chairman: Joan Black; Treasurer: Jane Dougan; Secretary: David Stubbs;  
Minutes Secretary: Lesley Naish

#### Eastern Region Officials in Attendance

Sharon Watson, Regional Education Manager; Jacquie Taylor, Operations Manager, Regional Office;  
Sarah Moore, Area Learning Manager; Sally Ridealgh, Essex Organiser

#### Guests

Andrew Westwood-Bate, Cambridgeshire Federation Chair; Mo Green, Regional Treasurer; Peter Threadkell, WEA Trustee; Leila Threadkell; Liz Bandy, Regional Committee Member (Bedfordshire); Betty Wolfenden, Acting Chair of Eastern Region and Hertfordshire Federation Chair; Bernard Godding, Regional Education Committee (Norfolk); Gordon Vowles, Regional Committee Member and former Trustee (Bedfordshire)

**Guest of Honour:** Trevor Phillips, OBE, Chair of Trustees

#### 1 a. Welcome and Outline of the Day

The Chairman welcomed members from the 26 branches present, the Regional Officials, and other guests. He thanked all who had helped in the preparations. He then outlined the business of the day.

#### b. Apologies for Absence

Sir Bob Russell {Patron}, Richard Colley {Great Oakley Branch}, Charles Sims {Leigh-on-Sea Branch}, Ray Hedley {Colchester Branch & EF News Editor}, Lucy Marshall {Dedham Branch}, Viv Smith {Halstead Branch}, Dave Bazley {Halstead Branch}, Anita Curtis {Writtle Branch}

#### c. Minutes of the last AGM, held on 10<sup>th</sup> October 2015

The Minutes were approved, and signed by the Chairman.

#### d. Matters Arising from the Minutes

There were no matters arising.

#### 2 a. Chairman's Annual Report

A detailed report of the work of the past year was tabled, and is at **Appendix 1**.

Ron also referred to his article in the Autumn edition of EF News.

As Chairman for the past 10 years he had sought to promote a better understanding of how all areas of the WEA work together, both the Branch and the Community programmes, and to try to see that our Members, Students, Branches, Tutors, Educational and Administrative Staff, the Federation and the Regional Committees all worked collaboratively, with mutual understanding, in a cooperative rather than hierarchical framework, to promote informal adult education and fulfil our educational, social and health missions, maintaining as much flexibility and simplicity of operation as possible despite externally imposed constraints, and enhancing our democracy. He said that 2016/17 would be his last year as Chairman if he were re-elected. He would be happy to continue working within the Essex Federation, but would like to concentrate more on his Regional role and, possibly, work at a National level. An enhanced Federation Committee, with more delegation of roles and some restructuring could improve its effectiveness. More volunteers from all areas of the county would be very welcome.

David Stubbs had also expressed his intention to retire from his role as Federation Secretary in October 2017, but would continue if needed to administer the website.

#### **b. Vice Chairman's Report**

Joan Black had attended the Regional Council and Regional Committee meetings throughout the year, along with Ron Marks. After Ron was elected a Vice Chair of the Region, Jane Dougan was invited to join the Committee as representative for Essex: so we were well represented.

Joan had also attended the Education Sub Committee as Federation Representative. At the last AGM it had been announced that the Course Selection process would be moved forward, allowing Branches to have their Tutor choices sorted earlier in 2016. Sadly this didn't happen. This was because at the last minute the Skills Funding Agency moved the goalposts, thereby altering the course lengths available to us.

At the recent Education Committee, this year's schedule for course choices was announced. The Subject Lists would be issued to branches on 1<sup>st</sup> November, and choices needed to be returned to Regional Office by 5<sup>th</sup> December. Any branch not returning choices would be contacted on 6<sup>th</sup> December. Courses should be confirmed to branches by 13<sup>th</sup> March 2017, and the county brochures will be available in mid-May. Hopefully this year would go more smoothly, both for the hard-pressed staff in the Regional Office, and for the Branches.

Seven guided walks had been organised for the Federation this year. All the walks, in Saffron Walden, Clacton, Silver End, Long Melford in Suffolk, Colchester and Dedham were very well received, and thanks go to the guides, who were all excellent. Two walks in particular were over-subscribed. We had managed to put on a second one in Silver End, and it is planned to repeat the Colchester walk next year, as well as a shorter walk around the Dutch quarter of Colchester. The Committee has asked that more be organised next year, with the possibility of places such as Thaxted, Maldon and Braintree being on the cards. The weather was kind for all bar one walk, where it rained over Silver End, but not apparently three miles down the road! The obvious chance to learn a bit more about our lovely county was also an opportunity for some healthy exercise. It is suggested that members be encouraged to book early to avoid disappointment.

#### **c. & e. Secretary's Annual Report**

David Stubbs hoped that he had responded to all telephone calls, letters and e-mails received during the past year. In relation to sending out documents and letters as hardcopy, the cost of postage was considerable and he hoped that the use of e-mails was acceptable to the majority of branch officers. If anyone has had problems with e-mails, especially the format of attachments, please let him know in order that he could provide the material in a suitable format.

WEA Essex Federation Website: The Website had been updated with details of the coming years Essex Branch courses.

In relation to the branch pages set up last year, fifteen branches were using these individual branch pages to post information about upcoming courses and events they had arranged. A few branches had sought assistance to initially log onto their branch pages and one or two had had questions relating to the facilities to use to update the pages. These issues had all been dealt with. Branches are now able to add text, images, links and even video clips to their own news pages and can use their pages to keep students updated with relevant information about current as well as new courses.

In relation to One Day Schools and Summer Schools and Other Events organised by the Federation and other related bodies the Federation Website has been updated with additional pages to be used to publicise and advertise these events.

