



Dear colleagues

Well, the green shoots of spring brought with them a Green Paper on SEN and disability, an aspirational document that proposes fundamental reforms to the system of education, care and health for children and young people with learning difficulties or disabilities from 0 – 25. This is undoubtedly very welcome – the system has been complex, bureaucratic and adversarial for too long, and there has been little join up between different departments and between pre and post 16 provision. However, it is unfortunate that this transformational agenda is being put forward at a time of significant cuts across public services – new systems take time and resources to implement and furthermore, the paper is thin on detail. On the plus side, we have an opportunity to influence any legislation that follows, through an extended consultation and I urge you all to respond. Detailed analysis and guidance is available for all members.

The Enhancement of Learning Support project has come to an end, and has resulted in a fantastic range of resources, guidance and innovative approaches to learning support. You can find many of these on the Natspec website at <http://www.natspec.org.uk/enhancement-of-learning-support/> where presentations from the national and regional events are available; in due course, all the resources will be available on the LSIS Excellence Gateway.

The national dissemination conferences were both very successful, with the learner panel sessions being especially powerful. None of this has been possible without the commitment of a great many people and I want to thank all the staff in ISCs who led in their region, took part in events and resource testing, and gave their expertise time and enthusiasm so generously. Thanks too to all the specialist advisers who have given such good support to the regional developments and to those who have contributed additional research and reports. The work has also led to some productive new partnerships between ISCs and GFEs which I hope will last and have an impact long beyond the life of the project. Finally, a huge thank you to the project director, Allie O'Brien, for steering this massive piece of work to such a successful and productive conclusion.

We are about to launch into a belated Easter break followed by a clutch of bank holidays, so I hope you have a bit of time for rest and relaxation, and whatever indulgence takes your fancy, whether that be chocolate, wedding watching or escape from it all.

Best wishes  
Alison

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## **Natspec Annual Conference May 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> 2011** **Celebrating specialism through enterprise and innovation.**

The success of ISCs lies in having a specialism that is not narrowly defined and exclusive, but which is constantly developing and building on new ideas. Learners may well be defined by characteristics linked to their disabilities, in which colleges develop expertise and experience. But they are also defined by their individual personalities and their hopes and aspirations. The real skills lie in responding creatively to these individual needs and developing learning programmes and support to meet them.

This conference will be a celebration of some of the imaginative solutions that ISCs have devised to place learners at the centre of all they do, and to ensure that they maximise successful outcomes for students. There will also be opportunities to consider the implications of changes in funding and placement systems, and explore enterprising responses to the new world.

Come along to share your ideas, find out what others are doing and think about future opportunities. Book online here: <http://www.natspec.org.uk/natspec-information/events/annual-conference-2011/>

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## **Elections to Natspec Board of Directors – May 2011**

### **CALL FOR NOMINATIONS**

#### **Number of Directors**

1. Under Article 3.5 of the Memorandum & Articles of the Company, one third of the elected directors (or the number closest to one third) must retire at the AGM each year. There are a minimum of five and a maximum of fifteen directors and following the 2010 elections, thirteen directors plus two co-opted directors were in post. Two directors were co-opted in 2010 (Paul Dolman and Angela Gray) but only hold office for the year and are required to retire at the AGM under Article 3.7.3.
2. The following three elected directors are retiring at the May 2011 AGM:  
**Amanda Quincey                  Andrew Giles                  Maggie Thompson**
3. Any of the retiring directors are eligible to be nominated for the three vacancies.
4. For the information of potential nominees, the Memorandum and Articles of the Company are available from Company Secretary, Andrew Harris. Please see attached pack which includes Role of Directors, Code of Conduct and Memorandum and Articles.

#### **Election arrangements**

5. **Nomination** Membership of the Board of Directors is open to any authorised representative of a full member of the Association. (NB representatives of associate organisations are not eligible).

**Anyone wishing to be considered for election as a Director (including Directors offering themselves for re-election) is requested to complete the attached nomination form (page 4 of Bulletin) and either**

**post to:**

**Andrew Harris  
Company Secretary Natspec  
Derwen College  
Oswestry  
Shropshire  
SY11 3JA**

**Or**

**email to: [andrew.harris@derwen.ac.uk](mailto:andrew.harris@derwen.ac.uk)**

The application should include a short personal statement by the candidate.

