



Children take part in a creative writing workshop as part of MaxLiteracy 2017

Introduction

It's a great privilege to write this report as NAWE's new Director, following my appointment in July 2018. This report is given with respect and appreciation for the work carried out by both of NAWE's committees, past and present, and by Paul Munden and Clare Mallorie, who contributed so much to NAWE's overall development.

2017/18 was a year of great change for NAWE. The organisation lost a valued long-term member of staff with the sudden passing away of Clare Mallorie, and NAWE's long-standing Director, Paul Munden, decided to pursue other opportunities. We said goodbye to Wes Brown, Manager of NAWE's Young Writers' Hub, and welcomed back Philippa Johnston as Information Manager. Libby Edison and Sarah Byrne at Mosaic Events took over our day to day membership and administration, and Paul Munden agreed to continue working as NAWE's Publications Manager.

NAWE Conference

Our 2017 Conference celebrated NAWE's 30th Anniversary in our hometown of York. We welcomed 170 delegates from across the UK, US, Australia, South Africa, Europe, and India for 3 days of networking, fellowship and exchange. We were delighted to be joined by RSL Fellow

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Professor Bernardine Evaristo, and T.S. Eliot prize-winning poet Sarah Howe as our guest readers, and our thanks go to them as well as the many readers who celebrated the launch of *Metamorphic*, a new version of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. We'd also like to thank our sponsors, York St John University, and in particular Naomi Booth and Abi Curtis. The conference took place under difficult circumstances, and we were grateful to all our members for their kindness and support.

Programmes: Max Reinhardt Literacy Awards

In 2017/18, we completed the second iteration of this project, working with the BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art (Stevie Ronnie), York Art Gallery (Antony Dunn) and Leeds Art Gallery (Helen Mort), as well as our partners Engage (the National Association for Gallery Education) and funders the Max Reinhardt Charitable Trust. Throughout 2017, we worked with partners to build a new website hosting a wide range of resources that can be downloaded, played and used by writers, teachers and gallery educators. These valuable teaching resources can be found at www.maxliteracy.org.

We continue to plan for the future: for the next iteration of the project in 2018/19, and for a legacy project that will help spread learning from this interdisciplinary work.



Paper Nations



In 2017/18 we ran two additional consultations, one at the English Shared Futures event in Newcastle, and one at the NAWE Conference in York. These consultations fed into a 'Call for Evidence' that surveyed examples of best practice from across England, and contributed to the Paper Nations Benchmark showcased in *Writing in Education*.

We were thrilled to work on this project with our partners at Bath Spa University, as they developed the creative writing benchmark, training and resources, and launched an exciting new campaign, Dare to Write?

Higher Education

A new Higher Education Committee continued to meet regularly. Derek Neale was elected Chair, and Celia Brayfield Vice Chair. Derek kindly volunteered to act as principal editor for our online, peer-reviewed journal, *Writing in Practice*. Under Derek's leadership, the committee revised the

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NAWE Research Benchmark; nominated panels for the REF 2021; participated in the AWP and English: Shared Futures conferences; supported the NAWE PhD Network; produced guidance documents on Open Access (with the British Library), and Casual Contracts (with Society of Authors); and ran a series of helpful, practice based events for lecturers and PhD students with the Open University.

International Creative Writing Partners

We continued to strengthen relationships with our international and European counterparts throughout 2017/18. We represented NAWE at the European Association of Creative Writing Programmes (EACWP) IV Pedagogical Conference in Turin, raising awareness of UK creative writing programmes and promoting creative writing as a distinct discipline. NAWE representatives attended the Association of Writers and Writing Programmes Conference (AWP, US) in March 2019, promoting UK institutions and courses in Creative Writing. We will attend the next event in Oregon in 2019, and promotion of advertising space will start shortly.

English: Shared Futures

In July 2017, we celebrated the English Shared Futures conference in Newcastle with colleagues at University English and the English Association, welcoming more than 600 international and UK delegates for a celebration of Creative Writing, English Literature and English Language. We curated a strong strand of readings, presentations and fringe events in creative writing, with 13 panels run by NAWE members. A second iteration of this will run in 2020, and we are keen for as many NAWE members as possible to be involved.

Other Networking and Subject Supportive Activity

We continued working with subject associations and learned societies, responding to concerns around policy changes in education at all levels. These included the English Association, University English, the English and Media Centre, the Common English Forum, the Arts and Humanities Alliance, the Council for Subject Associations and Artworks Alliance. As a result of conversations at the Common English Forum around the decline in students taking up English at A-level, in February we met with policy advisors from the Department of Education to discuss concerns. We also formed part of the steering group for National Writing Day, with our friends at First Story.

Organisational Update

Finance and Resources In light of the changes, we've taken the opportunity to overhaul the financial management of the company and brought in Mosaic Events, who now provide bookkeeping, membership and administration services. Our registered office remains as Shandy Hall, but our postal address has changed. We have a new phone number with a dedicated team answering members' enquiries from 9am - 5pm, Monday - Friday.

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Governance Both the Higher Education Committee and the Management Committee have continued to meet and work effectively throughout the transition process. In 2017, the Management Committee started work on a renewed budget and strengthened financial planning. We have begun the process of looking at long term governance in order to future-proof the organisation, and will be presenting our suggestions to members in 2019 for comment and approval.

Marketing and Communications We continued to produce the NAWE magazine, *Writing in Education*, three times per year, and the online peer-reviewed journal, *Writing in Practice*, once per year. We communicated with members by email, through the magazine, and through *The Writers' Compass*, our weekly bulletin of job opportunities. Following reports that these emails sometimes gets trapped in spam filters, we started to make greater use of social media.

What we're doing in 2018/19

Our aim is to re-establish NAWE's place in the national, long term conversation, meet the needs of our freelance and project-based writers as well as those who teach in universities and schools, advocating for the subject while renewing bonds with partner organisations across the country.

We will continue planning the next phase of NAWE's development, looking at those things of greatest value such as: new ways of serving our members, ensuring an effective smooth handover, working to ensure the organisation's financial health, renewing governance and the constitution. We're carrying out a members' survey to ensure we are consulting with members, designing services to meet your needs, continuing discussions with partners and funders, while supporting writers in education at all levels.

We'll carry on delivering projects with partner organisations that will be of lasting benefit to the discipline: disseminating the outcomes of the Paper Nations project and the draft benchmark, proceeding with the third iteration of the Max Literacy Award, and engaging with the REF 2021. We are planning a series of roadshows, an ACE application and more external facing work to support our members and the creative writing community, facilitating networking events and information exchanges.

My thanks to all our current and previous members and colleagues, to our two committees, and to Mosaic Events. You have all demonstrated collegiality, generosity and kindness in a year of great transition, and I look forward to building on this work with you over the coming years and months.



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