

# National Association of SACREs

## AGM 2023: Secretary's Report

*Our NASACRE Executive 2022-23:*

**Officers (4):**

*Linda Rudge (Chair), Sue Holmes (Secretary), Saquat Ali (Treasurer), Paul Smalley (Executive Assistant)*

**Members (6):**

*Anne Andrews, Denise Chaplin, Claire Clinton, Sheila Gewolb, Elizabeth Jenkerson, Sukaina Manji*

**Co-opted (2):** *Michael Metcalf, Lesley Prior*

**Admin:** *Marie Cooper*

**Webmaster:** *Matthew Tulley*

Over the last year, the NASACRE Executive Committee finally met in person in November in London, and then had to revert to meeting on other occasions remotely on Zoom, due to train strikes and sickness. The Exec met in June, September and November 2022, and in February and March 2023. So great was the volume of work, that a strategic sub-group of officers has additionally met twice across the year.

We are so delighted that we can once more hold our **SACREs for the Future** conference in the flesh after a 4-year hiatus, especially since we're celebrating 30 years since NASACRE was launched in 1993. And it's not without various trials and tribulations that we are meeting in Fishmongers' Hall, just two weeks after King Charles' Coronation. With various members of the Exec falling sick and the ongoing scourge of COVID afflicting our members from time to time, it has been a demanding year, with fewer Exec members to share the numerous tasks. The role of Vice Chair has been vacant for another year, so we retained as co-optees, some members who would otherwise have retired, just to ensure that NASACRE continued to function... we haven't met such a situation before, but we're hopeful that we can elect a Vice Chair this time round. Please continue to be mindful of the importance of supporting the sustainability of your association by offering your SACRE members' skills and ideas, so we can continue to move forward.

Our successful webinar programme attracts large numbers of participants, providing new opportunities for discussion and support as we meet together. It is helpfully providing extra choices for members who would otherwise not be able to attend a face-to-face conference, and allows SACREs to showcase their Westhill Award and other work to a wider audience. We hope you agree that the cost provides excellent value for money - especially for subscribed SACREs - and we're now settling into a regular programme of support which we can repeat and extend year on year. Do let us know if your members have ideas for new themes and aspects of SACRE's work that you'd like us to address.

Deborah Weston from the RE Council's Policy Unit (REPU) joined an Exec meeting to update on matters concerning the White Paper and academisation programme, and we've continued to publish such news in our regular *SACRE Briefings* - a lifeline of communication to support members. Executive officers meet regularly with the DfE to air current issues and concerns, and others represent NASACRE at REC board meetings and the IFN. These meetings are invaluable to our strategic partnership working.

Your Executive continues to work on the priorities identified in our Development Plan which is available to view online, along with the Minutes of our meetings. We are in process of registering NASACRE as a charitable incorporated organisation (CIO). We must thank Matt, our webmaster, for continuing to tweak our new website and we're always happy to hear your suggestions to improve it. We really do want to share SACRE success stories and recommendations of good practice. At our AGM, we are recommending minor changes to our Constitution to reflect changes to our way of working.

We hope you found the first analysis of SACRE annual reports interesting in 2022, and are ready for a second round. We made a second FOI request to all LAs last year about SACRE funding, and the results of that will show whether LAs are responding to our repeated messaging about the paucity of SACRE funding across the country, and the difference it would make if all local authorities took the work of SACRE a lot more seriously, by increasing their funding.

As we come to the end of yet another challenging year, Elizabeth Jenkerson retires from the Exec and Sukaina Manji comes up for re-election, Claire Clinton has served a full 6 years, but we're very anxious to co-opt her back to the Exec in her role as Director of the new Regional Hubs. Claire is invaluable to us as she oversees our webinar programme, and it's essential that we further work with regional hub leads. We must thank Elizabeth for everything she has contributed to NASACRE over the best part of 10 years. She is currently very poorly in hospital, and is not able to stand for re-election, so she is very much in our thoughts as we meet at Fishmongers' Hall; it was Elizabeth that did much of the leg-work for the AGM we're holding there. Michael Metcalf has continued as a cooptee to the Exec, working with Saquat our new Treasurer to support our financial management, whilst Marie Cooper continues to provide valuable and quietly efficient support in the background, as ever. We mustn't forget to acknowledge the work of NASACRE super-star, ex-Chair and current cooptee, Lesley Prior, who is also very poorly, undergoing treatment for a recurrence of cancer. Where would NASACRE be without the dedication and selfless commitment of these colleagues to our association over many, many years?

It has been more evident than ever this year, that keeping NASACRE afloat is very much a team effort. The team has been smaller, but the boat is still afloat, and we reach our 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary in the hope that we have many more years ahead, as we look towards **NASACRE for the Future**.

*Sue Holmes*