Copies of the booklet of courses for 2016-2017 were available at the AGM as were copies of EF News. Delegates were urged to collect sufficient for their branches, but it was worth bearing in mind that all of the information in the booklets should be easily accessible via the Federation website too.

As noted above David expressed his intention to stand down from the position of Secretary to the Federation but is willing to retain a role in relation to the Federation website.

In his tabled report David also gave the details of the Federation Autumn One Day Schools on Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> November. [All branches have had copies of the leaflet and booking form, which is also available on the website.] Other matters that the Federation had been involved with during the past year are covered under other items in the minutes.

#### d. Treasurer's Annual Report : Tabled as Appendix 2

Jane Dougan spoke to the report, and was happy to state that we had had a much better year financially than last year, largely due to the changes we had made to the summer schools. Generally speaking, attendance at day and summer schools had decreased a little. We had made a small profit of £6.44 on the Colchester summer school and a loss of £198.80 on Chelmsford but this had included the cost of both accommodation and tutors; so it was hoped members agreed that the two- day format was the way to go. The successful programme of guided walks had helped to offset this small loss. Jane had suggested that a WEA 'paddle' should be displayed on these walks but was democratically voted down! The walks are, however, a way of showing an active presence in the community and help in a small way to increase our profile.

Once again we were grateful to both Benham-Seaman Trust and Basil Slaughter Trust without whose help we would not be in as strong a position as we are now. Benham-Seaman provides funds for specific items including EF News, equipment, remitted fees and advertisements. Basil Slaughter gives us a grant that we are able to spend as necessary in maintaining our programme throughout the year and on occasion helping individual branches.

All branches (with the exception of Lawford) had paid their affiliation fee before the year end, which is much appreciated. Last year we had a complete revamp of our website which cost an additional £480 but hopefully these costs will be much reduced this year so there seems to be no need to increase the affiliation fee this year and Jane proposed keeping it at £20. Invoices would be sent out in November with the minutes of the meeting and it would be helpful to receive remittances as soon as possible, but if any branch had difficulty meeting the cost it should let Jane know.

Mike Wall, from Chelmsford Branch, has very kindly offered to mentor branch treasurers. So if your treasurer needs help, let us know.

It is hoped the programme of events we have lined up for this year will be well attended and that we can look forward to another successful year.

It was proposed that the Affiliation Fee remain at £20 per branch. This was proposed by Pat Dale (Loughton Branch), seconded by Dianne Collins (Writtle Branch) and carried unanimously by vote.

It was proposed that the Essex Federation Income and Expenditure Account for the Year Ended 31<sup>st</sup> July 2016 be accepted. This was proposed by John Came (Maldon Branch), seconded by Jean Roberts (Colchester Branch) and carried unanimously by vote.

#### f. *EF News Report*

Ray Hedley was unable to be present. The Chairman suggested that copies be displayed by Branches in local libraries if possible. Concern had been expressed by some Branches that their local libraries were uncooperative with regard to displaying posters and booklets. Ruth Spellman had taken this matter up at a national level. Eastern Region had sent the Course Brochure to all libraries in Essex as usual. Members were encouraged to go to their libraries and ask to see the WEA information.

#### g. Questions to Federation Officers

Chris Gunton asked how the proposed "Cluster" Brochures were to be funded. Ron said they would be produced and funded by the Regional Office. Lesley Naish asked if it would be possible to include the 30 word course description in the web version of the county brochure, but this was probably not possible since the brochure was produced by National, not Region.

### 3 Programme Reports

a. Sarah Moore, Area Learning Manager, said that her seconded National Information Advice and Guidance Role means she has only 3 days in a regional capacity until the end of May.

Two reports were tabled, Essex Branch Programme (**Appendix 3**), and Essex Partnership Programme (**Appendix 4**).

Mentioned in the Partnership Programme Report are two case studies – Alice and Pearl, learning with the Clacton Coastal Academy, attached as **Appendix 5**.

Following the resignation of Sam Bickerton the responsibilities of the Organisers have changed slightly, and a new map is attached at **Appendix 6**.

SWIFT is to be student focused, meaning improvements for students (and branches) as 'paperwork' is reduced and staff are able to spend more time supporting education initiatives rather than admin.

Online enrolments have increased, 286 last year across region and 719 this year so far including 210 'phone enrolments. Benefits for students who enrol this way. **The Freephone telephone enrolment number is 0800 328 1060.** Students using this number will speak to a person who can quickly take the students' details and carry out the online enrolment process for them.

#### b. Questions for Area Learning Management

The process for new tutor recruitment has changed slightly. Previously, this was done three times per year. Now it is targeted to recruit new tutors in subjects and geographical areas where there is a shortage.

### 4 a. Regional and National Matters

#### i. Sharon Watson, Regional Education Manager

Sharon's report was concerned with the WEA's work in raising its national profile. She pointed out that many people still say that they have never heard of the WEA.

Ways to raise our profile included more mentions in the press, promoting courses online to reach new students, increasing online enrolments, better use of the social media, influencing public policy by responding to Government consultations or Select Committees on matters relating to adult education, and finally reaching our target of making 150 "parliamentary friends".

To do this we were talking to universities, colleges, local authorities, housing associations, DWP job centres, the health sector, and the LEPs (Local Education Partnerships) to whom Government funding was being devolved.

We were also forming local links with community forums, wider educational networks and partnerships with schools and other local educational organisations.

We were promoting our activity with Festival of Learning events, in local and national news, using the websites/Twitter/Facebook, issuing brochures, creating more online enrolment opportunities, making parliamentary friends, using WEA Ambassadors.

