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***NALA staff work to ensure  
that people with literacy  
and numeracy difficulties  
can fully take part in society***

# 08



**NALA**

**National Adult Literacy Agency**  
Áisíneacht Náisiúnta Litearthachta do Aosaigh



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## Foreword

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***The Irish results of the International Adult Literacy Survey for Ireland showed that 25% of the adult population, aged 16-64 in Ireland scored at the lowest level of literacy on a scale of one to five***

(Department of Education & Science 1997)

This figure has provided a significant frame of reference to the work of NALA for over a decade as the only national survey data on adult literacy levels ever published for Ireland. At the time of publication there was shock and disbelief surrounding Ireland's poor performance and yet at the same time we knew Ireland had relatively high numbers of the adult population with less than upper secondary education and educational attainment level is closely related to literacy level. The figure for the number of Irish workers with less than upper secondary education is currently 30% and the upskilling of these people is now understood in the context of also raising adult literacy levels (National Skills Strategy 2007). Increasingly NALA's work is less concerned with convincing policy makers and funders that there are an unacceptably large number of adults in Ireland with low educational attainment and literacy difficulties and more about working with them to devise solutions and adequately resource his complex area.

One of the key objectives of the Agency is to make it easier for more adults to develop their literacy and numeracy through education and training programmes. This is partly achieved through securing publicity to raise awareness of the opportunities available and to motivate people to return to learning. Therefore it is pleasing to report that national and regional press interviews were up just over 13% on last year with almost a fourfold increase in the mentions of NALA in articles according to our media monitoring service. The number of television features on adult literacy dropped from 7 to 5 however securing a slot on The Late Late Show meant that the overall ratings of the 5 shows were far greater than that achieved the previous year.

The total number of telephone calls answered by the Agency for the year was also up on last year, 8583 as opposed to 7382. This breaks down as 6308 to the main office line and 2275 to the free-phone line, the majority of which were seeking information about improving their literacy and numeracy. The high volume of calls looking for information about learning opportunities was directly related to the broadcasting of the An Post sponsored advertisements. Enquiries about becoming a volunteer tutor also increased from 519 in 2007 to 583 in 2008. Whilst the numbers of customers dealt with in NALA fell from 238 in 2007 to 185 in 2008, the numbers of book orders rose from 1082 in 2007 to 1564 in 2008.

No doubt also adding to the number of calls to NALA was the new television series *Written Off?*, a fly on the wall documentary following 11 adult students who had taken up the challenge to take up learning. This was a new challenge for NALA to seek to represent adult learning and group dynamics in the hope of motivating viewers to take up learning. It ran for eight weeks between May and June and had average viewing figures of 210,000 or just over 14% of all people watching television at the time. This was consistent with the viewing figures secured by a mainstream entertainment programme for a 7.30pm broadcast slot on RTÉ 1 and so particularly good for educational television.

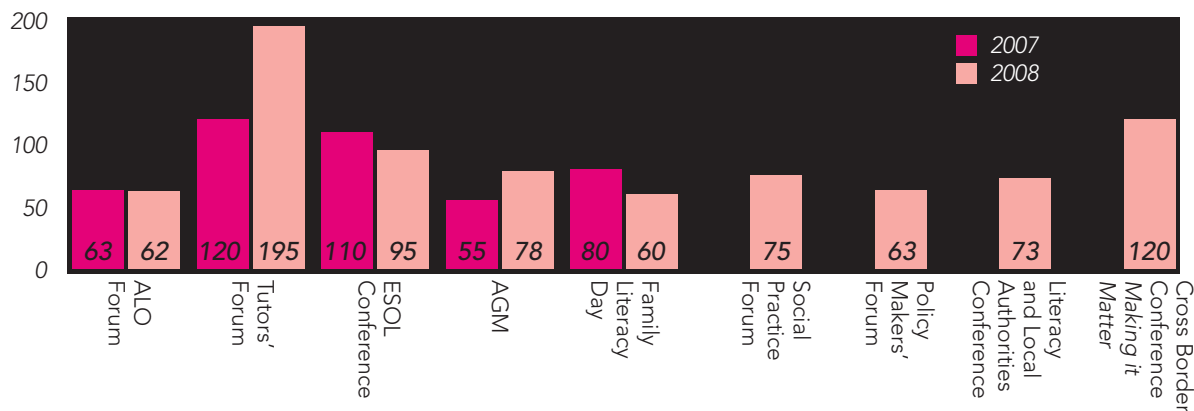
NALA also organised 3 press launches for the following: the new television series *Written Off?*, the ACE Awards and National Literacy Awareness Week and distributed 12,000 posters and 15,000 leaflets to adult literacy providers nationwide. 60 participants attended the ACE Awards presentation ceremony kindly sponsored once again by the EBS. The Awards are geared towards encouraging practitioners to research their practice and share this information with others involved in adult literacy.

In our efforts to make teaching and learning more effective, NALA continued work to encourage education and training providers to integrate literacy and numeracy across their programmes. 40 staff from FÁS Community Based Training programmes successfully completed the NUIM Certificate in Integrating Literacy, down from 58 participants last year. A further 41 in-house seminars on integrating literacy for managers and staff in education and training centres were also organised.

A further part of our work involves supporting organisations working with students as well as providing spaces for students to come together to discuss literacy in their lives. There were 49 successful applications under the Student Development Fund up from 28 last year. A total of 179 students attended two student events, up from 150 participants the previous year. A further student event on dyslexia had over 100 people registered to attend.

The following represents the number of attendees at a range of other NALA organised events during the year:





In working to persuade and facilitate organisations to be fully accessible to people with literacy and numeracy difficulties, Plain English continues to be a key part of the NALA advisory service. The Department of Social and Family Affairs and the Health Service Executive are very involved with us on this front. The number of other organisations dealt with remained steady at 51 clients however the volume of activity has increased from 2007.

The budget for adult literacy in 2008 is estimated to be €30 million, a very modest increase on 2007. A similar very modest increase is predicted for 2009 according to available figures from the Minister of State with responsibility for Lifelong Learning Seán Haughey. As NALA moves mid-way through its current strategic plan, the Agency is in a strong position to keep adult literacy high on the political agenda by providing evidence of the return on the investment in this area. Going forward NALA will continue its work towards ensuring the adult literacy budget as well as funding for up-skilling the labour force, is used effectively and efficiently to raise adult literacy and numeracy levels, ultimately equipping those with weaker skills and no qualifications to better manage their lives during this difficult economic period as Ireland moves deeper into a recession and take advantage of opportunities when they arise.

**Inez Bailey**  
Director, NALA

***My grandkids would say 'Nanny, how do you spell that?' or 'Nanny, will you help me with me sums?' and I would always pass the buck and say 'Ask your Granda!'***

*Dublin woman with literacy difficulties*

Taken from NALA's 2008 Research Report *It's never too late to learn*

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***'It's never too late to learn', launched in 2008, highlighted how engaging with adult literacy services is a positive adjustment in the lives of older learners with literacy difficulties.***

# NALA AGM 2008

## **Minutes of the 27th Annual General Meeting of the National Adult Literacy Agency**

Seventy eight people attended NALA's AGM on Saturday 1 March 2008 at the Marriott Hotel in Limerick.

Michael Power, Chairperson of the NALA Executive Committee, opened the meeting by welcoming everyone to the 27th NALA AGM and then introduced Gretta Vaughan, Vice-chairperson, who chaired the meeting. Gretta thanked Michael for being there, and referred to his untiring promotional work for NALA during the year.

The welcome address was given by Colin Cummins, Adult Literacy Organiser from the City of Limerick Adult Literacy Service. Colin spoke about the significance of holding the NALA AGM in Limerick this year as the city undergoes regeneration on a grand scale. His hope for the future would be that there would be 'parity of esteem' for adult literacy and adult basic education.

Gretta Vaughan introduced the speakers and the officers of the Executive Committee. The opportunity was taken to thank Joan Butler, for whom this will be the last AGM as Honorary Treasurer of NALA, as she steps down after her four years on the Executive. Gretta then spoke about the importance of the AGM and outlined the day ahead; explaining the procedures pertaining to the election, outlining the two resolutions that were to be put to the meeting and reminding the meeting of the importance of voting and that everyone has a role to play. The 2007 Annual Report was presented to the meeting and drew very positive reactions. Gretta then thanked the staff of NALA for their hard work organising the AGM and throughout the year.

A Standing Orders Committee was selected, comprising Frances Ward, Patrick Hallinan and Kevin Duffy.

The keynote speaker was Brendan Kenny, Chief Executive Officer, Limerick Regeneration Agencies. Mr. Kenny spoke about the situation that led to the setting up of the Limerick Regeneration Agencies, outlined the achievements to date and gave an indication of future plans. Changes needed to be made to how the area is governed and how services are delivered and this necessitated the setting up of an independent agency and direct consultation with people and agencies on the ground. The 'Vision Documents' for the area were launched in January 2008 by President Mary McAleese and the biggest part of both documents is education. Questions from the floor followed.

### **Minutes AGM 2007**

Anne Gannon, Honorary Secretary, presented the minutes of the 2007 AGM to the meeting. There were no matters arising. The minutes were proposed by Patrick Hallinan, seconded by Seán Staunton and adopted.

### **Financial Report**

Joan Butler, Honorary Treasurer, presented the audited accounts for 2007, thanked Fawzia McGlone for her assistance during the two years Joan spent as Treasurer and welcomed Marian O'Reilly, who will take over as Honorary Treasurer at the next Executive Committee meeting. The accounts were proposed by Cllr. Eddie Staunton, seconded by Michael Power and adopted.

### **Overview of NALA's Work**

John Stewart, acting Director of NALA, then gave an overview of the varied work of NALA during 2007 and outlined key priorities for 2008.

## 2007

John highlighted the shift over the last ten years from emigration to immigration and the consequent need for English language teaching, which has had an impact on VEC Adult Literacy Services. The absence of a clear language policy is a particular lack in public policy in Ireland. NALA was pleased to conduct the first national TV campaign on literacy in association with An Post. workplace basic education, family literacy and distance education are all areas in which NALA continues to engage to make it easier for more adults to develop their literacy and numeracy through education and training programmes. Resources and training were also produced during the year and best practice documented and shared. John congratulated the Kildare Youth Training Centre on being the overall winners of the ACE Award research grant this year.

## 2008

The key areas which require NALA's attention during 2008 are the need for a new adult literacy strategy, to have literacy integrated into all publicly funded education and training programmes, an implementation plan for the National Skills Strategy, the development of workplace basic education and a policy on English as an additional language (ESOL). Distance education will play a large part in NALA's work during 2008, beginning with the screening of the motivational television series 'Written Off?' in May and supported by online resources available on NALA's newly designed website. Further questions from the floor followed.

### ***The candidates for election to the Executive Committee were introduced:***

There was one candidate for the post of Honorary Treasurer and five candidates for the four vacant places on the Executive Board. Marian O'Reilly, the candidate for Hon. Treasurer, was proposed by Michael Power, seconded by Gretta Vaughan and introduced by out-going Treasurer Joan Butler, who praised Marian for her work on the Audit Sub-committee. As there were no other candidates for the post of Honorary Treasurer, Marian was deemed elected.

**Eileen Condon** (Adult Education Organiser from Co. Tipperary VEC and sitting member of the Executive Committee) was proposed and introduced by Joan Butler and seconded by Cllr. Eddie Staunton.

**Bridie Daly** (student from the Mullingar Adult Literacy Scheme and sitting member of the Executive Committee) was proposed and introduced by Helen Donnelly and seconded by Kevin O'Duffy.

**Cllr. Mary Kelly** (member of Co. Mayo VEC and sitting member of the Executive Board) was proposed by Cllr. Eddie Staunton, seconded by Eileen Condon and introduced by Seán Staunton.

**Helen Donnelly** (Adult Literacy Organiser from Mullingar Adult Literacy Scheme) was proposed and introduced by Kevin Duffy and seconded by Bridie Daly.