**Nominations must be received by Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> April 2011**

**6. Election** A list of the candidates together with their personal statements will be available with the registration pack at the Conference and in the event that there are more than three candidates, the designated representative of each member college will be invited to complete the voting paper prior to the AGM on May 18<sup>th</sup> 2011. Members will be notified by May 4<sup>th</sup> 2011 if an election is to be held and any member college who will not be represented at the Conference, or whose representative will not arrive until the morning of 18<sup>th</sup> May 2011, may apply for a postal vote. This will need to be returned by 16<sup>th</sup> May 2011.

**7. Election Arrangements** Election arrangements will be the same as previous years with nominees completing personal statements. Any of the retiring directors may offer themselves for re-election, as may any of the co-opted directors. Voting will take place on the first day of the Conference (17<sup>th</sup> May '11) and counting will take place that evening so that results can be announced prior to the AGM (18<sup>th</sup> May '11). Any member colleges who will not be represented at the Conference will have the opportunity to cast a postal vote.

### **8. Timetable**

April 2011 Election arrangements published in Bulletin; nominations invited

**28<sup>th</sup> April 2011 Nominations close**

4<sup>th</sup> May 2011 Applications for postal ballot invited

16<sup>th</sup> May 2011 Postal ballot closes

17<sup>th</sup> May 2011 Conference ballot - closes 6pm. Results announced




18<sup>th</sup> May 2011 AGM & Post Conference meeting of Board – to include election of officers (Chair, 2 x Vice Chairs & Treasurer) and co-option of up to 2 Directors.

### **Forthcoming Board meetings:**

Post - AGM Board Meeting

- May 18<sup>th</sup> 2011, Aston Conference Centre, Birmingham
- July 12<sup>th</sup> 2011, Hinwick Hall College, Hinwick, Nr Wellingborough
- September 27<sup>th</sup> 2011, London - venue tbc
- November 23<sup>rd</sup> 2011, venue tbc

The following links detail:

-  [Board Membership 2007-11.pdf](#)
-  [Natspec Code of Conduct and Roles of](#)
-  [Mem & Articles.pdf](#)
- a recent history of Directors attendance
- Natspec Code of Conduct of Directors and roles of Officers
- Memorandum and Articles of Natspec

**Natspec Board of Directors**

**Nomination for election to the Board of Directors May 2011**

**For completion by member college (Board Chair, Director, Line Manager of nominee)**

I hereby nominate:

An authorised representative of this College, as a candidate for election to the Board of Directors of Natspec and confirm that the College is willing to make him/her available for the meetings of the Board (a minimum of three per year).

Signed

Position

Member College

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**For completion by Nominee**

I agree to being nominated for election to the Board of Directors of Natspec.

I have read the Memorandum of Articles of the Company, I agree to abide by the Code of Conduct and confirm that I am eligible under the Companies Act for election as a Director.

I append a personal statement.

Signed..... (Nominee)

**Personal Statement**

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## LLUK News

*Professional development solutions for your support staff*



LLUK Professional Development Solution  
Transfer of LLUK and SVUK functions.doc

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### Disability hate crime

ARC the Association for Real Change is currently undertaking a Dept. of Health funded project looking at Hate Crime and in particular Mate Crime where people with a learning disability are befriended then exploited by people they thought were they friends.

This is the Safety Net project - [www.arcsafety.net](http://www.arcsafety.net)

There are lots of free resources, ones developed by the project and others on the website which also has links to You Tube clips and other useful sites. There is lots of good work going on around Disability Hate Crime awareness at the moment and the site is a good place to find out about this work.

Hate Crime is the key theme for Learning Disability Week in June this year and the project is developing an easy read booklet for people with a learning disability and their supporters to support the week and highlight hate and mate crime

David Grundy  
Safety Net Project Worker ARC 07931 116099

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### 'Mate crime'

The Safety Net project is a national project looking specifically at 'Mate Crime' where people with a learning disability are befriended and then exploited. Mate crime is one aspect of Hate Crime.

ARC has developed a number of resources as part of the project and an easy read booklet about Hate and Mate Crime is in development at the moment. This will be released nationally before Learning Disability week in June this year during which Hate Crime is a key theme

The Safety Net website has a number of national resources on it (such as the True Vision Hate Crime reporting pack) from a range of providers and organisations as well as our own and is - in our opinion - a good place to start. <http://www.arcsafety.net/>

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## New NIACE CEO announced

The Board of NIACE has announced that David Hughes - the current National Provider Services Director at the Skills Funding Agency - will be the new Chief Executive of NIACE, following the retirement of Professor Alan Tuckett in the summer.