This year there had been 448 online enrolments so far, of which 155 had been to Colchester Branch, and 172 in the community programme.

A report, "Adult Education: Too important to be left to chance" prepared by the All Party Parliamentary Group for Adult Education (of which the WEA is a member) warns that national policy for adult education could disappear by 2020 if adult and community learning providers continue to be ignored by the area reviews and skills devolution processes.

The report calls for

- The establishment of a national and regional strategy for adult education
- The redistribution of resources to develop a fair and cohesive adult education framework.
- Improved awareness of adult education through careers information, advice and guidance in local communities
- Research into the full impact of adult education.

With regard to Health and Well Being, WEA West Midlands had teamed up with Oxford University to take part in a study on the health benefits of adult education, and the final part of this research had been launched in early October. There has been a mix of national, regional and local news coverage (around 300 titles in total), including The Huffington Post, The Daily Mail, The Belfast Telegraph and The Yorkshire Post.

Sharon reminded us that funds for adult education are no longer nationally controlled and are being devolved to Local Enterprise Partnerships. County councils were keen to steer the allocation of funding as much as possible, "Big Business" was also keen to get their hands on this funding for job related training, and Further Education colleges were merging.

This means that the voluntary sector needed to communicate with local skills commissioners, to highlight what we can contribute and show understanding of local learning and skills needs and demonstrate how we fit in. The student voice and the representation of students' needs and views were hugely important.

#### ii. Peter Threadkell, WEA Trustee

Peter became a National Trustee of the WEA in September 2016, having previously been, since 1992, part of the Regional Governance team and Regional Chair for many years. He referred to his article in *EF News* which gives a fuller account of his work for the WEA. *[This will be available on the WEA Essex Federation web-site in the near future].*

Peter thanked the Essex Federation for all the work done to promote the WEA in this area and Ron thanked him on behalf of everyone for all of the work he has carried out on behalf of the WEA.

#### **b. Questions**

The possibility of volunteer members of branches becoming more involved in the Community programmes in their areas was mentioned. There was a need for Branches to be made much more aware of this work.

### **5 Address by Trevor Phillips OBE, Chair of Trustees, Workers' Educational Association: Guest of Honour**

Trevor has been Chair of the Trustees of the WEA for the past seven months. He has had a varied career as a writer, journalist, broadcaster, GLC politician and is currently President of the Partnership Council of the John Lewis Partnership.

He told the meeting that his parents and siblings had come from British Guiana in 1950 because his sister had wished to train as a nurse, and there were more opportunities for education and careers of all types in the UK. His family regarded learning as a route to personal transformation, very much part of the WEA's philosophy.

The WEA started over 100 years ago, and its formation was contemporary with changes in the lives of ordinary people brought about by such as the Co-operative Movement and the Labour Party, not to mention the formation of the John Lewis Partnership in the 1920s. There was massive social change in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

But there are still more massive changes in the 21<sup>st</sup> century – for example, globalisation, the use of social media for communication, and online purchasing are transforming our world. Migration was happening 100 years ago, and is still happening, the position of women has changed and is changing. Life expectancy has improved, and people are in better health for longer, with knowledge, time, talent and resources to share.

100 years ago the organisations supporting the poor, and bringing people together, were primarily the churches and trades unions, but now their importance has lessened. Education can be the heart of a community, through improved literacy and IT skills, fostering citizenship through programmes such as ESOL, and work on social mobility. A movement like the WEA offers every opportunity to every individual. These days, no-one needs to end life as the person they were born.

*[Trevor's address was filmed and we hope to be able to make a full copy available via the Federation website in the near future.]*

Trevor was asked to make a presentation to Kerry Beere (Alice in the case study) of a certificate from Adult Learners' Week (Festival of Learning) in recognition of commitment to learning, and was delighted to do so – as an example of the WEA helping to transform a life.

Mo Green, our Regional Treasurer, thanked Trevor for his inspiring Address. She also reminded branches of the importance of sending their representatives to the Regional Council AGM on 5<sup>th</sup> November in Cambridge, a key date in the democratic functioning of the WEA.

### **6 Open Forum**

Diana Taylor (Rayleigh Branch) referred to the Parliamentary Friends, and offered to encourage Baroness Angela Smith, formerly of Rayleigh, to join us.

Chris Gunton (Tiptree Branch) said that although some paperwork must be necessary, the learning outcome forms were perhaps excessive, and some students felt lost in dealing with the paperwork. The answer was that the SFA wanted evidence of learning from all courses, and this would provide it. Trevor made two points – that standardisation does not mean producing identical students, and that paperwork does inform tutors, but the aim should be to keep it to a minimum, and that perhaps much of it could now be done in advance of the courses starting.

## 7 Election of Federation Officers and Committee Members

Nominations having been received for all of the individuals listed below, and there being no additional nominations, all of the following were duly elected:

Chairman	Mr. Ron Marks (Kelvedon & Feering, and Braintree)
Vice-Chairman	Mrs. Joan Black (Chelmsford)
Secretary	Mr. David Stubbs (Braintree)
Treasurer	Mrs. Jane Dougan (Chelmsford)
Regional Committee Rep.	Mrs. Jane Dougan
Regional Council Reps.	Mrs. Joan Black

Regional Education Committee Mrs. Joan Black

Committee Members

Mrs. Lesley Naish (Hatfield Peverel)
Mrs. Pat Dale (Loughton & Epping)
Mr. Richard Colley (Great Oakley)
Mrs. Jean Roberts / Mr. Jos Claessen (Colchester)
Mrs. Jane Powell / Mrs. Jane Humbles “
Mrs. Mary Nugent (Chelmsford)
Mrs. Anita Curtis (Writtle)
Mr. Peter Norfolk (Brightlingsea)
Mr. Ray Hedley (Colchester)
Mr. Peter Naish (Hatfield Peverel)

### Any Other Business

There being no other business, the Chairman thanked everyone for their contributions and declared the meeting closed at 1p.m.