**Breda Kavanagh** (student from Ringsend Adult Literacy Service) was proposed by Frances Ryan, seconded by Peggy Murphy and introduced by Carmel Scott.

The voting to fill the four vacant places on the Executive Board took place during the break for lunch.

## Resolutions

Two resolutions were put forward for consideration by the AGM.

1. That the NALA annual membership fees structure should be updated from 2008 to:

Individual members	€25
Unwaged individual members	€5
Discounted rate for 10 or more individuals	€15 per person
Local literacy centres	€50
Non-profit organisations	€100

Statutory and corporate organisations	€300
Individual associate members	€50
Corporate associate members	€150

Proposed by Cllr. Mary Kelly and seconded by Cllr. Eddie Staunton.

This motion was carried (36 in favour) and will come into effect from 1 January 2009.

2. That the NALA constitution should be re-written to reflect plain English style and guidelines.

Proposed by Marian O'Reilly and seconded by Eileen Condon.

### ***From the floor:***

Bridie Daly spoke to the motion and suggested that a plain English constitution would facilitate the involvement of people with literacy difficulties in NALA's activities and structure. Cllr. Ernie Sweeney spoke to the motion – if we ask others to use plain English then we should lead by example.

This motion was carried (51 in favour).

### ***Results of election:***

The following candidates were deemed elected to the Executive Board.

- Breda Kavanagh
- Bridie Daly
- Eileen Condon
- Cllr. Mary Kelly



In her closing address, the NALA Vice-chairperson reminded the meeting that the strength of any organisation is in its members and that each person could be an advocate of adult literacy and promote the work of NALA. There being no other business, the meeting was concluded.



*Kevin from Offaly had trouble with numbers, especially when it came to filling in forms. He got help through his local literacy service and has never looked back.*







*When Mandy from Dublin picked up a menu, she used to feel intimidated by large, unfamiliar words. Not anymore, thanks to help from her local literacy tutor.*





# Objective 1

***Secure the support of policy makers and politicians for providing increased resources to adult literacy and numeracy services***

## ***Research***

Objective 1 outlines the need for research to help develop national policy and continue to develop an evidence-based policy agenda.

## ***Development of a cost / benefit or effectiveness model***

In 2008 we undertook a project to develop a model to demonstrate the value of adult literacy work was initiated. The development of a cost / benefit or effectiveness model will help NALA to analyse current approaches, design new initiatives and continue to inform policy development with the aim that there is an appropriate level, range and quality of services to a broad range of adult literacy learners.

## ***Comparative analysis of adult literacy policy and spends***

Last year also saw the start of an international comparative analysis of adult literacy policy and spending from Canada, New Zealand, Norway, Massachusetts (USA), and Scotland. An initial review of the international and Irish literature and data sources illustrated that there is a dearth of comparable data on the impact and outcomes of international strategies and an absence of longitudinal studies on the outcomes for adult learners.

### *The experience and outcomes for adult literacy students and learners*

This research approach was intended to document real life studies as a means of informing current Irish policy and the development of future NALA position papers. An experimental pilot project to track the experience and progress of adult learners was initiated in May 2008. The pilot project was developed in co-operation with seven adult literacy services Dublin, Cork, Galway, Donegal, Offaly and Meath. However, it proved too difficult to capture the required data within the project timescale and the limitations of the adult literacy service returns.

### *Conferences to secure the support of policy makers and politicians*

NALA held two international conferences in 2008 to further Objective 1.

#### *“Towards a Knowledge Based Economy: Basic Skills in the Workplace”*

Micháel Martin, TD, then Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment, opened this conference on 28 February. The keynote speakers included Professor Mike Campbell of the Sector Skills Development Agency, UK, and Colm Harmon, Professor of Economics, University College Dublin and Director of the Geary Institute. A panel of policy makers discussed the proceedings, including Pat Hayden (DETE), Des O’Loughlin (DES), Rody Molloy (FÁS) and Fiona Hartley (IVEA).

Following the conference, NALA developed a paper on basic skills in the context of the National Skills Strategy and sent it to Ministers and senior policy makers in the Departments of An Taoiseach, Finance, Enterprise, Trade and Employment, Education and Science, Forfas and FÁS.

The paper identified the following key areas that need to be addressed:

- integration of literacy into public funded education and training programmes
- a specific approach to engaging people with adult literacy and numeracy difficulties in education and training, including incentives, and
- flexible supply of learning opportunities, including funding for distance education at FETAC Levels 1-3 and expansion of the Workplace Basic Education Fund.

Meetings were then held with Mary Coughlan, TD Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment, and her officials, Minister of State for Lifelong Learning, Seán Haughey, TD, the Department of Education and Science and FÁS.

### *"Making it work"*

The second conference, held in Dundalk in November, involved a cross-border partnership with the Learning and Skills Development Agency Northern Ireland. Titled "Making it work", it focused on integrating essential skills and literacy into training and further education. The conference attracted two Ministers, one from each side of the border: Seán Haughey, TD, Minister of State for Lifelong Learning (ROI) and Sir Reg Empey, Minister for Employment and Learning (NI). The speakers included Dr Rosie Wickert, Southern Cross University, Australia, Pat McCartan, Belfast Health and Social Care Trust, Dr Ursula Howard, University of London, Kathleen Cramer, Youth Training and Development Centre, Newbridge FÁS CTC and Blathnaid Ní Chinnéide, NALA. Over 120 delegates attended.

### *Securing support*

NALA also gave presentations at a range of national and international conferences in 2008. These included UNESCO Institute of Lifelong Learning (Hamburg), UNESCO Regional Literacy Conference (Azerbaijan), RAPAL (Galway) and the German Institute of Adult Education (Bonn).

NALA continues to work in partnership with a broad range of stakeholders, including on a range of IVEA / VEC committees as well as committees of the Adult Education Guidance Initiative, Waterford Institute of Technology, FETAC and the Irish Deaf Society. NALA also participates on the Community and Voluntary Platform, and was nominated through them onto the National Economic and Social Forum Project on Literacy and Educational Equality, as well as onto committees dealing with progress on the social partnership agreement Towards 2016.

Finally, 2008 was also noteworthy as Batt O'Keefe, TD, Minister for Education and Science, nominated Bridie Daly, from the NALA Executive Committee, as the learner representative on the Further Education and Training Awards Council until 2011.



## PIAAC

In 2008 NALA lobbied the Department of Education and Science, the Minister for Lifelong Learning and party political spokespersons for a means to evidence progress in adult literacy levels. This was supported by the community and voluntary sector through the social partnership arrangements. Ireland committed in 2008 to participating in the initial stages of the OECD international survey called PIAAC - the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies. PIAAC will assess the level and distribution of adult skills and collect information on adult literacy and numeracy practices generally. It will be administered in 2011, with results expected in 2013. Engaging in PIAAC will provide a comparison with the results of the OECD International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS), and indicate progress in adult literacy levels in Ireland between 1995 and 2011. This will provide a measurement of the adult literacy target as set out in the National Action Plan for Social Inclusion to reduce the proportion of adults with literacy difficulties from 25% to between 10% to 15%, as defined by IALS.

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# 200

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***In 2008 there were 200 mentions of NALA in the national and regional press according to the records from Media Market, NALA's media monitoring service.***

## Objective 2

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***Make it easier for more adults to develop their literacy and numeracy through education and training programmes***

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### ***NALA literacy awareness campaigns and public relations***

In 2008, NALA worked continuously with a range of media, setting up interviews with literacy students and specialists, issuing press releases and answering questions related to adult literacy. Once again, the Irish media were very supportive in reporting these issues and were hugely influential in both encouraging adults with literacy difficulties to return to learning and explaining what adult literacy means for wider social and economic development in Ireland.

The year started well with student Kevin O'Duffy featured at his farm on RTÉ's *Ear to the Ground* and Michael Power doing a book review live on the Ryan Tubridy radio show. However, it was NALA's groundbreaking *Written off?* TV series that created the most press coverage in May and June. This included over 40 press articles, a number of radio and TV interviews and a fantastic, in depth interview on RTÉ's *The Late Late Show*. On Friday 9 May, both Keith O'Connor and Jane Quilligan, participants on *Written off?*, spoke passionately to Pat Kenny about their journey back to education and the benefits it had brought to their lives. With an audience of over 590,000 viewers, there is no doubt that this interview brought to life the literacy issue to many homes around the country.

Additional high profile interviews occurred throughout 2008 on programmes such as The Gerry Ryan Show, The Seoirge Show and The Afternoon Show.

In total there were:

- five TV features;
- over 40 national and regional radio interviews; and
- 200 mentions of NALA in the national and regional press (according to the records from Media Market, NALA's media monitoring service).

### **National Adult Literacy Awareness Week 2008**

National Adult Literacy Awareness Week (NALAW) was celebrated nationwide from Monday 22 to Friday 26 September. As always, the aim of the week was to inform individuals about the benefits of improving their literacy and to raise awareness of all the different learning opportunities available to them. Before NALAW Week, NALA produced colourful, eye catching posters and leaflets featuring pictures and quotes from Irish students. NALA circulated over 12,000 posters and 15,000 leaflets during the week through VEC Adult Literacy Services, Youthreach centres, libraries and other key groups.

To celebrate the first day of NALAW, student Mandy Kennedy spoke live on 2FM's The Gerry Ryan Show about her own literacy difficulties and how she went back to education so that she could help her kids with their homework. Laois student Martina Lawlor also became a star for the day, when she appeared alongside Inez Bailey, Director of NALA, on RTÉ's The Afternoon Show. According to Martina, returning to literacy learning was one of the best decisions she ever made and through her own story she encouraged other people in the same position as her to go back to education.

To celebrate the launch of NALAW, Mr Seán Haughey, TD, Minister of State for Lifelong Learning, launched NALA's new information DVD for prospective literacy students, called 'Take on learning. Take on life.' Minister Haughey also unveiled NALA's new websites, [www.nala.ie](http://www.nala.ie), [www.literacy.ie](http://www.literacy.ie) and [www.writeon.ie](http://www.writeon.ie) at the launch in the National Library of Ireland. Following the official launch, NALA went directly to the National Ploughing Championships in Kilkenny (see page 22). Many adult literacy services around the country also

contributed to NALAW by holding open days, issuing press releases and getting regional radio and newspaper coverage.

On the last day of NALAW, and to coincide with Ireland's national day of volunteering, NALA issued a nationwide call for literacy volunteers. This resulted in over 100 people calling NALA's freephone number enquiring about becoming a volunteer literacy tutor.

### *New DVD: Take on learning. Take on life.*

Many adults with literacy difficulties are apprehensive about returning to education. To bridge the time gap between speaking to a freephone operator and signing up to a literacy course, NALA produced an information DVD that could be posted to anyone who rings the freephone. The aim of the DVD is to highlight the benefits improving literacy skills can bring and to outline all the different learning options that are available.

Filming took place over two days in Dublin in September. The informative DVD features students talking about their reasons for attending a course, their fears and expectations and their experience since starting a course. By profiling literacy students of different ages and backgrounds, we hope that a wide range of viewers will be able to relate to their stories. We also hope that the DVD will address the many preconceptions adults have about attending a literacy course and answer the most frequently asked questions received on the NALA freephone. NALA also produced a handy map of Ireland that shows every literacy provider and its contact number.

### *The National Ploughing Championships*

In 2008, NALA had a stand at the National Ploughing Championships, for the first time. After a summer of rain and dark clouds, three days of sunshine brought out a record 210,000 attendants, making it the largest event of its kind in Ireland. The NALA stand was hectic over the event, with staff distributing information and resources to the thousands of people who visited it. During the three days, staff and students spent time talking and advising members of the general public on the literacy issue in Ireland and services available. It was deemed a very worthwhile experience and we hope to have a stand at the event again.

### **An Post TV advertising campaign goes from strength to strength**

In September 2008, An Post was awarded the Chambers Ireland Special President's Award for Literacy Related Programmes, specifically for its advertising campaign 'Take the first step'. The TV advertisement profile three individuals who have overcome their difficulties with reading, writing and working with numbers and were intended to encourage people with literacy difficulties to make contact with service providers by ringing NALA's freephone number. Last year, An Post also produced two complementary radio advertisements, which have been broadcast nationwide.

