



THE NATIONAL REPORT FOR 2004

The 64th Annual National Conference 16th / 17th April 2005

Publicity

During the first half of 2004 we did not have an External Public Relations Officer. However, Corinna Teale was elected at the ANC. She worked very hard towards improving outside communications and advertising in major magazines. We were also fortunate in appearing in the Agony Aunt column of a National newspaper, which generated a large number of enquires.

Publications

The role of Plus News Editor changed hands from the excellent work of Pete Sharples to Ian Crawshaw, who was elected at the ANC. Since then, an all new Plus News was presented with a high quality finish. The second edition of the magazine was posted direct to all members of the Federation.

Development

In the absence of an officer until the July NEC meeting, the Areas worked hard at developing new Groups throughout the country. A special mention of Southern Area should be made in this regard. Adam Redshaw was co-opted at the July meeting and has worked hard in supporting both Groups & Areas.

Activities

National Scale Events such as Skiing, Badminton, Karting and a Multi Activities Weekend were well supported together with the National event Brean.

Training Co-ordinator

Francis Wallington continued to produce quality training events. Inspire was held at Alsager in September. The event was well received. Francis continued to offer Areas support with their training needs.

NEC

The NEC, which comprises of the Honorary General Secretary, National Finance Officer and Area Chairman worked their socks off putting together the restructuring proposals for the ANC 2005. They, along with certain other individuals gave up a great deal of their personal time help towards a better future for the Federation.

General

Communication within the Federation improved over the year, with articles in Plus News and postings to the Onelist, to ensure that the Members were kept informed of developments and achievements.

The National Chairman visited all the Areas to ensure that communication was kept high and to chat with as many members as possible. He tried to ensure that everyone worked together as a Federation.

Wayne Fenton

Wayne Fenton
National Chairman

East Anglia Area

The number of Activities the Area ran increased markedly: this was in addition to the number of Competitions.

In May 2004 we elected an Activities Officer, after a long gap without one. We did not fill the post of Competitions Officer, although the Area committee organised Competitions amongst themselves.

Both the Groups and the Area continued to run a number of high quality events, which drew support both from our own membership and from Plussers from neighbouring Areas.

Additionally, EAA has a number of talented individuals who are able to run National-scale events, e.g. Keith Israel (and the rest of Kings Lynn), Barry Healey, Lara Collins and Chris Page, etc. etc.

Sadly Hunts 18 Plus closed due to small membership. However, its erstwhile members remained Plussers, having joined Kings Lynn and Bishops Stortford Groups.

Although due to various reasons four of the original committee members resigned, the roles of PRO and GCM were filled; the functions of the role of Training Officer were taken over by the EAA Chairman.

The Area instituted a Groups Publicity Fund to help our Groups (especially the less well off ones) with their publicity. Regarding publicity, honourable mention should go to Barking & Dagenham who staged an Open Day for both themselves and neighbouring Groups

in the Area. They also have a pioneering approach to publicity and membership incentive schemes generally.

Plussers in EAA continued to support events throughout the Area and beyond, especially the major National Holidays, in large numbers.

Joe Gurney

Joe Gurney
East Anglia Area Chairman

London & South East Area

In 2004 there were some successes in bringing the two groups together although difficulties were experienced in achieving committees in the Groups.

As the Area is made up of two Groups the emphasis remained on joint events rather than formal Area events. Ideas for these events are invited at Area Conference and two events were implemented as a result. Whilst attendance could have been greater, both events were successful in creating a certain level of bonding.

Attendance at National events was variable, although a notable achievement was 1st Place at the National Treasure Hunt by Crawley Group. WASH remained the highlight of National scale events for both groups.

To encourage attendance at Inspire 2004 the Area offered substantial grants to the Groups. Sadly attendance was poor.

The Area continued to make available funding for publicity, although the level of take up in 2004 declined. Apathy was the major problem within the Area, although L&SEA were not alone in this.

The internet remained an effective publicity medium for both Groups. The internet combined with local publicity was the sole source of new members in 2004.

Andy Cole

Andy Cole
London & South East Area Chairman

Midland Area

The May Conference saw a mainly new Area Committee with just two members retaining their posts, and a complete novice joining the team.

The Area held a variety of well-attended events, dances and competitions throughout 2004. Members also turned out to support National events including Brean, WASH and Inspire.