David Hughes will take up his position as NIACE Chief Executive on 1 September 2011, after a career that has involved leading complex organisations and implementing change in post-school education and skills. Before joining the Skills Funding Agency, David worked as Executive Director in Derbyshire and Regional Director - in both the East Midlands and London - of the Learning and Skills Council. He has also worked in the voluntary sector both in the UK - as Chief Executive of Nottingham CVS - and Australia in areas including housing, social enterprise, regeneration and education.

The new Chief Executive, **David Hughes**, said: "I am absolutely delighted to be offered this job. NIACE is a hugely important organisation which does fantastic work and I relish the opportunity to help it continue to make the impact it does on adult learning policy and practice."

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## Disability benefits

A report published by the Disability Benefits Consortium, a coalition of 41 charities and organisations, shows how welfare reform changes may harm disabled people.

The report highlights concerns over the impact of reforms to vital benefits like Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) and Disability Living Allowance (DLA) on thousands of disabled people and their families.

The report presents the findings of recent surveys. The Disability Benefits Consortium surveyed 6,000 disabled people and found that:

- 43% of those who had been for a medical assessment for ESA said it made their condition worse because of the stress and anxiety caused;
- Nearly 7 out of 10 believed the assessment failed to take account of how their condition fluctuates; and
- Of those not in work, more than half have been unable to find work for over two years.

Co-chair of the DBC policy group, Rebecca Rennison from Leonard Cheshire Disability, said: “Our research shows the difficulties thousands of disabled people face when seeking support from the benefits system. Much more work is urgently needed to ensure that benefits like ESA help disabled people, in particular as the Government presses ahead with plans to reassess over one million people currently receiving Incapacity Benefit.”

Disability Alliance surveyed 1,700 people about their experience of Disability Living Allowance, a benefit designed to help meet the extra costs associated with disability. Among respondents:

- Fewer than 10% said DLA covered all their disability-related costs; and
- A quarter suggested their disability-related expenditure was over £100 per week (i.e. 40% higher than the average DLA weekly payment).

Disabled people, their families and charities want the Government to listen to what they are saying about proposed changes to vital benefits. They are campaigning to ensure that as the Government seeks to cut public spending disabled people are not ‘the hardest hit’.

Chair of the DBC campaigns group, Federico Moscogiuri, from Arthritis Care, said: “The shakeup of the benefits system is set to hit disabled people particularly hard, with future spending on DLA expected to be cut by a huge 20%. “The Hardest Hit” campaign aims to fight damaging cuts to disability benefits. We’re urging our supporters, their families and friends, to join the march at Westminster, on 11 May, so that their voices can be heard.”

Download the full report – [Benefiting disabled people](#)

## Useful statistics

These two links are to reports that look at the number of people with autism who also have learning difficulties and the overall estimates of people with LD in England. They are research reports, but useful for planning purposes

[http://www.improvinghealthandlives.org.uk/uploads/doc/vid\\_8731\\_IHAL2010-05Autism.pdf](http://www.improvinghealthandlives.org.uk/uploads/doc/vid_8731_IHAL2010-05Autism.pdf)

[http://www.improvinghealthandlives.org.uk/uploads/doc/vid\\_9244\\_IHAL2011-02PWLD2010.pdf](http://www.improvinghealthandlives.org.uk/uploads/doc/vid_9244_IHAL2011-02PWLD2010.pdf)

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## Regulated activity

Please see below an email from Lawrence Fry at BIS about the issue of regulated activity. I know that safeguarding learners is a high priority in all ISCs, but I thought you would want to know about the change which will now bring teaching/working with 16 & 17 year olds into regulated activity.

I wanted to give you an important update respecting the proposed definition of regulated activity (Part V, clause 63.)

The original proposal in the Bill was that regulated activity relating to children should be narrowed to comprehend only children below 16 years of age. I have been advised that DfE Ministers, in the light of discussions with a number of external organisations and after further consideration, have decided that the teaching, training etc of 16- and 17-year olds should be brought back into regulated activity.

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## HfT Virtual Smart House

This is a good example of ways in which a national organisation is using technology to support people to live as independently as possible. It has recently won an award for this work. You can look around their virtual house here: <http://www.hftsmarthouse.org.uk/>

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## YOUNG PEOPLE'S GUIDE TO TRANSITION....