Since the adverts were first aired, NALA has received thousands of calls to its freephone support line. Many Adult Literacy Organisers (ALOs) around the country have also noticed an increase in what they would define as 'hard to reach' adults and early school leavers. More young men are coming forward with clearly defined goals, for example wanting to complete the Junior and Leaving Certificate, and possibly enrol in third level education. Several ALOs said the advertising campaign has helped reduce the stigma and embarrassment associated with having a literacy difficulty.

An Post has generously agreed to broadcast the adverts again in 2009.

### **Distance learning**

Distance learning happens when learners and tutors are separated by either space or time. This is a broad definition, which reflects the fact that distance learning can involve people studying in a range of ways using a number of learning methods and technologies.

NALA's Distance Learning Paper was presented to the NALA Executive in March.

### **Written Off?**

Eight episodes of *Written Off?* were broadcast on Mondays at 7.30 pm on RTÉ One and repeated after midnight on Thursdays from 5 May to 23 June 2008. Average weekly viewing figures showed 210,000 people were watching,

representing 14.1% of the viewing public. The format of this series was a 'fly-on the-wall' documentary following the progress of 11 students engaged in an intensive eight-weekend learning course.

Viewers were encouraged to call the freephone number to find out about options available to them. Viewers also had the option of engaging with NALA's Distance Learning Service. All 11 students from TV series received their FETAC Level 2 Certificates in General Learning from then Minister for Education, Mary Hanafin, on 24 May 2008.

During filming, a Media Advisory Group met regularly to guide the work of the project. This group expanded to include a representative from the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment in 2008.

The group also has representatives from:

- the Department of Education and Science;
- RTÉ;
- Chief Executive and Education Officers' Association (CEEEOA);
- Irish Vocational Education Association (IVEA);
- Adult Education Organisers' Association (AEOA);
- Adult Literacy Organisers' Association (ALOA); and
- NALA.

### *NALA's Distance Learning Service*

NALA's Distance Learning Service was re-organised to include 14 Distance Learning Tutors working from home and a Freephone Administrator recruited to co-ordinate calls and tuition from Dublin. Our freephone number received 658 phonecalls looking for support up to 1 September. Some 147 people engaged with 14 Distance Learning Tutors with the remainder looking for information on local services. Six learners have submitted portfolios for the Level 2 Certificate in General Learning.

A new web site, [www.writeon.ie](http://www.writeon.ie), was developed specifically to provide access to learning and accreditation at Level 2 and was launched in September 2008. The site contains over 2,600 interactive screens and took nine months to develop.



About 200 learners are currently using the site, with four submissions for minor awards having been received to date. Usability testing is ongoing and we anticipate larger numbers of online users in 2009.

An external consultancy, Exodea, was contracted to conduct an evaluation of NALA's Distance Learning Service in 2008. The final report is due in January 2009.

NALA also attended the Literacy Campaign at the 2008 Frankfurt Book Fair, showcasing its work in a presentation titled Media Literacy: Distance Learning for Basic Literacy Learners in Ireland.

### **Workplace basic education**

Workplace basic education programmes are an innovative way of improving adult literacy skills while in the workplace. A programme may include literacy, numeracy, communication skills, computer skills, interpersonal skills, problem solving and report writing. They are offered on site, where possible, or else in a mutually convenient location.

### ***Paid learning leave (PLL)***

In 2008, NALA continued its work on promoting the paid release of workers with less than a Level 4 qualification who wished to develop their literacy and numeracy skills. This policy aims to remove time and financial issues for people already trying to maintain their work-life balance and also return to education.

In making our case for paid learning leave to policy makers, we need compelling evidence that allowing workers to take time off to study will help significant numbers of people to engage. NALA gathered international evidence in support of PLL and continues to advocate and promote adaptable models for the Irish context.

### ***FÁS Skills for Work - Workplace Basic Education Fund***

In 2008, NALA had two representatives on the national steering committee which met twice. During the year we progressed two particular projects with FÁS, including:

- apprenticeships
- our WBE tutor resource, Clocking In to Clocking Out.

The FÁS Apprenticeship project aims to develop a tool that can be used by tutors delivering apprenticeship courses to identify literacy and numeracy issues early on in the course. The tool will help to identify needs as early as possible so support mechanisms can be put in place, allowing more apprentices to be successful in their course. In 2008, FÁS set up an internal project group to develop an action plan for piloting the tool and support mechanisms developed in phase 1 of the project. Phase 2 will take place in 2009 and involve piloting in a number of trades and training centres.

Clocking In to Clocking Out was developed with funding from the FÁS Skills for Work. The pack is designed to help tutors meet the reading, writing, communications, numeracy and ICT needs of learners in the context of workplace basic education demands.

### ***Skillnets***

In 2008, NALA met with Skillnets to discuss support structures for their networks involved in low basic skills initiatives. We gave a presentation to the Training Provider Competency Skillnet in November and will facilitate a focus group with trainers in January 2009.

### ***Integrating literacy into initial assessment***

NALA took part in a range of activities related to developing integrated initial assessment approaches. This included contributing to the work of the DES-IVEA-NALA Initial Assessment and Screening Committee, which commissioned research into this topic.

### *Accredited training for instructors and tutors*

In 2008, 40 staff from FÁS Community Based Training programmes successfully completed the NUIM Certificate Course in Integrating Literacy. The participants included instructors, literacy tutors and managers. Participants produced reports on their action research projects, showing how they integrate literacy into: induction and courses such as childcare, health and safety, ar mechanics, personal and social development, computers and sport.

### *Consultancy and training service*

NALA provided in-house seminars on integrating literacy for managers and staff in 41 education and training centres. Most of these were FÁS Community Training Centres, which availed of the service as part of their national strategy to integrate literacy across their programmes.

In November, NALA recruited additional members for its panel of integrating literacy consultants. The expanded panel will meet early in the New Year, in preparation for providing on-site consultancy and training service to education and training providers as part of NALA's new Literacy Advisory Service.

### *NALA-FÁS Workshop*

In November, FÁS and NALA organised a National Strategic Planning Workshop for FÁS Community Training Centres and Community Services Managers and Officers. NALA designed and facilitated the workshop, in which representatives of various centres worked in small groups using checklists based on the 10-point Integrating Literacy Guidelines to review and plan their integrated literacy strategy.

### *Transfer of learning seminar*

In December, NALA organised a seminar for 18 tutors who had completed accredited training in integrating literacy earlier in the year. This focused on how they were using the approach in practice. Participants identified and shared methods and materials they had found useful. The aim of the seminar was to help participants to sustain the integrated approaches they had learned on the course.

## Research into the needs and experiences of older people

In 2008 NALA published a research report on the *experiences of older people* with literacy difficulties. The study, *It's never too late to learn*, details the experiences of a group of older learners and tell us much about the personal, social and economic dimensions of literacy.

The research provides an insight into the older learners' experience of formal education, the impact literacy difficulties had on their family, working and social lives and the coping strategies they used to disguise their literacy difficulties.

A total of 24 older learners between the ages of 51 and 80 from four Dublin-based adult literacy centres took part in the study carried out by the NALA research team. The research findings provide great insights, confirm information that is known anecdotally and identifies new information.

This study showed that tasks, such as helping children with homework or ordering food from a menu can be stressful when you have literacy difficulties. The study also highlighted how engaging with adult literacy services has been a positive experience for this group of older people. In the majority of cases, it has resulted in improved reading and writing skills, increased self-confidence and a welcome extension of often limited social networks.

NALA also developed a further piece of research with older people in 2008. This second research project specifically targets people aged 60+ years with literacy difficulties who are *not* currently engaged with adult literacy services. The aim of the research project is to explore with older people their views and experience of living with literacy difficulties. We also aim to identify the education and service needs of older people and identify any barriers that stop them returning to education.

## ***Informal learning, literacy development and men***

In 2008, the NALA research team developed a pilot research project with men with literacy difficulties to document their literacy needs, experience of informal learning and the benefits of participating in adult education. The project is part of an international research project on men's informal learning initiated by the University of Ballarat, Victoria, Australia. This is taking place in Australia, New Zealand, England, Scotland, Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. NALA is working in close co-operation with Queen's University, Belfast and National University of Ireland, Maynooth, to develop comparable data across the island of Ireland.

A small scale pilot project was developed in 2008 to explore the experience of men with literacy difficulties who are not currently engaged in the adult literacy services. NALA identified this research as a result of the increased engagement with the freephone service from men responding to the An Post advertising campaign and the TV programme, *Written Off?*. Initial exploratory field work took place in November and December 2008, while more extended project is planned for 2009.

***I used to hate when someone would say "Will we go for something to eat?" I was afraid of the menu, you see, so when I had to go, I just used to order the same thing all the time.*** *Dublin man with literacy difficulties*

Taken from NALA's 2008 Research Report *It's never too late to learn*

***With the recent increases in adult literacy budgets, participation in VEC adult literacy services has increased from 5,000 students in 1998 to 45,000 in 2008.***

## Objective 3

### ***Make approaches to teaching and learning more effective***

#### ***Evaluation of Adult Literacy Initiatives***

Throughout 2008 NALA continued to build its capacity to carry out evaluation work. We carried out an audit of possible evaluation opportunities and developed a strategy to monitor and take advantage of these opportunities. NALA's Evaluation Officer and Research Officer gained the Certificate in Return on Investment (ROI) Impact Measurement from the ROI Institute. Other impact and assessment training was also undertaken by both officers during the year which further added to our capacity to undertake evaluation work in the years ahead.

#### ***National Student Days***

Throughout 2008, NALA continued to build its commitment to involving adult literacy students in its work. NALA's student sub-committee very involved in directing our work in this area. In 2008, NALA organised two national student days. One day was held in Dublin and the second day was held in Cork. A total of 179 students attended the days.

The theme for these days was 'How your literacy work builds on your connection with family, work and community' (also called Literacy as a Social Practice). A key part of NALA's voice strategy is to ensure that students are aware of current and evolving thinking within practitioner circles in adult literacy. The student days also give students the chance to chat to each other and to share their experience. The days are also an opportunity for NALA to present updates on its ongoing work.



## **The NALA Student Development Fund**

In 2008, there were 49 successful applications for the NALA Student Development Fund, an increase of 28 from 2007. This increase occurred because NALA particularly welcomed applications from centres that had never applied before for the fund. The amount of funding given to each successful applicant was typically €650 and this year's theme was 'student networking'. As well as meeting students from other literacy centres, some groups visited places of local and national interest.

Through the Student Development Fund NALA gathers feedback from students and this feedback in turn informs NALA's voice strategy.

## **Curriculum development**

Following the research on curriculum development in adult basic education carried out by the National Research and Development Centre for Adult Literacy and Numeracy (NRDC), NALA have published two documents on the NALA website:

- the NRDC report 'Developing Curriculum in Adult Literacy and Numeracy Education', and
- an NRDC report on 'Curriculum for Intensive Tuition in Adult Basic Education'.

During 2008 NALA set up a working group to review its work on curriculum development to date and to plan the next stage, with particular reference to the key elements of *Guidelines for Good Adult Literacy Work*. The working group recommended that we should produce an evolving model for curriculum development together with rationale and guidelines to support the model. This will be the focus of our work on curriculum development in 2009.

## Adults Continuing Education (ACE) Awards 2008

The ACE Awards are now in their fourth year and again were given a major boost of €20,000 by the EBS Building Society. This year the aim of the research-focused awards was to identify and support further study into innovative and high quality learning opportunities for adults, with a specific focus on informal learning in the home and in the community.

A diverse range of projects from across the country, dealing with adult basic education issues, were nominated for the awards. All projects focused on new and innovative approaches helping adults to improve their literacy and numeracy skills, through ICT, sport, photography and family literacy.