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### Afternoon Programme: Tutor Taster Sessions

Thanks go to Sally Ridealgh who organised the Taster sessions, and produced the Essex Brochure with Henry Baker.

Presentations were delivered by

**Dr. Anat Vernitski** introducing a range of courses on *Russia – the Land, the History, the Culture and the Literature*.

**Steven Haydon** introduced his **Science** course: *Science and Some of its Current Controversies*.

**Robin McCartney** talked about his new course looking at the painting, sculpture and architecture of the 15<sup>th</sup> Century in Italy: *Introducing the Italian Renaissance*.

**Richard Till** introduced his course looking at the problems and scandals that beset the early Stuarts, comparing their experiences with those of the more successful Tudors: *The Rise And Fall Of The New Monarchy, 1485-1642*.

Details of the following tutors who were unavailable for the Taster Day were included in the Taster Day Brochure, as was availability of teaching days, and possible travel locations.

#### **Dr Rosanna Eckersley**

German Art 1900-1939; Women Artists in France and Britain 1850-1950; Whistler to WW1: Avant-Garde Art in Britain

#### **Dr Grace Halden**

Cultural History and English

American History after 1945; What Does it Mean to be Human?; 21<sup>st</sup> Century Fiction; 20<sup>th</sup>/21<sup>st</sup> Century Disasters and Their Impact; British Literature, Key Texts; Short Stories, Close Reading

### **Viv Jacobs**

Shakespeare . . . Don't Make Me Laugh; The 19<sup>th</sup> Century Novel and Its Times; Find Your Pen, Creative Writing; Who are we? Who are you

### **Mike Miller**

European Cinema since 1945, including Italian Neo-Realism, New German Cinema, French New Wave (La Nouvelle Vague), and British Cinema – The Free Cinema Movement and New Wave/Social Realism

### **Veronica Minns**

Forensic Psychology

Including a 4½ hour introduction to the subject, a 10 hour course on Criminal Profiling and a 10 hour course on Criminal Psychology.

### **Mike Peters**

Literary Strangers: Modern Writers and the Experience of Exile

### **Sue Pownall**

Art Appreciation: Inspired by East Anglia; Art Appreciation: Gardens in British Art; Art Appreciation: The Role of Location Drawing in Art; History: Women's Roles in Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century British Life; Art: Sketching Fun; Art: Painting Like The Masters

### **Abbie Saunders**

Controversial Crime Narratives by Japan's Female Novelists; Landmark Magic-Realist Novels; Surrealism in Literature, Part 1; Surrealism in Literature, Part 2; Contemporary Japanese Literature; Post-Modernist Detective Fiction; Contemporary Chinese Women Writers

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**The taster session finished at 3.30pm**

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## **Appendix 1**

### **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

#### **Federation Committee Meetings**

Since the last Federation AGM your Committee has had five full meetings, covering a great deal of business, as well as sub-committee meetings to discuss and plan our One Day Schools and Festival of Learning activities, i.e. the Richard Waskett Memorial Lecture, the Summer Schools and Summer Walks.

The Committee meetings were held as follows:

Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> November 2015 in Chelmsford: no Observers attended.

Thursday 22<sup>th</sup> January 2016 in Tiptree: no Observers attended.

Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> April 2016 in Pitsea: Observers – Barbara & Don Stammers from Wickford.

Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> July 2016 in Saffron Walden: Observer – Prue Swarbrick (Saffron Walden).

Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> September in Brightlingsea: Observers – Jill Frostick from Ardleigh, Angela Wilson from Brightlingsea and Janet George from Holland-on-Sea.

We continue to move meetings around the County in the hope that observers from local branches will attend. 'Observers' do not merely observe: they often raise matters, give advice and make valuable contributions to our discussions. **I would still very much like to see every group or 'cluster' of branches in the County represented on the Federation Committee on a rotational basis at least** in the same way that our largest branch, Colchester, has four members who can rotate attendance.

#### **Federation Events**

Taster Day: A very successful Essex Taster Day was held in Kelvedon on Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> December. Five new Tutors introduced their courses and five established Tutors joined them to promote new ones. Warm

thanks are due to Sally Ridealgh and Sam Bickerton for their meticulous organisation of the event, and to Henry Baker for the very detailed booklet. Sadly, from our point of view, Sam has now left us to resume full-time Civil Service employment in the Department of Education. (or whatever it is now called!) but fortunately Sally continues and has organised this afternoon's session.

The Federation Day Schools were held in Feering on 14<sup>th</sup> November 2015 and 23<sup>rd</sup> April this year, with three courses delivered at each. Feedback on all three was good. Jane will be covering the finances in her report. Thanks are due to everybody who helped, including the members from Feering who deal with car parking and assist with refreshments

The Richard Waskett Memorial Lecture on 27<sup>th</sup> April was an enjoyable experience, delivered by musical entertainer Steve Galler. Thanks are again due to Joan and the members of her croquet club who provided the tea and delicious cakes, and to the friends of Richard who established the fund to sponsor the event.

The Federation Summer Schools were held in Chelmsford on Monday and Tuesday, 27<sup>th</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup> June, and in Colchester on Monday and Tuesday, 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> July. The two-day (10 hour) courses, each with two instead of three tutors, proved successful, increasing numbers in each class and improving the finances. In order to help the Region get nearer to fulfilling its Skills Funding Agency contract, we offered to 'donate' the Summer Schools, with the agreement of the tutors, resulting in a little more paperwork for them.