This guide explains what happens when young people receiving help from Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) are reaching an age when they need to move on from CAMHS, and get the support that they need from adult services. This is often called 'Transition'.

If you are about to move from CAMHS or have been told that this will happen soon, then this guide should be of help to you.

This guide tells you what should happen during Transition, and who should be involved in helping you get the support that you need. Transition may take place at a time when lots of other things are changing in the rest of your life, so it is important that you know what should happen when you need to move on from CAMHS.

<http://www.youngminds.org.uk/young-people/transitions-guide>

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## Eye problems in young people with Down's syndrome

People with Down's Syndrome are at higher risk of having significant sight problems, many of which may be correctable or treatable. SeeAbility have produced an easy read factsheet about eye care and eye health

[http://www.lookupinfo.org/includes/documents/2011/d/downs\\_syndrome\\_220311\\_b.pdf](http://www.lookupinfo.org/includes/documents/2011/d/downs_syndrome_220311_b.pdf)

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## **Challenging behaviour - Family carers: Getting the right support for adults, teenagers and children**

These three new briefings are aimed at family carers supporting people whose behaviour is described as challenging. The information and advice comes from the Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE). The 'At a glance' briefings are written in conjunction with the Challenging Behaviour Foundation.

There are separate briefings for adults, teenagers and children.

### **Adults**

Family carers who support adults behaviour is described as challenging, should be given advice on housing options. Their loved-ones should have a care plan that is based on the person's needs as an individual, including their cultural needs. There is also advice on how people with challenging behaviour should be supported in playing a part in their community. <http://www.scie.org.uk/publications/ata glance/ata glance37.asp>

### **Teenagers**

Teenagers and young adults with learning disabilities should be able to choose, as far as possible, how and where they want to live as they become adults. Families should not be put in a position of choosing between coping at home or sending their loved-one to residential care. <http://www.scie.org.uk/publications/ata glance/ata glance39.asp>

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### **Easy read guide on abuse**

<http://www.ldhealthnetwork.org.uk/docs/stop.pdf>

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### **Pakistani community views of disability**

These two reports look at Pakistani community views and the information that is helpful to them

<http://www.ldhealthnetwork.org.uk/docs/isiner.pdf>

<http://www.ldhealthnetwork.org.uk/docs/iie.pdf>

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### **The Twisting Ducks Theatre Company's new accessible website**

The Twisting Ducks Theatre Company makes entertaining, accessible and informative drama about issues that are important to us and other people with learning disabilities. We Raise awareness about the rights of people with learning disabilities and the challenges they face. The Twisting Ducks inspire others and change society's attitudes towards learning disabilities.

Our new and exciting website will tell you all about our health musicals about our training, go online today and you can find out about our new performance academy.

Our website is full of videos and music to watch and listen to, all pages are in audio just press the listen to symbols.

Please check out our website today! You're only one click away [www.thetwistingducks.co.uk](http://www.thetwistingducks.co.uk)

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### **Employment**

Netbuddy is putting the spotlight on a subject we feel extremely strongly about, with our new info pack on jobs and training opportunities for people with learning disabilities: <http://www.netbuddy.org.uk/info-packs/jobs-training/>

Only one in 10 people with a learning disability are in employment – despite research showing that 65% want to work. We hope this info pack will provide some help in this hugely important area. We also want to hear of any employment or training initiatives you would like to add, so please do let us know.

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1. Your Local Council News
2. [The Mirror](#)
3. [BBC News](#)
4. [5min.com/dating](#)
5. [NHS Videos](#)
6. [TED](#)
7. [Coronation Street](#)
8. [Discovering Antarctica](#)
9. [Easy Read Online](#)
10. [BBC iPlayer](#)

The most popular categories of web sites were...

1. News
2. Services
3. Sport
4. Entertainment
5. Interests
6. Travel
7. Local
8. People
9. Places

There is a new section called 'Other Interests' on [Dobson's Choice](#). You can find it by going to **Interests** and then **Other Interests**

So far we have 6 new buttons here: Fashion, Religion, Technology, Dance, Drama, and Photography. There is space for 3 more buttons - Please speak with some people with learning disabilities and [let us know](#) what other categories of Interests would be useful.

Dobson's Choice is designed for people who can't read and it will help them to find local information, local news, local services, and lots of other interesting information from around Britain and the world.