A selection panel, comprising:

- Kerry Lawless, NALA,
- Eibhlin Carr, EBS,
- Rob Marks, QUB,
- Ted Fleming, NUIM,
- Anne Jordan, WIT,
- Claudia Carroll, Author

selected five literacy projects from Dublin, Galway, Cork and Kerry. They were each awarded €2,000 in December 2008 to carry out initial research into the projects they had submitted.

The award ceremony for the 2008 awards will be held in February 2009 where the winning project will be awarded an additional €10,000 research grant to continue their research project.

The following projects were shortlisted and awarded the first grant of €2,000:

**Nominee: Dublin City Council**

Project: Library Learning Bus

**Nominee: City of Cork Travellers Literacy Scheme**

Project: City of Cork Traveller Literacy Scheme

**Nominee: County Galway VEC**

Project: A B Sea (basic skills for the fishing industry)

**Nominee: Crumlin Adult Literacy Service**

Project: Fatima Literacy Project

**Nominee: Soilse - Addiction Rehabilitation Service**

Project: Soilse/Maynooth NUI Return to Learning Course

## **Numeracy research**

NALA submitted a successful joint application with IT Tallaght for a Strand 1 Postgraduate Research and Development Skills Programme. The funding is being used to support a post graduate student to work (under the supervision of Terry Maguire, IT Tallaght) with NALA forming part of steering group. The research will explore the mathematical and numeracy demands of the workplace. A 'grounded' research process (work shadowing of up to four people) will identify the ways in which mathematics are contextualised in particular jobs. The generic mathematical skills, knowledge and competence of each job will then be documented and benchmarked against the National Framework of Qualifications.

## **Family literacy**

The term family literacy describes:

- the uses of literacy within family networks, especially activities that involve two or more generations;
- education programmes that help to develop literacy and numeracy learning in a family context.

Family literacy work can help to overcome the barriers to learning felt by some adults and children who find it difficult to relate to school learning.

### **Department of Education and Science: Working Group on Family Literacy**

NALA is a member of this working group which is responsible for allocating grants to support family literacy development projects under the DEIS Action

Plan for Educational Inclusion (2005). In 2008, seven family literacy pilot projects were funded and grants have been allocated to a further 13 projects for 2009. Projects are based on partnership between adult literacy centres, schools, libraries and community projects. On 5 December 2008 the working group organised a seminar on good practice in family literacy work.

### *European family literacy projects*

NALA is a partner in two Grundtvig projects relating to family literacy:

#### ***Family and Active Citizenship Education – an Integrated Training (FACE IT)***

This Grundtvig 1 project connects two key aspects of lifelong learning. It is led by EuroEd in Romania with partners from Co. Clare (Clare FL project), France, Italy, Slovenia and England. In January 2008 the fourth partners' meeting was held in Marseille and the closing conference took place in Iasi, Romania, in July. Handbooks produced by the project, on active citizenship education and family learning approaches, are available in the NALA resource room.

Further information about the project is available on the website [www.faceit.org](http://www.faceit.org).

#### ***European Family Learning Network (EFLN)***

The EFLN is a Grundtvig 4 project led by Campaign for Learning in the UK. The other partners are from Finland, France, Germany, Malta, Norway, Italy, Poland, Romania, Slovenia and the UK. The partners organise seminars to co-incide with network meetings. In May 2008, the theme was 'developing networks in family learning'. This seminar was held in Finland and was attended by 10 participants from Ireland. In November, the seminar was held in Romania on the topic 'family learning and active citizenship'.

A description of the network, presentations, a newsletter and further information is available on the website [www.efln.eu](http://www.efln.eu).

### *Family literacy research*

In 2008 the NALA research team developed a working partnership and research plan with the School of Community Studies in the National College of Ireland.

This research plan will underpin research in four geographical areas, maximising the skills and expertise of local field workers under the guidance and support of the National College of Ireland and NALA. The main aim of the research is to examine the attitudes of families towards learning that takes place in the home. It will also identify where, how and why this learning takes place.

### ***English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)***

In the adult basic education (ABE) context ESOL is about providing learning support for non-English speakers. Literacy and language are intertwined not only within first language acquisition but also within the teaching and learning of English as a second language. 'ESOL literacy' refers to provision that focuses on both English language development and literacy development for students who have low levels of literacy in their native language.

#### ***Informing NALA's future direction in ESOL***

NALA is currently reviewing its involvement in English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) in light of its current strategic plan, which sees a move to a more research and policy focused role. In 2008, NALA produced a position paper to outline our work in relation to ESOL supports over the past six or seven years and to set out recommendations for our future involvement in ESOL. The paper also sets out the policy context for the Agency's involvement in ESOL to date and draws on the main findings of an internal NALA review of ESOL practice and provision internationally.

In making recommendations for NALA's future involvement in ESOL, we recognise that the policy context and operating environment for ESOL is currently under review at national level. In 2007 the Reception and Integration Agency (RIA) and the Department of Education and Science (DES) commissioned a review of ESOL provision. The review and consultation is part of the development of a national English language training policy and framework for legally-resident adult immigrants.

### ***Review of international ESOL provision***

NALA carried out a review to look at ESOL practice and provision internationally. The aim of the review was to explore current ESOL arrangements in a range of international settings to inform NALA's deliberations. The review looked at the current situation in England, Scotland, New Zealand, Australia and California under the following headings:

- funding of ESOL classes
- links between adult literacy and language provision (ESOL)
- organisations which provide a support and lobbying role in ESOL
- provision and accreditation options for ESOL students
- conditions and qualifications for ESOL teachers.

### ***Events promoting the Guidelines for Good Adult Literacy Work***

'Guidelines for Good Adult Literacy Work' (2005), sets out the five principles that should be reflected in the content and methods of tutor training and development programmes. In 2008, we focused specifically on the theme of 'social practice'.

### ***National Forum for Adult Literacy Tutors 2008***

The National Forum for Adult Literacy Tutors took place on Saturday 26 January 2008 in Dublin. The title for the forum was 'Explore how good adult literacy work builds on students' connections with family, work and community'. About 195 tutors attended the Tutors' Forum, up from 120 in 2007, and the result was a very positive and uplifting day.

The keynote speaker was Lyn Tett, Professor of Community Education and Lifelong Learning from the University of Edinburgh. Lyn spoke about what social practice is and how learning and living can be connected through social practices. Rose Brownen, the Adult Literacy Organiser with KLEAR, Kilbarrack Adult Literacy Service, discussed a case study on social practice literacy. This consisted of research that Rose had carried out with learners on how literacy classes had affected their lives. Mandy Kennedy, a student with the Northside

Reading and Writing Centre, Coolock, Dublin spoke about how she used her literacy skills in the community, as she is now actively involved with the parent-teacher group at her childrens' school, the girl guides and the church committee. Finally, Barney Whelan of An Post gave a presentation on the adult literacy advertising campaign. In the afternoon there were a wide range of workshops on methods of motivating adult literacy students. Participants were very happy with the event with very positive feedback from the 111 evaluation forms returned by tutors.

### **Adult Literacy Organisers Forum 2008**

The theme for the forum was 'Striking the balance: students' interests and institutional demands'. This theme dovetailed with the overall theme of 'literacy as social practice'. The term 'institutional demands' covers such areas as accreditation, administering assessment, meeting targets in recruitment and retention of students, reporting to the VEC and Department of Education and Science etc. Some 62 ALOs attended from 29 VECs, compared with 63 at the 2007 event. The evaluations were very positive and complimentary in terms of the quality of speakers, the debate and the organisation of the event.

The speakers were Uta Papen, Lancaster Literacy Research Centre, Mary Roche, South Tipperary VEC, Victoria Purcell-Gates, University of British Columbia, Larry O'Farrelly, CEO, Co. Roscommon VEC, Helen Smith, Employee Advisory Resource Ireland, Moira Greene, Clare Reading and Writing Scheme, Anne Simpson, Aberdeenshire Adult Literacy and Numeracy Partnership and Morven Considine, Aberdeenshire Council Community Learning and Development.

### **Social practice conference**

The title of the conference was 'Literacy as Social Practice: A challenge and a support'. The conference took place in the National College of Ireland, Dublin, and was attended by 75 people. The aim of the conference was to help practitioners to develop a deeper understanding of how social practice views of literacy, language and numeracy relate to learning to develop all aspects of literacy practice, including organisation, technical skills, personal development and social action.

The main speakers for the morning session were Kathy MacLachlan, senior lecturer, Department of Adult and Continuing Education, University of Glasgow. Kathy spoke about traditional views of literacy versus a social-practices approach to literacies and effective literacies learning approaches. Mary Maher, director of the Dublin Adult Learning Centre (DALC), talked about research that looked at the effects of motivation on students and on how learners learn more effectively when the learning is connected to their lives and is authentic. Mary also looked at persistence and how learners are more likely to persist if their goals are social (work, community participation) as well as personal. Heide Wrigley, International Adult Literacy Consultant, Literacywork, USA, spoke about functional, critical and literacy as social practice and gave examples of how literacy enabled students to take more control of their lives. The event was chaired by Helen Murphy, Literacy Development Centre, Waterford Institute of Technology.

### *Family Literacy Development Day*

On 4 June NALA ran a national family literacy development day for 60 participants at the National College of Ireland in Dublin. The theme for the day was 'Building on Home Learning'. Catherine Macrae from the City of Edinburgh Literacy and Numeracy Partnership gave a one word address on the topic 'Learning and Power in Family Learning'. This was followed by workshops on making the links between culture and literacies at home and school learning; family learning and active citizenship; storysacks; and numeracy at home.

### *English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Conference*

The title of the conference was 'Culture, community and contexts: Linking ESOL classes to students' lives'. The conference took place in Dublin and 95 participants attended.

The purpose of the event was to highlight the wider issues of ESOL including ways in which ESOL students use written and spoken language in their home, community and work lives. It looked at people's cultural practices so that what the students do in the ESOL class has a link to their family and community life. This tied in with the 'social practice' theme that ran through all NALA conferences and students events in 2008. The conference also examined



strategies for working with ESOL students who have little or no literacy in their native language.

### **Speakers**

The main speakers for the morning session were Piaras MacÉinrí and Anne Whiteside. Piaras MacÉinrí is Director of the Irish Centre for Migration Studies, Department of Geography, UCC. He spoke about integration policy in Ireland and gave an overview of attempts that the state has been making to encourage active citizenship among immigrants. Anne Whiteside, Researcher and ESOL tutor, City College of San Francisco, spoke about how students with few years of schooling can best be served in ESOL classes. This presentation was based on her research on the language practices of migrants from Yucatan, Mexico in San Francisco and previous research on second language acquisition, early adult first- and second-language literacy development and sociolinguistics. The event was chaired by Natasha Kocijan, ESOL student and Croatian language teacher. Natasha gave some examples of how she participates more in her community thanks to what she learned in her ESOL classes.

**+ 3,823**

***Since the launch of the new version of [www.nala.ie](http://www.nala.ie) at the end of September, a total of 31,664 visitors searched it for information directly related to NALA and its work. This means that on average 3,823 more people have visited the site every month since its relaunch.***

## Objective 4

**Persuade organisations to be fully accessible to people with literacy and numeracy difficulties**

### Health Literacy

*"Health literacy emerges when the expectations, preferences and skills of individuals seeking health information and services meet the expectations, preferences and skills of those providing information and services."*  
(IOM 2004)

Health literacy is a relatively new health policy area in Ireland, but is receiving attention in recent years. We do know that society is getting more complicated and people need more literacy skills in everyday life. The Irish health sector is also demanding more literacy skills. Many people who deal effectively with other aspects of their lives find health information difficult to obtain, understand, or use. Patients are often faced with complex information and treatment decisions.

### **Literacy audit for healthcare settings**

NALA with the Health Service Executive (HSE) produced a resource titled *Literacy Audit for Healthcare Settings* resource to address the issue of accessible and literacy friendly healthcare settings. Designed to help healthcare workers understand the literacy demands of their environment, it offers guidance to make settings and practice more accessible. Informed by best practice in the area of health communication, this practical resource can be used by anyone dealing with the public in any healthcare setting. This initiative will improve the understanding of what is effective communication both in written and oral form in the area of healthcare.