The Summer Walks programme, organised by Joan, proved very successful, and will be repeated next year.

### **Branch AGMs**

We have 35 branches currently running courses. We continue to try to ensure that a Federation Committee member attends every Branch AGM, but this is not always possible. Since this time last year, according to my diary, I have attended those of Mersea, Frinton, Colchester, Rayleigh, Hatfield Peverel, Coggeshall, Braintree, Holland-on-Sea and Dedham. David attended at Saffron Walden, Silver End, Tollesbury, Danbury, Maldon and Loughton; Joan at Billericay, Felsted, Kelvedon & Feering, with Benfleet to come; Jean at Brightlingsea.

### **Chairman's attendance at Regional and other meetings**

National Conference: I attended this as the Kelvedon & Feering Branch Delegate in Sheffield on 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> March. Jill Frostick, representing Ardleigh, travelled with me by train. No other Essex branch sent a delegate, I regret to say. I spoke to four motions that I proposed, one on behalf of the Regional Committee and three on behalf of the branch, but all linked to the issue of the future of branches. I had been in correspondence about the President's Working Party on Branches, of which Mo is a member, and was glad that an interim report was tabled at Conference and that this working party would be pursuing the ideas we put forward.

Regional Committee: Following my election as one of the two Regional Vice-Chairs at the Regional Council AGM last year, Jane Dougan stepped into the role of Federation Representative, and will be standing for election to this post again today. Joan Black is one of the members directly elected by the Regional Council, and will be standing for election again at the Council AGM on 5<sup>th</sup> November, to which all branches have received invitations. I attended all three meetings of the Regional Committee and all three Regional Council meetings, the Regional Strategy conference held in January and a recent 'Diversity in Governance Workshop' together with Jane. I have also attended the more frequent meetings of the Regional Finance and General Purposes Committee, and two informal meetings in Cambridge of Federation Chairs.

2016-17 Essex Course Brochure: I again assisted with the last-minute proof-reading of the draft of this nationally produced cut-down version, assisted by the Secretaries of a couple of our larger branches. We have been encouraged to produce more local, more detailed and illustrated brochures and other publicity, printed in-house in Cambridge, and having had two discussions in Cambridge in May and September with Jacquie Taylor, the first attended by the former National Publicity and Marketing Manager, Sebastian Hanley, I sent out details of my ideas for branch 'cluster' brochures to all branch officers, the responses that I have so far had being largely favourable. My proposal was to include a few branches from the other counties bordering Essex and I have been discussing this with my fellow Federation Chairs. It is my hope that such brochures could be produced in time to publicise Spring and Summer courses this year. Critically, success in drawing in new students will depend on branches helping to ensure that the printed brochures appear in all appropriate public places and are not just distributed to current members.

SWIFT: I have been involved by e-mail and a couple of telephone conferences (meant to be ZOOM con-



ferences but I lack the equipment) in this huge project. A little more about this is in the Chairman's notes in *EF NEWS*, which as in previous years also form part of this report. We received a SWIFT update with six consultation documents and a response form on Thursday, but I haven't had time to read through these yet and some of the material may, at this stage, be confidential to participants consisting of:

- All WEA Core Staff
- WEA Council members
- Members of Regional Committees
- Members of other Regional Governance Committees".

Attendance at other County Federation AGMs: On behalf of the Federation I attended that of Norfolk in North Walsham in 2015 and in Hingham last week. I hope to attend the Cambridgeshire AGM on 22<sup>nd</sup> October, but it would be good if someone else could represent us in Hertfordshire on 15<sup>th</sup> October and Suffolk on 29<sup>th</sup> October.

Celebrations: Halstead celebrated 100 years of its branch this year, and Silver End Village, where Brian Gillion and his branch have been very active, its 90<sup>th</sup> birthday.

**Thanks:** Finally, on your behalf I thank all members of the Federation Committee for all their work, in particular fellow Officers David Stubbs, Joan Black and Jane Dougan, Lesley Naish for her work on the Summer Schools and assistance with one Day School catering, Ray Hedley for *EF NEWS*, and all Branch Officers and others who have helped with activities during the year.

*Ron Marks* - 7<sup>th</sup> October 2016.

## Appendix 2

### WEA ESSEX FEDERATION Charity No. 1112775

#### INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JULY 2016

<u>INCOME</u>		<u>EXPENDITURE</u>	
Autumn One Day School	1070.00	Autumn One Day School	1135.10
Spring One Day School	1150.00	Spring One Day School	1112.90
Summer School Colchester	1120.00	Summer School Colchester	1113.56
Summer School Chelmsford	1155.00	Summer School Chelmsford	1353.80
Richard Waskett Lecture	165.00	Richard Waskett Lecture	340.00
Walks	460.00	Walks	305.20
Benham-Seaman Trust	3727.85	Equipment	1008.80
		EF News	1244.00
		Advertisements	772.32
Basil Slaughter Trust	2000.00	WEA Rayleigh	335.00
Affiliation Fees	825.00	Accommodation	100.85
Catering	89.09	Travel Expenses	300.45

Bank Interest	15.83	Stationery/Postage	134.99
		AGM	526.20
		Catering	20.35
		Website	780.00
		Add Excess Income over Expenditure	<u>1194.25</u>
	<u>11777.77</u>		<u>11777.77</u>
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### **NOTES TO ACCOUNTS**