We are looking for more websites that are accessible to people with learning disabilities, or that have information for people with learning disabilities.

[Email us](#) with sites that you know about, or join our [Facebook group](#), or [follow our blog](#)

Encourage someone with learning difficulties to have a go, and let us know how they get on. Make a link on your desk top so that people with learning difficulties can get to the site quickly and easily. [Let us know what web sites they have found.](#)

We will be constantly making changes and improvements, and we will be adding new websites, so it's always worth having a look at what's going on.

**If you have been sent this email by a colleague and you want to get our news directly - please click here to see our sign up form**

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## **Photosymbols version 4**

Just out, Photosymbols version 4 with lots of new features

- Now with 3,500 images
- Online access - you can now access the entire Photosymbols library online. The online library is quicker and always up to date, allowing access to the latest pictures as soon as they become available.
- Stock Photographs - high resolution photos and add colour and style to reports, websites and brochures
- Personal Photo Album - your own secure area to store your pictures to make it easier to make personalised, custom information for individuals and groups.
- Professionally designed templates - Each template includes pre formatted text and placeholder images. You edit these by typing in your own words and adding Photosymbols or other pictures.
- Easy read word clips - chunks of ready written easy-read text you can copy and paste into your documents.
- Video training tutorials - videos covering all the different skills areas we draw on to make easy-read.

For more details, prices and upgrading information go to [www.photosymbols.com](http://www.photosymbols.com)

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## **Prader-Willi syndrome**

Please see below a flyer about a multi-disciplinary event on PWS, which might be of interest to some of you. There is an educational element at the end, but also useful sessions from other professionals

<http://www.ldhealthnetwork.org.uk/docs/pwsc.pdf>

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## **Reaching and Supporting Diverse Communities**

Reaching and Supporting Diverse Communities: a guide to meeting the needs of people with learning disabilities, and family carers, from newly arrived, Black, Asian and other Minority Ethnic (BME) communities.

[http://www.hft.org.uk/Family\\_Carer\\_Support/BME\\_Resource\\_Guide](http://www.hft.org.uk/Family_Carer_Support/BME_Resource_Guide)

This work has been carried out by HFT with support from the DH, NLDEN and various other organisations.

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## Information for carers

Please see link to information which family carers need. This might be useful for staff supporting or having contact with parents, or even advising students about benefits: <http://www.ldhealthnetwork.org.uk/docs/dwpcare.pdf>

This pack has been compiled by DWP to help carers organisations access the range of services and resources available. It has not been designed to be issued to individual carers.

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## Criminal justice system

Hopefully you won't need access to these resources, but if you find yourself supporting a student who is in trouble with the law, there are useful resources at this link: <http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/AdvanceSearchResult/index.htm?searchTerms=positvie+practice+positive+outcomes> . It includes a guide for professionals and an easy read version for learners, describing best practice in working with people with learning difficulties, both published on March 1<sup>st</sup>.

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Stop press: [Welcome to the new Principal at Hereward College, Mrs Sheila Fleming](#)

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## Natspec endorsements

Events, consultants or programmes advertised in this bulletin are not necessarily endorsed by Natspec. Individual colleges or staff who are asked to present on behalf of Natspec, please check with a member of the Board of Directors before committing yourself to an event.

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## Natspec website

### Situations Vacant

If you wish to advertise posts on the Natspec sits vac web page, please send them to Andrew Harris [andrew.harris@derwen.ac.uk](mailto:andrew.harris@derwen.ac.uk) , the cost is a mere £25.00 to cover the admin. This service is only available to Natspec members.

Any problems accessing the Principal's forum contact Julian: [webmaster@jewelion.com](mailto:webmaster@jewelion.com)

Please let us have any news, events or job vacancies that you want placing on the website.

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## Natspec Directory

To request a Natspec directory please contact:

Queen Alexandra College  
0121 428 5050

[allformats@qac.ac.uk](mailto:allformats@qac.ac.uk)

Derwen College  
01691 661234

[chair@natspec.org.uk](mailto:chair@natspec.org.uk)

### Contacts

email Alison Boulton

[chiefexecutive@natspec.org.uk](mailto:chiefexecutive@natspec.org.uk)

Bulletin info:

[andrew.harris@derwen.ac.uk](mailto:andrew.harris@derwen.ac.uk)

*Andrew Harris*

*April 2011*