### **Awareness resources**

Work got underway to develop a health literacy awareness DVD, which was cited as a necessary resource in our awareness training with health practitioners. We also launched an Irish health literacy website, [www.healthliteracy.ie](http://www.healthliteracy.ie). Developed by the MSD/NALA Health Literacy Initiative, it provides information for health practitioners, policymakers and the general public. All of these resources should advance the understanding of health literacy in Ireland.

### **Campaigning work**

Health literacy initiatives should connect to ongoing efforts to improve the competence and standards of healthcare settings. To this end Jennifer Lynch, Health Literacy Co-ordinator, met with the Hospital Information and Quality Authority (HIQA) to outline our health literacy work and discuss how the health literacy audit could assist settings in the area of communication standards. HIQA now avail of our plain English service in efforts to make their service more accessible.

We met with the Department of Health to discuss the need for a national health literacy policy and the lack of Irish research in this area. We outlined our work with the HSE but emphasised that this work was being driven by the Health Promotion area solely and we need health literacy to be considered in other areas of health. We discussed Ireland's involvement in the proposed European health literacy survey, which is planned to take place in 2009. The Department has asked NALA if it will be involved as an advisor in this initiative. The Health Literacy Survey EU will collect data on health literacy and provide a comparative assessment of health literacy in the general public.

We attended a consultation meeting with the Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland in July 2008 as part of a focus group to discuss their interim report 'Advancing Clinical Pharmacy Practice to Deliver Better Patient Care'. We outlined how literacy should be a part of any practice assessment and literacy awareness part of any professional training.

One of the recommendations arising from the focus group was that:

*"There is a need for more communication by pharmacists with patients. Pharmacists should also be cognisant of patients with cognitive disabilities and those who have difficulties and or disabilities with literacy, language and sight. Pharmacies should be more user friendly to patients who fall into these groups."*

### **Projects Scoop 'Crystal Clear' Health Literacy Award**

In April, people working in the health care arena were commended for their efforts in communicating with patients in a clear and accessible way. Six projects from over 100 entries were awarded for their outstanding work by Minister Mary Harney at the first Crystal Clear Health Literacy Awards in Ireland. Each project was designed to address the issue of health literacy, which is a person's ability to understand basic health information and then make informed decisions. The nationwide campaign was developed by MSD Ireland (Human Health) Ltd in partnership with the National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA).

The second Crystal Clear Awards were launched in November and will be held in 2009.

### **Health literacy campaign continues in 2009**

The second phase of the MSD/NALA Health Literacy Initiative, was launched in November to raise awareness of the importance of health literacy in Ireland. As part of the initiative, MSD and NALA launched a number of tools to help improve communications between the public and their healthcare professional.

These include a campaign urging patients to ask three questions of their healthcare professional so that they clearly understand their problem and what they should do about it. The Ask Me3 campaign encourages patients to always ask:

1. What is my problem?
2. What do I need to do?
3. Why is it important for me to do this?

They were originally developed by an international health literacy organisation and have been adopted by the MSD/NALA Health Literacy Initiative for Ireland. As part of the initiative appointment cards and desk calendars were distributed nationwide to GP surgeries and hospitals promoting the three questions and providing top tips to help healthcare professionals communicate with the public clearly.

### **Advisory service**

Our literacy advisory service offers specific supports to organisations to help them adopt a 'whole organisation' approach to literacy. This approach means making sure that adults with literacy difficulties can avoid unnecessary barriers in dealing with the organisation – whether as customers or as current or potential staff. It involves staff at all levels and across all departments ensuring that recruitment processes, training, customer services and written communications, among other activities, are carried out in a literacy-friendly way wherever possible.

#### **Guiding organisations through the approach**

One of the service's main achievements in 2008 was to prepare a guide for organisations that introduces them to the whole organisation approach and provides concrete examples of good practice in a range of activities. The guide also outlines a process through which organisations can review their current literacy awareness and then develop, implement and review any necessary plans to become more literacy friendly. Case studies and checklists round out the guide to offer encouragement and practical tools to embark on this approach.

Dr Liz McSkeane developed the final guide following extensive consultation with literacy students, local authority staff, HR consultants and organisations such as EBS Building Society, FÁS, Skillnets and Dublin Bus.

#### **Offering on-the-ground support to organisations**

While we developed the guide as a practical resource for organisations, we are aware that sometimes day-to-day support and guidance from a literacy consultant may be preferred, and indeed necessary. For this reason,

in autumn 2008, we began recruiting a panel of consultants to work with organisations as they identify and address any literacy-related barriers. The role of the consultants is to facilitate an initial review and planning day, draft recommendations for future actions and then link in with the organisations to keep them on track as they develop new policies and practices.

### *Introducing the approach to city and county councillors and local authority staff*

In May we held a conference for local authority councillors and staff to raise awareness of literacy difficulties and showcase the various supports we provide through the literacy advisory service. More than 60 delegates heard presentations from: Judith Hinman, on the Skills for Life programme in the UK; Niall Flaherty, on Limerick City Council's initiatives to develop a literacy policy; and Robert Traynor, on his experiences of the Return to Learning programme through Dublin City Council. Cllr Tom Kelleher, then President of the Association of County and City Councils, launched and chaired the event. Workshops covered a range of topics such as how to start reviewing policies and practices, literacy awareness and customer service, plain English, integrating literacy into training and case studies of good practice in Irish and UK local authorities.

### *Offering plain English support*

We continued to offer training and editing support to organisations under the plain English wing of the literacy advisory service. In September we successfully tendered to review and edit letters about rent relief under a pilot programme by the Revenue Commissioners. We also edited a booklet on PAYE that was issued to over two million Revenue customers in November.

Organisations whose documents received the Plain English Mark include the:

- Road Safety Authority;
- Office of the Director of Corporate Enforcement;
- Law Society;
- Office of the Ombudsman;
- Irish Hospice Foundation; and
- Communications Regulator.



We continued to edit materials from the Health Promotion Information Project under the HSE and Information Services in the Department of Social and Family Affairs (DSFA).

In autumn 2008, we offered training to various sections of the DSFA and to other organisations such as Teagasc and the Office of the Data Protection Commissioner. Earlier in the year, we facilitated workshops on plain English at the Irish Hospital Pharmacists' Association and presented to a quarterly meeting of Dublin City Council's Customer Services Network.

Finally, we worked to update our popular publication Writing and Design Tips to take account of some of the latest thinking on plain English and clear layout. The new publication has more examples of good practice and a handy glossary of alternative words and phrases to make writing more straightforward.

### *Integrating Literacy Research*

In 2008 we developed a research project that explored the initial and on-going assessment of literacy for early school leavers in a youth training centre. Newbridge Youth Training and Development Centre (NYTDC) won the 2008 Adults Continuing Education (ACE) Award for their work and research about integrating literacy into vocational education and training. The Centre submitted a research proposal to identify aspects of the centre's policies and procedures that support the integration of literacy and how these could be developed further.

NALA supported further research into the impact of these practices and the impact of integrating literacy into the Centre's work. The research clearly demonstrated the benefits of a 'whole organisational' approach to literacy and provides a practical overview of the experience of the Centre. The research findings will prove invaluable to all groups currently involved in education and training.



*Roy from Meath had trouble with numbers. This stopped him from becoming a carpenter. He got help from his local literacy service and is now doing an apprenticeship.*







*Breda from Dublin lacked confidence with reading. Her local literacy tutor helped her and now she takes joy in reading story books to her grand-daughter.*



## Objective 5

### **Strengthen NALA's effectiveness as an organisation**

#### **Internal operations and reporting**

In 2008 we continued to adapt how we plan and report on our work. We finalised a new style of work plan that includes our intended actions each year as well as the goals of our work and the impact we want it to have on our stakeholders by the end of 2010. We also updated how we report at our staff meetings so that we can work as effectively as possible, keeping each other informed of our progress and any difficulties or upcoming work.

Regular meetings among management and between managers and individual staff have helped to ensure that progress was recorded and any challenges or new issues were discussed and dealt with promptly.

Our staff handbook, staff contracts and organisational handbook were also updated in 2008. The organisational handbook is a manual designed to ensure that staff understand and follow the same procedures when carrying out their day-to-day work. It covers areas such as file management, team working, administrative duties and organising events.

#### **Health and safety**

We updated our health and safety statement to take account of recent changes in health and safety legislation. The safety statement is now available on the 'About NALA' section of our website. Under the provisions of the statement, we carried out a number of hazard audits and organised an ergonomic assessment

in our Dublin office. The assessment looked at the suitability of working conditions at people's desks (for example level of light, heat, noise pollution as well as physical space) and made a number of recommendations. We plan to carry out similar audits and assessments for our other offices in 2009.

### **Customer service**

Our new customer service team met three times in 2008. It now comprises: Clodagh McCarthy, Organisational Support Co-ordinator; Eilis Mernagh, Office Manager; Sandra Peel, Resource Room manager; Emma Ramsey, Communications Officer; and Margaret Murray, Student and Membership Officer.

Our customer charter continues to be based on the following six standards: service, your opinions, communications, equality and respect, accessibility and health and safety. Our main progress during the year included revamping our Resource Room, developing a new database to monitor customer calls and e-mails, including an 'online shop' and customer contact forms on our new website and updating our procedures for organising events.

### **Balanced Scorecard**

Throughout 2008 NALA continued to research a tool to measure our work and its impact, called the balanced scorecard (BSC). 2008 saw NALA produce its BSC Position Paper and we began to restructure how we plan and report our work in accordance with the BSC model. NALA has now engaged Farrell Grant Sparks McClure Watters in association with Excitant Ltd to lead the next phase of this work in the first half of 2009.

### **AGM resolutions**

Our 2008 AGM saw members pass a resolution to put NALA's constitution into plain English. As the primary document outlining the purpose and governance of the

Agency, it was felt that it should be as clear as possible, particularly because of our policy to use plain English in our publications. Following a careful edit and internal review, the revised constitution was discussed by our Executive Committee and sent for legal approval. It will be put before members for their approval at our next AGM.

## Training

Staff arranged and attended a number of courses under our programme of training and development for the Agency. New members of the Executive Committee received an induction in April and, in May, the Executive Committee attended a half-day workshop on board member duties, delivered by The Wheel. Training courses attended by individual staff included:

- 'Return on Investment' (a model of measuring the value of something, or example a project or funding),
- risk management and strategic planning, and
- governance and the role of boards.

A small number of staff were also funded to attend third level courses on personnel practice, public policy and social justice and adult and community education.

Group training was arranged for staff throughout the year. This included:

- a one-day course on writing in plain English in January,
- half day Age Wise training with Age and Opportunity in February,
- a two-day course on writing for the web and updating our website in August,
- an introduction to budgeting, in July and November, and
- a series of courses on Microsoft Word, Outlook, PowerPoint and Excel from October to December. The IT courses were delivered by New Horizons following a successful tender and a training needs analysis.

Our annual staff development day, in May, was facilitated by training consultant Caroline McCamley and took the theme of 'team working'. The purpose of the day was to help staff look at current examples of team working and identify good practice and any areas needing attention. The day had a practical focus, with staff encouraged to break up into small groups to discuss working styles within teams,



priority project actions and key actions to follow up from the day. Staff found the day to be a very useful opportunity to reflect on how we work and any necessary improvements to enhance the Agency.

### **NALA Administration Team**

The NALA administration team had a busy year in 2008 as they provided support to all sections of the Agency. The team generally supported the Agency's development, training and awareness work and co-ordinated the many mailings that went out during the year. Some 6,308 telephone queries were dealt with through the NALA main line number and 185 customers visited the NALA Dublin office seeking information and resource materials. The administration staff also played an active role in helping NALA development staff organise major events and campaigns throughout the country, such as National Adult Literacy Awareness Week, the NALA Annual General Meeting, organisers' and students' forums and many other seminars and conferences.