Once again the ANC was held in the Midlands, and for the third year running the Linda Street Spirit of 18 Plus Award went to a Midland Area member - Corinna Teale, and Solihull won the Charities Trophy.

We sadly said goodbye to Malvern Group, who didn't manage to retain any members despite continuous support from Area Committee members and Sutton Coldfield Group.

Midland Area now has its own magazine 'MidPoints', which has been well received and is a good resource for the Area.

Dotti Sallis

Dotti Sallis
Midland Area Chairperson

Southern Area

Southern Area had a great ANC 2004, where we received 5 trophies, for Best Area, Best New Group, Training, Magazine and Recruitment, and 2nd place for Best Group

Our love of putting on events continued throughout the year, with 8 competitions, 4 dances, 20 other events. This does not include the many charity fundraising events, which the Groups were

encouraged to participate in to raise money for their own choice of charity.

Southern Area put on National, Area and Group events for anyone in the Federation to enjoy. All Groups get on with, visit and support each other, both in and out of the Area.

Our aim is to have fun and with a choice of Groups to visit on a weeknight, and a multitude of events to choose from every weekend, we are having a great time.

We held regular Council meetings, pre-ANC training, an afternoon training followed by a free game of bowling and the National Training weekend was again well supported by the area.

Good communication, whether through emails, telephone, word of mouth, or post, are all important ways to publicise events coming up, organise ongoing group publicity and deal with any problems.

The Southern Area Committee greatly supported groups regarding publicity, providing high quality posters on request, and the provisioning of 100 leaflets per group, per year, free of charge. Due to the hard work by the Groups, in excess of 40 enquiries have been generated. Naturally in addition to this, Groups had their own publicity, resulting in enquiries and a number came in via the National website.

Although only 9 groups in the Southern Area, with a full committee, we are very strong together and will continue to be so and intend to open more groups soon.

So watch this space, would you like to be with SOUTHERN AREA?

Tina Bunyan

Tina Bunyan
Southern Area Chairperson

Northern Area

The learning experience of my first partial term, (November to May), was over and the question will I stand again in May was asked. Partly due to the positive work being done by the NEC and partly due to the increased activity within the Northern Area I decided that we were managing to make a difference and therefore I would stand for a full term at the May Conference.

This time I thought I knew what I was letting myself in for!

At the May Conference a Chairman, Administrator, Treasurer, and General Committee Member were elected. A further General Committee Member was appointed at the next AEC meeting and another at the November Conference

The Conferences were both quite positive with Groups committing to various Area scale activities. In November members from Leeds Group volunteered to lead in the opening of a new Group.

My thanks to the Area Administrator who stood in for me on the Saturday of the Annual National Conference, which I was unable to attend.

The e-mail newsletter "e-chat" was continued throughout 2004. I also ensured that events were notified and publicized on paper. The Northern Area Web Page was constantly updated. To encourage two-way communications the Area Treasurer set up a Message Board that he kindly made available as a Northern Area Forum.

Area events included the Leeds & Manchester Nights Out, Valentines and Christmas Discos and the War of the Roses and Badminton competitions.

Area scale Group events were also organized including Bradford Group's now annual Treasure Hunt and Rothwell Group's Bunk Barn Holiday, Canal Cruise and Ten Pin Bowling & Karaoke night.

Sadly Romiley 18 Plus Group closed in early 2004.

The Area Committee attended Inspire 2004.

John Smith

John Smith

Northern Area Chairman

North Thames & Chiltern Area

Events run in the Area were well attended by the Groups and neighbouring Areas, especially the May Dance. The Area made little or no profit from the events but did not make a loss.

From May onwards, the Area's goal was to hold events bi-monthly. The events held were a Dance in May, Chess in August, and a quiz in November. Unfortunately Area meetings and Conferences were poorly attended by the Groups.

The Groups continued to work hard to retain and recruit members. Hillingdon and Hounslow Groups offered reduced membership fees for new members and Dunstable Group ran a retention scheme.

The Area Chairperson would like to thank the rest of her team - Colin Rumford, Gary Schwimmer and John Allum for their support and help during her first term as Area Chairperson.

Tracy Thorn

Tracy Thorn

North Thames & Chiltern Area Chairperson