1. Autumn one day school: leaflets 145.00, accommodation 442.50, tutors 547.60. Loss £65.10.
  2. Spring one day school: leaflets 145.00, accommodation 433.12, tutors 534.78. Profit £37.10.
  3. Summer school Colchester: accommodation 380.80, tutors 732.76. Profit 6.44.
  4. Summer school Chelmsford: accommodation 640.00, tutors 713.80. Loss 198.80.
  5. Richard Waskett Lecture: leaflets 30.00, catering 130.00, accommodation 100.00, speaker 80.00. Loss 175.00, balance remaining in Memorial Fund 464.34.
  6. Walks: profit 154.80.
  7. Benham-Seaman Trust Grant 3727.85: equipment 1008.80 (1 projector, 3 wireless presenters and 5 mics 408.82; 2 projectors 599.98) - grant received 2015/16 1102.82 plus 26.00 remaining from the previous year, 120.02 remaining to be spent on equipment. EF News 1567.72, remitted fees 184.00, advertising 873.31.
  8. EF News: Autumn 607.00, Spring 637.00.
  9. Advertisements: The Month 9/2015 300.00, The Month 4/2016 160.00, Enquirer 6/2016 200.00, joint advertisement for WEA Holland-on-Sea and WEA Frinton 112.32.
  10. WEA Rayleigh received a grant through the Federation from the Basil Slaughter Trust of 315.00, plus 20.00 affiliation fee returned.
  11. Affiliation fees: 36 fees were received this year, 20.00 fee returned to WEA Rayleigh, WEA Lawford outstanding (2012/13 15.00, 2013/14 17.50, 2014/15 17.50, 2015/16 20.00).
  12. AGM: accommodation 315.00, catering 211.20.
  13. Catering: Summer school Chelmsford income 27.29, expenditure 20.35; income Summer school Colchester and one day schools 61.80.
  14. Website: balance revamp October 2015 480.00, maintenance and domain name July 2016 300.00.
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## Appendix 3

### Essex Branch Programme ALM Report: Oct 2016

#### Branch Course programme 2015-16 Course and enrolment numbers

During the past academic year there were 136 courses delivered through the branch programme in Essex, this compared to 140 in the previous year.

A total of 2417 course hours were delivered, contributing significantly towards the regional course hour target. Average enrolments per course dropped a little with an average figure of just over 22 per class, compared to just over 23 in 2014-15.

In addition you delivered 45 day schools or summer schools that are non SFA funded on the system with over 216 course hours.

Day schools are a good way to 'try out' new tutors, new subjects and or recruit new students. For instance the Essex Federation have organised a day school on Mindfulness for this autumn and it appears to be recruiting well – so book quick if you want a place!

#### Looking forward to 2016-17

Early indications are that we are likely to find hitting our Essex and regional course hour targets more challenging this year. This is due in part to some changes in our partnership delivery models and also we already have 12 less courses planned through the Essex branch programme compared to last year equating to over 200 hours.

There is opportunity to run some more courses and the staff will help you to organise if you decide to run additional courses or perhaps a summer programme. Our funding rules have been redefined by the Skills Funding Agency so we will be able to run some courses that do not fit the 'loadbands' for example if you want a 10 hour course in the summer – you can have it! A 6 hour day school/course – you can have it! How about trying something new? Recruiting through different areas?

#### Staffing:

This year has seen some more staffing changes within WEA Eastern region and within Essex. Samantha Bickerton left us in the summer to work at the Department of Education in London where she is currently working on a project to support schools into academy status. Sam is not being replaced like for like, however we have just recruited a new Business Development Manager which will hopefully free up a little of my time so that I can support the team.

As a result we have had a bit of a reshuffle! A map of Essex handout and which staff member is responsible for which area and which branch is listed, However in the first instance you are encouraged to contact the office if you have any queries as we do expect the team to be out and about most of the time whereas the office phones are manned between 08.30 and 4pm

I am pleased that Sally Ridealgh is with us today... Sally has organised your taster sessions for this afternoon.

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## Appendix 4

### Essex Partnership Programme ALM Report: Oct 2016

#### Partnership Course programme 2015-16 Course and enrolment numbers

154 courses were delivered in partnership with other organisations over the past year, working with more than 20 partners and contributing 2588 course hours to the regional target.

63 courses were delivered through our successful partnership with Basildon Education Services Trust or BEST. BEST work with over 20 schools in some of the most deprived areas of Basildon.

Sally Ridealgh who is here today, has reinvigorated an old partnership and once again we are working with Clacton coastal academy. This partnership has delivered 14 courses in the last year with mindfulness and complimentary therapy proving to be highly popular on this area of need.

In addition to the work with BEST and Clacton Coastal Academy we also worked with parents through three different children's centres. We delivered courses to people with mental health difficulties in partnership with 4 charities. Working with Tabor centre in Braintree we provided opportunities for people with physical and or sensory impairment. In addition we have provided courses for the Job Centre and worked with ex offenders through Essex Community Rehabilitation Company. As you can see the work is very varied.

I am delighted that through the hard work of the team the average enrolments on these courses increased to over 11 per course form just over 10 in the previous year. The lowest enrolments were from the Job Centre.

#### Additional Contract

##### Essex Learning Partnership Fund (ELPF)

This Essex County Council funding of about £10K enabled us to engage with hard to reach groups in low numbers (average 5 per course) to deliver short engagement activities or taster courses. With this funding we offered some short 6 hour First Aid courses and 4 courses that were internally certificated by WEA for Supporting Children with Maths and Supporting Children with English and Supporting children with phonics. This funding enables us to deliver free courses to people with low educational attainment in very small classes – averaging 7 students per course.