### **NALA Resource Room**

2008 saw a total refurbishment of NALA's resource room. Based in the Dublin office, the NALA Resource Room continues to be widely used by all those involved in tutoring adults in various settings. These include:

- VEC Adult Literacy Services;
- Senior Traveller Training Centres;
- prison education services;
- FÁS Community Training Centres;
- National Learning Network;
- VTOS centres;
- Youthreach centres; and
- tutors of ESOL.

We dealt with an average of 674 orders by post, fax, email and telephone over the year. We also received 890 orders for free NALA resources.

Materials from the NALA Resource Room were displayed at events such as the NALA Annual General Meeting, the Conference on WBE and National Skills Strategy, the Social Practice Conference, regional student days, the ALOs Forum, National Student Event on Dyslexia, RAPAL Conference, NALA/LSDA Making It Work Conference, IRAACE seminar, NALA ESOL and Family Conferences and the launch of National Literacy Awareness Week 2008. If you would like to receive the NALA Resource Guide or an order form, contact the NALA Resource Room by phone on (01) 855 4332 or by email at [resources@nala.ie](mailto:resources@nala.ie).

### **National Referral Service**

Members of the public contacted the NALA freephone number to request:

- information on how to make contact with local literacy schemes;
- support in improving literacy skills; and
- free workbooks, DVDs and CDs that accompanied the ReadWriteNow and Really Useful Guide to Words and Numbers TV series.

The NALA administration team dealt with 2,275 such calls last year. We also dealt with 583 enquiries by telephone, letter and email from people wishing to become volunteer tutors.

The administration team also updated an information leaflet providing the contact names, telephone numbers and email addresses of all adult literacy schemes in the country. It is extremely useful for anyone wishing to put adults in touch with their local adult literacy service. If you would like to receive a copy, contact us by phone on (01) 855 4332 or by email at [literacy@nala.ie](mailto:literacy@nala.ie).

### **NALA web site**

In 2008 we launched two new NALA websites. NALA's main site, [www.nala.ie](http://www.nala.ie), has been totally recreated to reflect NALA's new branding. It contains all the information that the public, practitioners, stakeholders or policymakers may wish to know about NALA's work and about the literacy issue in Ireland. It also

contains a new online shop and a new, secure members' area, where members can take part in online surveys, discuss matters in a private forum, renew their subscription online, share publications and get updates on recent and upcoming work in NALA.

From January 2008 to September 2008, the original version of [www.nala.ie](http://www.nala.ie) received 50,029 visitors. Since the launch of the new version of [www.nala.ie](http://www.nala.ie) at the end of September, a total of 31,664 visitors searched it for information directly related to NALA and its work. This means that on average 3,823 more people have visited the site every month since its relaunch.

A new website, [www.literacy.ie](http://www.literacy.ie), was developed to bring together all NALA's existing sites and to provide the most comprehensive information on the current literacy issue in Ireland. This site functions as a one-stop-shop for everybody's literacy needs and is the easiest way to gain access to all the information that exists through NALA's other websites. A total of 8,560 visitors have visited [www.literacy.ie](http://www.literacy.ie) since its launch in May.

### **Website audit and strategy**

In December 2008, NALA commissioned consultancy company Amas to carry out an audit of its existing websites. This audit and subsequent strategy will inform NALA's online presence for the next three years, allowing NALA to better meet the needs of existing website users and allow the websites to cater for new users. NALA wants to develop this strategy to meet best practice, capitalise on emerging online tactics in the future and become a leader in the area of online adult basic education.

### **Spreading the word through print**

In March we sent out the first edition of NALA's new magazine *Literacy Matters*. This bi-annual publication details NALA's exciting new projects and provides news on adult literacy in general. The second edition was produced and distributed in November.

We sent *Literacy Matters* to all our members and nearly 2,000 copies to literacy practitioners, politicians and civil servants. We also sent copies to representatives of national education and voluntary sector organisations and community groups.

This year the NALA Journal was also redesigned and re-launched as a research journal titled *Literacy Review*. This now forms the third item in the suite of NALA's annual publications. The aim of the journal is to provide reflection and analysis on key literacy issues. The 2008 Journal was based on the annual theme of social practice and contained five articles from a selection of speakers who presented at this year's related conferences. We sent the Journal to over 3,000 individuals.

### **Irish Research Association of Adult and Community Education (IRAACE)**

The Irish Research Association of Adult and Community Education (IRAACE) is a network for those engaged in or interested in research in the adult and community education fields. This includes those working in adult basic education, vocational and community education, and further and higher education.

The first event of 2008 took place on 4 April and was hosted by AONTAS. This event, held in the Royal Dublin Hotel, was titled *How to undertake research and use research findings*. The keynote speaker was Professor Lyn Tett, University of Edinburgh. Five 'Speed-Networking' workshops allowed delegates to cover issues relating to policy, literacy, supporting researchers, community based research and widening access.

NALA has been an active member of the IRAACE development committee since its inception and in June 2008 began its first 12 month secretariat of the network.

Under NALA's secretariat, the IRAACE network has undergone a rebranding exercise and launched a new website: [www.iraace.ie](http://www.iraace.ie).

A second IRAACE event, titled *Making it Matter* was hosted by NALA in the National College of Ireland on 14 November. Its primary aim was to address the relationship between research and policy. The keynote speaker was Dr. Mark Morgan, St.Patrick's College, Drumcondra. The event was also an opportunity to provide a platform for those working in adult education to showcase their work and experiences. It offered an opportunity for delegates to discuss current research being undertaken, methodologies used, challenges faced and conclusions reached.

### **Research strategy and work plan**

In 2008 the NALA research team developed a research strategy and three year work plan. Drawing on the work and experience of the research team to date the paper outlines NALA's approach to the development of an integrated research strategy and sets out priorities for its research team in 2008, 2009 and 2010.

NALA research is focused on three key areas:

- internal capacity building and research integration,
- research specific outputs (based on the research team activity within the Strategic Plan 2007-2010), and
- the development of strategic research alliances and partnerships.

The NALA research team will play a central role in the development of research work within the Agency.

However research will continue to be seen as a part of each development worker's role and as an integral part of all work across the agency.

In 2008 work has included:

- the development of a library management system,
- the drafting of an ethics and work practice research policy,
- the development of a guide to evaluation approaches and methodologies, and
- an initial identification of research training needs within the Agency.

# NALA Structure

## NALA Executive

### Officers

Chairperson	Michael Power
Vice-Chairperson	Gretta Vaughan
Hon. Treasurer	Marian O'Reilly
Hon. Secretary	Anne Gannon

### Ordinary

Bridie Daly  
Helen Walsh  
Eileen Condon  
Cllr Eddie Staunton  
Alison Hickey  
Breda Kavanagh  
Cllr Mary Kelly  
Laureen Leslie  
Pat Ayton  
Frances Killeen

## NALA Student Sub-Committee

The NALA Student Sub-Committee met six times in 2008. Two members resigned and One new student joined the sub-committee. The sub-committee helped plan and organise events throughout the year and members often gave talks at events. The work of the sub-committee included the National Student Days and doing media interviews during National Adult Literacy Awareness Week.

Given the amount of media work that the sub-committee continues to do, a two-day media training course with DHR Communications was held in August. The following people are currently on the NALA student sub-committee:

- Kevin O'Duffy, Co. Offaly
- Peggy Murphy, Dublin
- Marion Cusack, Co. Mayo
- Michael Power, Co. Offaly
- Bridie Daly, Co. Westmeath
- Alison Hickey, Co. Westmeath
- Sheila Brennan, Co. Dublin
- Breda Kavanagh, Dublin
- Mary Shanahan, Co. Kerry
- Michael Lamb, Co. Cork
- Anne Ryle, Co. Kerry
- Patrick Hallinan, Co. Cork
- Mandy Kennedy, Dublin
- Avril Lynch, Co. Carlow

### **Staff details**

#### **Dublin Office**

NALA

76 Lower Gardiner Street

Dublin 1

Fax: (01) 855 5475

Website: [www.nala.ie](http://www.nala.ie)

Name	Role	Email	Telephone
Inez Bailey	Director	ibailey@nala.ie	(01) 850 9111
Blathnaid Ní Chinnéide	Integrating Literacy Co-ordinator	bnichinneide@nala.ie	(01) 850 9112
Clare McNally	Public Relations Officer	cmcnally@nala.ie	(01) 850 9109
Clodagh McCarthy	Organisational Support Co-ordinator	cmccarthy@nala.ie	(01) 850 9115
Eilis Mernagh	Office Manager	emernagh@nala.ie	(01) 850 9102
Emma Ramsey	Communications Officer	eramsey@nala.ie	(01) 850 9110
Fawzia McGlone	Finance Manager	fmcglone@nala.ie	(01) 850 9120
Fergus Dolan	Literacies Development Worker	fdolan@nala.ie	(01) 850 9118
Grainne Fitzpatrick	Administration Staff	gfitzpatrick@nala.ie	(01) 855 4332
Helen Ryan	Policy Officer	hryan@nala.ie	(01) 850 9119
John Stewart	National Adult Literacy Co-ordinator	jstewart@nala.ie	(01) 850 9113
Kerry Lawless	Research Manager	klawless@nala.ie	(01) 850 9116
Margaret Maher	Administration Staff	mmaher@nala.ie	(01) 850 9114
Sandra Peel	Administration Staff	speer@nala.ie	(01) 855 4332
Tina Byrne	Research Officer	tbyrne@nala.ie	(01) 850 9117



**Cork Office**

NALA

21 Lavitts Quay

Cork

Fax: (021) 427 8665

Name	Role	Email	Telephone
Jennifer Lynch	Health Literacy Co-ordinator	jlynch@nala.ie	(021) 427 8664
Margaret Murray	Student and Membership Officer	mmurray@nala.ie	(021) 427 8655
Tom O'Mara	Distance Education Co-ordinator	tomara@nala.ie	(021) 427 8669

**Mullingar Office**

NALA

Adult Education Centre

Austin Friar Street

Mullingar

Co. Westmeath

Fax: (044) 934 5834

Name	Role	Email	Telephone
Peter Kiernan	Evaluation Officer	pkiernan@nala.ie	(044) 934 0374

**Working from home**

Name	Role	Email	Telephone
Jenny Derbyshire	Literacies Development Worker	valleylodge4@eircom.net	086 810 4452

## Membership

In 2008, NALA had 825 members, of which 185 were student members. Throughout 2008 NALA continued to expand its membership and to extend the benefits of membership. In 2005 just over 20 new student members joined NALA but in 2008, over 65 new student members joined.

From 2009 onwards, members will have access to an exclusive members' area on our website. Here members will be able to:

- access member-only information and news,
- discuss literacy issues with other members in a private forum,
- take part in member-only online surveys and polls,
- book events online before the general public and benefit from a 50% discount,
- take advantage of exclusive member discounts on specific resources, and
- gain access to and share literacy resources with other members.

# NALA membership – corporate

**Year Ending December 2008**

## Adult Literacy Schemes

ABLE, Blanchardstown	Dunmanway
ABLES, Cork	Kinsale Centre
Ballyfermot Adult Learning Centre	Kinsale Road
Altrusa/VEC Adult Literacy Scheme, Cork	Macroom
Athlone Reading & Writing Group	Co. Cork Adult Literacy Services, (North)
Athy Adult Learning Centre	Charleville
Ballymun Adult Literacy Scheme	Kanturk
Basic Education Service Tallaght (BEST)	Mallow
Cabra Adult Literacy Scheme	Millstreet
Choices, Shankill	Mitchelstown
Clondalkin Adult Education Centre	Co. Cork Adult Literacy Services, (West)
Cork Traveller Literacy Scheme	Bandon
Co. Carlow Adult Literacy Scheme	Bantry
Co. Cavan Adult Learning Centre	Castletownbere
Bailieborough Adult Learning Centre	Clonakilty
Co. Clare Reading & Writing Scheme	Schull
Co. Cork Adult Literacy Services, (East and Harbour)	Skibbereen
Cobh	Co. Donegal Adult Literacy Service
Fermoy	Ballyshannon
Midleton	Donegal Town
Youghal	Gaeltacht
Co. Cork Adult Literacy Services, (Mid)	Inishowen
Ballincollig	Letterkenny
Carrigaline	Raphoe
	Co. Kerry Education Service, Literacy & Life Skills Programme:
	Cahirciveen
	Dingle

Kenmare	Carnew
Killarney	Wicklow Town
Killorglin	Co. Wexford Adult Literacy Scheme
Listowel	Crumlin Adult Literacy Scheme
Tralee	Drogheda Adult Learning Centre
Co. Laois Adult Literacy Scheme	Dublin Adult Learning Centre (DALC)
Co. Limerick Adult Literacy Scheme	Dublin City South West Adult Reading & Writing Scheme
Kilmallock	Dundalk Adult Literacy Service
Newcastlewest	Dundrum Adult Literacy Scheme
Co. Longford Adult Literacy Scheme	Dungarvan Adult Education Centre
Co. Mayo Adult Literacy Scheme	Dun Laoghaire Adult Learning Centre
Ballina	East Galway Adult Literacy Scheme,
Ballinarobe	Loughrea
Belmullet	Farranree Adult Literacy Scheme
Castlebar	Fingal Adult Basic Education Scheme
Swinford	Fingal (North) Adult Education Centre
Co. Meath Adult Literacy Scheme	Finglas Reading and Writing Scheme
South Meath/Ratoath	Galway Adult Basic Education Service
Dunboyne/Dunshaughlin	Headford Adult Learning Centre
Kells	JAEN, Jobstown Adult Education
Laytown	Network
Navan	Kildare Adult Learning Service
Trim	KLEAR, Kilbarrack
Co. Monaghan Adult Literacy Service	Larkin Community College Adult Literacy
Co. Offaly Reading & Writing Scheme	Scheme
Co. Sligo Adult Literacy Scheme	Leitrim Education for Adults Programme
Co. Tipperary (NR) Adult Literacy	(LEAP)
Scheme	Leixlip Adult English Scheme
Co. Tipperary (SR) Adult Literacy Scheme	Liberties Adult Literacy Scheme
Co. Waterford Adult Education Centre	Limerick Adult Learner Support Services
Co. Wicklow Adult Literacy Scheme	Lucan Adult Basic Education Centre
Arklow	Mahon Adult Literacy Scheme
Baltinglass	Mallow Adult Learning Centre,
Blessington	Bank Place
Bray	

Mullingar Literacy & Employment Centre	Kilkenny Employment for Youth
Naas Adult English Centre	Kylemore
Northside Reading & Writing Centre	Limerick Youth Service
Parnell Adult Literacy Centre	Loughrea
Rathmines Adult Literacy Scheme	Lourdes Youth & Community Services
Read Write Now/Ballyphehane	Mullingar
Ringsend Literacy Scheme	North Wall, Dublin
Roscommon Adult Literacy Scheme	Ogra Dún Dealgan
Ionad Foghlana, An Cheathru Rua	Ronanstown
SIPTU Basic Education Service	Southill, Limerick
TARGET, Donaghmede	Sligo
Tuam Adult Literacy Centre	Tolka Valley
Waterford City Adult Literacy Scheme	Tralee
West Galway Adult Literacy Scheme	Tuam
Wordaid, Kilkenny	Waterford Youth Training and Education Centre
Write On, Mayfield	Youth-Train Wexford
Write Together Group, Churchfield	

### **Community Training Centres**

Athlone  
 Ballinasloe  
 Ballymun  
 Blackpool/Glen/Faranree  
 Carlow  
 Clare  
 Clonmel  
 Crosscare  
 Darndale  
 Drogheda  
 Dun Laoghaire  
 Finglas West  
 Galway  
 GK Workshop

### **General**

Age & Opportunity  
 ALOA  
 AONTAS  
 An Tochar Adult Education Centre  
 ASTI  
 Association of Community & Comprehensive Schools  
 Bray Traveller CDP  
 Breacadh  
 Bridge Project  
 Candle Community Trust  
 Clonmel Youth Training Enterprises  
 Combat Poverty Agency  
 Comhairle

Curriculum Development Unit, CDVEC  
 Co. Longford County Council  
 Co. Monaghan County Council  
 Doras Luimni  
 Exchange House Travellers Service  
 FETAC  
 Foundation/Homeless Project, Parnell Square  
 Henrietta Adult & Community Education (HACE)  
 Islamic Cultural Centre of Ireland  
 INTO  
 Irish Congress of Trade Unions  
 IVEA  
 Link-Up  
 Moorehaven Centre, Tipperary Town  
 National Womens Council of Ireland  
 NQAI  
 NCCCCAP  
 NUI Maynooth – Dept. of Adult & Community Education  
 08 CEC, The Digital Hub  
 Pathways Project  
 Pavee Point  
 Prison Education Service  
 SAOL Project, Dublin  
 Sligo Young Enterprises  
 Tallaght Probation Project  
 Teagasc  
 The Tower Programme  
 Trocaire  
 The Wheel  
 Warrenmount Community Education & Development Centre

## Libraries

Blackrock Branch Library  
 Cabinteely Public Library  
 Carlow County Library  
 Clare County Library  
 Cork City Public Libraries  
 Cork County Library  
 Dalkey Branch Library  
 Deansgrange Public Library  
 Donegal County Library  
 Dublin City Library Archives  
 Dublin City Public Libraries  
 Dundrum Public Library  
 Dun Laoghaire/Rathdown Public Library Service  
 Kerry County Library  
 Kildare County Library  
 Leitrim County Library  
 Limerick City Library  
 Longford County Library  
 Louth County Library  
 Mayo County Library  
 Meath County Library  
 Monaghan County Library  
 Sallynoggin Public Library  
 Shankhill Public Library  
 Sligo County Library  
 Stillorgan Public Library  
 Tipperary Joint County Libraries  
 Tullow Public Library  
 Waterford County Libraries  
 Waterford City Library  
 Westmeath County Library  
 Wexford County Library  
 Wicklow County Library

***Prison Education Service***

Arbour Hill  
 Castlerea  
 Limerick  
 Loughan House  
 Midlands Prison  
 Mountjoy  
 Shelton Abbey  
 St. Patrick's Institution  
 Wheatfield

St. Oliver's, Clondalkin  
 Sandy Road Training Centre, Galway  
 Shannon Bank Training Centre  
 Riverside, Rathkeale  
 Tallaght Travellers Youth Service  
 Tara Senior Traveller Training Centre,  
 Dundalk  
 The Murrough, Wicklow  
 Tuam Traveller Education and  
 Development Association  
 Tullamore Senior Travellers Centre

***Senior Traveller Training Centres***

Athy Traveller Club  
 Birr Travellers Training Centre  
 Clondalkin Travellers Centre  
 Fealeside, Abbeyfeale  
 Mullingar  
 Navan  
 Our Lady's, Mallow  
 Bray Traveller Community Development  
 Group  
 St. Anne's, Killarney  
 St. Basil's, Tallaght  
 St. Benin's, Tuam  
 St. Brendan's, Loughrea  
 St. Canice's, Portlaoise  
 St. Catherine's, Ballyhaunis  
 St. Catherine's, Carlow  
 St. Finbarr's, Cork  
 St. Francis's, Cork  
 St. Joseph's, Ennis  
 St. Mel's, Longford

***Youthreach Centres***

Arklow  
 Armagh Road, Dublin 12  
 Ashbourne  
 Athy  
 Ballina  
 Ballinasloe  
 Ballincollig  
 Ballinrobe  
 Ballyfermot  
 Ballymahon  
 Ballymun  
 Blanchardstown  
 Bonnybrook  
 Bray  
 Clondalkin  
 Clonmel  
 Cootehill  
 Cork - Dean Street  
 Cork – Sunbeam Industrial Estate  
 Delvin

Dominick Place  
Dundalk  
Dungarvan  
Edenderry  
Ennis  
Enniscorthy  
Fermoy  
Hospital  
Harmonstown  
Galway  
Kilkenny  
Killarney  
Kilrush  
Kingscourt  
Knocknaheeney  
Letterfrack  
Letterkenny  
Lettermore  
Limerick  
Lucan  
Mountmellick  
Naas  
Navan  
Newbridge  
New Ross  
North Great George Street  
Roscommon  
Roscrea  
Rush  
Sligo  
Swords  
Tallaght  
Tralee  
Tuam  
Wexford

Wicklow  
Youghal

### **Vocational Education Committees (VECs)**

City of Cork VEC  
City of Dublin VEC  
City of Galway VEC  
City of Limerick VEC  
City of Waterford VEC  
Co. Carlow VEC  
Co. Cavan VEC  
Co. Clare VEC  
Co. Donegal VEC  
Co. Dublin VEC  
Co. Galway VEC  
Kerry Education Services  
Co. Kildare VEC  
Co. Kilkenny VEC  
Co. Laois VEC  
Co. Leitrim VEC  
Co. Limerick VEC  
Co. Longford VEC  
Co. Louth VEC  
Co. Mayo VEC  
Co. Meath VEC  
Co. Monaghan VEC  
Co. Offaly VEC  
Co. Roscommon VEC  
Co. Sligo VEC  
Co. Tipperary (NR) VEC  
Co. Tipperary (SR) VEC  
Co. Waterford VEC



Co. Westmeath VEC  
Co. Wexford VEC  
Co. Wicklow VEC  
Dun Laoghaire VEC

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# ***NALA Accounts***

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*National Adult Literacy Agency Limited*  
*(A Company Limited By Guarantee)*

## Company Information

Directors	Patricia Ayton Eileen Condon Alison Hickey Mary Kelly Laureen Leslie Marian O'Reilly Michael Power Eddie Staunton Gretta Vaughan Helen Walsh Frances Killeen Bridie Daly Breda Kavanagh (Appointed 1 March 2008)	
Secretary	Ann Gannon	
Company number	342807	
Registered office	76 Lower Gardiner Street, Dublin 1.	
Auditors	Browne & Murphy Chartered & Certified Accountants & Registered Auditors, 28 Upper Fitzwilliam Street, Dublin 2.	
Business address	76 Lower Gardiner Street, Dublin 1.	
Bankers	A.I.B Bank, 37 Upper O'Connell St., Dublin 1.	Anglo Irish Bank Corp plc 18/21 St. Stephen's Green, Dublin 2.

## **Directors' Report For The Year Ended 31 December 2008**

The directors present their report and financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2008.

### **Principal activities and review of the business**

The National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA) was established in 1980 and from that time has campaigned for recognition and response to the adult literacy problem in Ireland. The agency continued that work in 2008 through:

- raising public awareness of the extent and the nature of adult literacy difficulties;
- answering literacy related queries from the general public and referring thousands of callers to the VEC adult literacy services as a result of the ongoing TV advertisement campaign supported by An Post;
- developing and broadcasting a new TV literacy series entitled "Written Off?" to support a distance education strategy;
- advancing research in the area of adult literacy;
- lobbying for increased funding for adult literacy and numeracy work and for the VEC Adult Literacy Service; and
- lobbying to keep adult literacy as a priority within Government and the Further Education budget.

NALA is funded by the Department of Education and Science through the National Development Plan 2007 - 2016, other government Departments, FÁS, the EU Structural Fund and its members.

The results for the year and the financial position at the year end were considered satisfactory by the directors.

The principal risks and uncertainty facing the organisation in the coming year is regarding the funding levels it will receive from the Department. In the current economic climate, it is difficult to assess at this stage whether and to what extent funding levels may be cut.

### **Results and dividends**

The results for the year are set out on page 80.

### **Directors**

The following directors were in office in 2008:

Patricia Ayton  
Joan Butler (Resigned 1 March 2008)  
Eileen Condon  
Alison Hickey  
Mary Kelly  
Laureen Leslie  
Marian O'Reilly  
Michael Power  
Eddie Staunton  
Gretta Vaughan  
Helen Walsh  
Frances Killeen  
Bridie Daly  
Breda Kavanagh (Appointed 1 March 2008)

### **Books of account**

The company's directors are aware of their responsibilities, under section 202 of the Companies Act 1990 to maintain proper books of account and are discharging their responsibility by employing experienced staff and ensuring that sufficient company resources are available for the task.