#### This year

This term is proving to be a little bit slow to start with the partnership programme. We have introduced fees for students who are not on benefits in order to bring it in line with the branch programme and Skills Funding Agency expectations. This has unsurprisingly had an impact on student numbers so course viability is a concern for some courses.

In addition we have amended the way that we plan and deliver our English, Maths and ESOL (English for speakers of other languages) courses. To improve quality and success for students we have streamlined delivery so that students are signposted to a course which is aimed at their level or ability. This means that tutors no longer have to teach students across 5 different levels in one class. This range can be from unable to read to people ready to undertake L2 exams all in one class. The upside is a better service for students, better for tutors; the flip side is it is not as easy to find enough students, through our existing partnerships, of the same level to run a course.

Any ideas/contacts for new partners will always be followed up.

Finally for the Partnership programme I wanted to share a couple of real student stories with you. These are printed and a copy available for you to take away. Both of the students highlighted have met the WEA through our partnership with Clacton Coastal Academy. I have used made up names for each case study. One of the students was made redundant at the same time as becoming a new mum. Her story tells of how a WEA art class followed by a confidence building class has supported her to overcome a difficult period in her life to enjoy her role as a parent and also to find a new job.

The second student has developed a support group for fellow students following a mindfulness course.

Please read the complete story on the handout

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## Appendix 5



**In Partnership**



### Alice's story (not her real name)

Having previously worked in the City of London all of my adult life, I discovered I was to be made redundant at the same time I found out I was expecting my first child. I felt extremely apprehensive and un-certain of my future – what should have been a happy time, suddenly was scary and not at all how I would have imagined my situation being whilst pregnant. I would not be getting the enhanced maternity pay I would normally have been due, or have a job to return to.

I found it hard to adjust to not working; being heavily pregnant I was unable to find another job. Following the birth of my son I felt isolated and that I had lost my identity and purpose. My husband still commuted to London each day working long hours. Motherhood is very rewarding, but also challenging, lonely and hard work. Although I went to baby groups and tried to find my new role in the world, I felt extremely low and often tearful. I felt nothing I did was good enough and there was more to life than just being Mum to my child. Of course, every time I thought this, I was also racked with guilt. Some women are unable to have children and here I am complaining. I thought I must be a terrible mother, but have gradually come to realise it is ok for me to want more for myself and my family. I applied for local roles, which I didn't get, so my confidence was knocked even more. I was finding it very hard to take rejection. I took it all too personally.

Some other family problems followed the next year resulting in me being prescribed anti-depressants and undergoing counselling. I was at an all-time low and had hit a wall, feeling un-able to make decisions and was stressed, anxious and panicky.

Whilst attending my weekly sessions at Clacton Coastal community centre, I read some literature and discovered they held training courses there. I liked the sound of the Ways of Looking 1 drawing course being run through the WEA, so enrolled. I asked my mother-in-law to attend with me as she had an interest in drawing – and it gave us both a safety net of knowing someone on the course.

During the first couple of lessons we were taught about the technique of sighting. I struggled with this and after quite some time still had nothing down on paper as I was too worried about doing it wrong. My tutor recognised that I suffer from perfectionism and lacked confidence. She recommended I attend the WEA Confidence course. I took her up on the offer and also enrolled on that. I really enjoyed the Art course, it gave me a positive focus and something to look forward to each week. I had done Art whilst at school, but hadn't done anything in relation to it since leaving. I re-discovered my love of drawing and spent time out of class on my new hobby. I improved week after week, even though at first I didn't believe so!

By attending the Confidence course I learnt that I was not alone in feeling negative about myself and my abilities. We did exercises to help with breathing and had to note something down each day that we had done successfully or made us feel good about ourselves. This was hard to begin with, to focus on the positive and not the negative, but became easier as time went on. I started to believe in myself and realise that the fear of getting something wrong was actually holding me back from discovering what I was capable of. Once I realised that whatever the outcome, even if it wasn't what I was hoping to achieve, I was learning each time I completed a task wasn't afraid to try anymore. This really helped me to progress in my Art work, personal and work life.

I was amazed at the ripple effect the training I undertook had on those around me. My sister-in-law was unable to attend the confidence course, but I told her about it and some of the exercises. She used them to overcome her fear of driving and is now able to make car journeys on her own without being a nervous wreck.

I felt better in myself and managed to get a part time job. Being back at work gave me such a lift. I felt whole again, and a person in my own rights – back to having independence and earning money.

I enrolled on the next Ways of looking 2 course and continued to develop my skills, now using other medium such as pastels and charcoal, whereas before I had only used pencil. I also introduced colour to my work. I received good reviews of my drawings from my classmates and tutor – even comparing my style for drawing flowers to Van Gough!

I recently applied for another job, this time in a school office so the hours will fit around my family commitments and was successful - I start in June. I am very proud of myself for having the guts and confidence to apply and give a strong interview as it is very hard to get work in schools.

I have got my self-respect back and discovered a long hidden talent in my Art work. I am now doing a Watercolour course so I can add painting to my repertoire. I would love to eventually be able to exhibit and sell my work – I now know that with determination and enough practice this goal is achievable and could soon be a reality.

I appreciate it is normal to feel apprehensive of change, but that if you persevere you can improve your life significantly. I have better future prospects now and my general well-being and happiness, and that of my family members, has also improved as a direct result of me attending the WEA courses.

I truly credit [the tutor] and her teaching with the changes in my life. She saw both the potential in my Art and the weaknesses that were holding me back in this and other areas (perfectionism and low self-esteem). When I first came to her classes I wasn't working and had a very low opinion of myself. I now have two part time jobs, improved confidence and a love of Art and drawing. She provides encouragement and offers constructive criticism to allow each person to achieve to the best of their abilities. I have a greater appreciation of Art and other Artists work, even now visiting galleries. I even look at the world differently now, taking the time to study colour / form and the effect things like light and water can have on items. She has put my life into perspective, in more ways than one. Thank you!

### **Pearl's Story**

Pearl (not her real name) worked as an IT trainer for the NHS before starting a family and whilst raising her family, worked voluntarily as a Secretary at Surestart for The Parent Voice Group. During this time she attended Parenting courses at Clacton Coastal Community Centre. Whilst at the Coastal Community Centre a Community Support Worker position was advertised for 3 hours a week, which she was successful in gaining. As part of this new role she attended a partnership network meeting where the WEA was represented. She approached them to see if it would be possible to run a Mindfulness course at the Coastal Community Centre. As a result of this interaction the WEA organised a course for centre users on this topic.

Pearl attended this WEA Mindfulness course, in Autumn 2015, as a student and since completing, Pearl has continued to develop her skills in this field both personally and professionally. Pearl has said that the techniques she has learnt helped her to cope with everyday issues.

The subject has also inspired her to set up an on-going support group for the students who were on the course. Pearl sought advice from the Coastal Community Centre on how she could set up such a group, and along with the support from the tutor, has managed to set up a weekly meeting for those that wanted to continue with Mindfulness after the course ended. They now meet weekly in the Coastal Community Centre and do many activities including taking part in a mindfulness body scan and creating their own art journals. The group discuss issues surrounding mindfulness, such as negative thinking in a confidential, safe and supportive environment. Whilst the group benefits the attendees, Pearl finds it of a great benefit to herself.

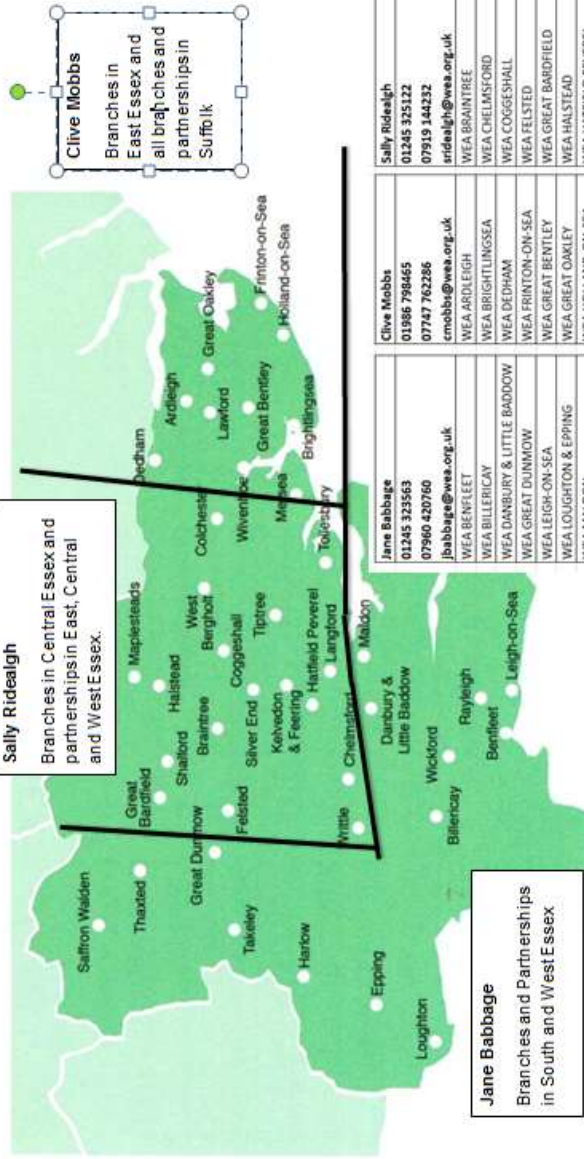
The groups ongoing success is down to Pearl who asked for and took on board feedback and comments from the students as to the best days and times to run the group, initially the room she used at first wasn't suitable, so she liaised with the Coastal Community Centre to establish her group in another more appropriate room. Pearl was willing to fit the group around the needs of those that were attending and listened to their requirements to have the best outcome for the attendees.

Pearl believes that adult learning is important after having a family to stimulate and keep the brain active and has benefited on a personal level from her own learning as well as being better placed to support her family and the wider community who, without Pearl, would not have the opportunity to continue to meet weekly for mutual support.

# Appendix 6

## Essex Branches and Organisers

August 2016



**Sally Ridealgh**  
Branches in Central Essex and partnerships in East, Central and West Essex.

**Jane Babbage**  
Branches and Partnerships in South and West Essex.

**Clive Mobbs**  
Branches in East Essex and all partnerships in Suffolk

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WEA BILLERICAY	WEA BRIGHTLINGSEA	WEA CHELMSFORD
WEA DANBURY & LITTLE BADDOW	WEA DEDHAM	WEA COGGESHALL
WEA GREAT DUNMOW	WEA FRINTON-ON-SEA	WEA FELSTED
WEA LEIGH-ON-SEA	WEA GREAT BENTLEY	WEA GREAT BARDFIELD
WEA LOUGHTON & EPPING	WEA GREAT OAKLEY	WEA HALSTEAD
WEA MALDON	WEA HOLLAND-ON-SEA	WEA HATFIELD PEVEREL
WEA RAYLEIGH	WEA LAWFORD	WEA KELVEDON AND FEERING
WEA SAFFRON WALDEN	WEA MERSEA	WEA MAPLESTADS
WEA SHALFORD		WEA SILVER END
WEA THAXTED	<b>Sarah Moore</b>	WEA TIPITREE
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