The books of account are held at the company's registered office, 76 Lower Gardiner Street, Dublin 1.

## Auditors

In accordance with the Companies Act 1963, section 160(2), Browne & Murphy continue in office as auditors of the company.

## Statement of directors' responsibilities

The directors are responsible for preparing the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and Generally Accepted Accounting Practice in Ireland including the accounting standards issued by the Accounting Standards Board and promulgated by the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Ireland. Company law requires the directors to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company and of the surplus or deficit of the company for that period.

In preparing those financial statements, the directors are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the company will continue in business.

The directors are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the company and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Acts 1963 to 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

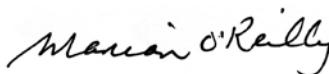
## By order of the board



**Michael Power**

Chairperson

10 February 2009



**Marian O'Reilly**

Honorary Treasurer

## ***Independent Auditors' Report To The Members Of National Adult Literacy Agency Limited***

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We have audited the financial statements of National Adult Literacy Agency Limited for the year ended 31 December 2008 set out on pages 80 to 103. These financial statements have been prepared under the accounting policies set out therein.

This report is made solely to the company's members, as a body, in accordance with Section 193 of the Companies Act, 1990. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditors' report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the company and the company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

### ***Respective responsibilities of the directors and auditors***

As described in the Statement of Directors' Responsibilities on page 78 the company's directors are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and the accounting standards issued by the Accounting Standards Board and promulgated by the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Ireland (Generally Accepted Accounting Practice in Ireland).

Our responsibility is to audit the financial statements in accordance with relevant legal and regulatory requirements and International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland).

We report to you our opinion as to whether the financial statements give a true and fair view, in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Practice in Ireland, and are properly prepared in accordance with the Companies Acts, 1963 to 2006. We also report to you whether in our opinion: proper books of account have been kept by the company; whether, at the balance sheet date, there exists a financial situation requiring the convening of an extraordinary

general meeting of the company; and whether the information given in the directors' report is consistent with the financial statements. In addition, we state whether we have obtained all the information and explanations necessary for the purposes of our audit, and whether the company's balance sheet and its income and expenditure account are in agreement with the books of account.

We also report to you if, in our opinion, any information specified by law regarding the directors' remuneration and transactions is not disclosed and, where practicable, include such information in our report.

We read the directors' report and consider the implications for our report if we become aware of any apparent misstatements within it.

### **Basis of audit opinion**

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland) issued by the Auditing Practices Board. An audit includes examination, on a test basis, of evidence relevant to the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. It also includes an assessment of the significant estimates and judgements made by the directors in the preparation of the financial statements, and of whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the company's circumstances, consistently applied and adequately disclosed.

We planned and performed our audit so as to obtain all the information and explanations which we considered necessary in order to provide us with sufficient evidence to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or other irregularity or error. In forming our opinion we also evaluated the overall adequacy of the presentation of information in the financial statements.



## Opinion

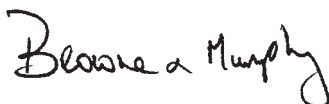
In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view, in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Practice in Ireland, of the state of the company's affairs as at 31 December 2008 and of its deficit for the year then ended ; and
- have been properly prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Acts, 1963 to 2006.

We have obtained all the information and explanations we consider necessary for the purposes of our audit.

In our opinion, proper books of account have been kept by the company. The financial statements are in agreement with the books of account.

In our opinion, the information given in the directors' report is consistent with the financial statements.



**Browne & Murphy**

10 February 2009

Chartered & Certified Accountants  
& Registered Auditors,  
28 Upper Fitzwilliam Street,  
Dublin 2.

**National Adult Literacy Agency Limited**  
**Income And Expenditure Account For The Year Ended 31 December 2008**

		2008	2007
	Notes	€	€
<b>INCOME</b>	2 - 4	2,875,238	2,971,580
Property Expenses		(84,370)	(62,324)
Administrative expenses		(234,259)	(175,604)
Objective & Project Expenses		(3,075,126)	(2,357,588)
(Deficit)/surplus For The Year		(518,517)	376,064

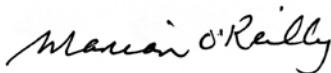
The income and expenditure account has been prepared on the basis that all operations are continuing operations.

There are no recognised gains and losses other than those passing through the income and expenditure account.

Approved by the board on 10 February 2009



**Michael Power**  
Chairperson



**Marian O'Reilly**  
Honorary Treasurer

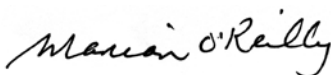
**National Adult Literacy Agency Limited**  
**Balance Sheet as at 31 December 2008**

		2008		2007	
	Notes	€	€	€	€
<b>Fixed assets</b>					
Tangible assets	5		23,072		23,257
<b>Current assets</b>					
Stocks	6	13,424		22,186	
Debtors	7	33,775		47,784	
Cash at bank and in hand		402,782		985,215	
		449,981		1,055,185	
<b>Creditors: amounts falling due within one year</b>	8	(124,101)		(71,146)	
<b>Net current assets</b>			325,880		984,039
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>			348,952		1,007,296
<b>Accruals and deferred income</b>			9 (379,694)		(519,520)
			(30,742)		487,776
<b>Represented by:</b>					
Deficit)/Surplus		11	(30,742)		487,776
		12	(30,742)		487,776

Approved by the board and authorised for issue on 10 February 2009



**Michael Power**  
Chairperson



**Marian O'Reilly**  
Honorary Treasurer

**National Adult Literacy Agency Limited**  
**Cash Flow Statement For The Year Ended 31 December 2008**

	2008		2007	
	€	€	€	€
<b>Net cash outflow from operating activities</b>		(1,212,470)		(6,637)
<b>Capital expenditure</b>				
Payments to acquire tangible assets	(39,046)		(12,395)	
<b>Net cash outflow for capital expenditure</b>		(39,046)		(12,395)
<b>Net cash outflow before management of liquid resources and financing</b>		(1,251,516)		(19,032)
<b>Financing</b>				
Government grant received	666,290		519,520	
<b>Net cash inflow from financing</b>		666,290		519,520
<b>(Decrease)/increase in cash in the year</b>		(585,225)		500,488

**National Adult Literacy Agency Limited**  
**Notes To The Cash Flow Statement For The Year Ended 31 December 2008**

**1 Reconciliation of operating (deficit)/surplus to net cash outflow from operating activities**

	2008	2007
	€	€
Operating (deficit)/surplus	(518,517)	376,064
Depreciation of tangible assets	39,229	29,468
Decrease/(increase) in stocks	8,762	(4,328)
Decrease in debtors	14,009	8,250
Increase/(decrease) in creditors within one year	50,163	(38,007)
Movement on grant provision	(806,116)	(378,084)
Net cash outflow from operating activities	(1,212,470)	(6,637)

**2 Analysis of net funds**

	1 January 2008	Cash flow	Other non-cash changes	31 December 2008
	€	€	€	€
Net cash:				
Cash at bank and in hand	985,215	(582,433)	-	402,782
Credit Card Balance	-	(2,792)	-	(2,792)
	985,215	(585,225)	-	399,990
Bank deposits	-	-	-	-
Net funds	985,215	(585,225)	-	399,990

**National Adult Literacy Agency Limited**  
**Notes To The Financial Statements For The Year Ended 31 December 2008**

**3 Reconciliation of net cash flow to movement in net funds**

	2008	2007
	€	€
(Decrease)/increase in cash in the year	(585,225)	500,488
<b>Movement in net funds in the year</b>	<b>(585,225)</b>	<b>500,488</b>
Opening net funds	985,215	484,727
Closing net funds	399,990	985,215

**National Adult Literacy Agency Limited**  
**Notes To The Financial Statements For The Year Ended 31 December 2008**

## **1 Accounting policies**

### **1.1 Accounting convention**

The financial statements are prepared under the historical cost convention.

### **1.2 Compliance with accounting standards**

The financial statements are prepared in accordance with applicable law and the accounting standards issued by the Accounting Standards Board and promulgated by the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Ireland (Generally Accepted Accounting Practice in Ireland), which have been applied consistently (except as otherwise stated).

### **1.3 Tangible fixed assets and depreciation**

Tangible fixed assets are stated at cost less depreciation. Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write off the cost less estimated residual value of each asset over its expected useful life, as follows:

Office Equipment	25% Straight Line
Computer equipment	25% Straight Line
Fixtures, fittings & equipment	25% Straight Line

### **1.4 Stock**

Stock is valued at the lower of cost and net realisable value. Cost is defined as the purchase price of the books and manuals. The net realisable value would be defined as obsolescence value of the books.

**National Adult Literacy Agency Limited**  
**Notes To The Financial Statements For The Year Ended 31 December 2008**

**1 Accounting policies (continued)**

**1.5 Revenue recognition**

Income represents revenue received from a wide variety of sources, mainly in the form of grants received and income received in contribution to the general and specific expenses of the organisation. Revenue is recognised as received, however when income is received with regard to specific activities, this income is recognised when the relating expenditure has being incurred.

**1.6 Pensions**

The company operates a defined contribution scheme for the benefit of its employees. Contributions payable are charged to the profit and loss account in the year they are payable.

**1.7 Government grants**

Grants are credited to deferred revenue. Grants towards capital expenditure are released to the profit and loss account over the expected useful life of the assets. Grants towards revenue expenditure are released to the profit and loss account as the related expenditure is incurred.



## National Adult Literacy Agency Limited

### Notes To The Financial Statements For The Year Ended 31 December 2008

#### 2 Government Grants

	2008	2007
	€	€
Department of Education & Science – Core Grant	339,000	327,000
– Special Allocation	1,579,640	1,579,000
– Deferred Grant 2006	-	110,575
– Deferred 2007	162,936	-162,936
– Deferred 2008	-100,331	-
Department of Social & Family Affairs	50,000	47,250
Deferred	-50,000	-
FÁS Income	380,675	726,930
FÁS Deferred	-78,342	-260,862
Department of Foreign Affairs (CEI)	-	5,000
Department of Enterprise & Trade	378,000	-
Deferred	-45,059	-
HSE	-	87,905
Deferred	-68,714	-
Fingal County Council	-	-
ASC Initiative	-	9,500
	2,616,519	2,400,648

**National Adult Literacy Agency Limited**  
**Notes To The Financial Statements For The Year Ended 31 December 2008**

**3 Other Income**

	2008	2007
	€	€
Membership Fees	18,621	21,107
Conference Fees	13,910	5,150
Miscellaneous	11,231	7,149
Training Fees	-110	7,390
POBAL (ICT)	-	6,836
POBAL (ICT) Deferred	-	1,953
POBAL (ABE)	30,389	36,785
POBAL (ABE) Deferred	-12,479	24,561
EU Projects	29,583	22,182
Plain English Income	160,470	78,812
Plain English Deferred	-80,143	-27,008
Bank Interest Received	37,640	22,324
EBS	30,000	10,000
EBS Deferred	-20,000	30,000
Age & Opportunity	15,000	-
LAT	3,400	5,000
RUG ( BCI)	-	174,859
Deferred	-	71,350
Donations	500	-
CDVEC	-	7,500
An Post	10,890	20,703
Starbucks	-	8,000
	248,902	534,653

**National Adult Literacy Agency Limited**  
**Notes To The Financial Statements For The Year Ended 31 December 2008**

**4 Resource Room**

	2008	2007
	€	€
Opening Stock of Books	19,610	15,282
Purchases for the Year	36,562	52,940
	56,172	68,222
Closing Stock of Books	-10,848	-19,610
	45,324	48,612
Sale of Books	48,481	-84,891
Surplus for the Year	3,157	36,279

**National Adult Literacy Agency Limited**  
**Notes To The Financial Statements For The Year Ended 31 December 2008**

**5 Tangible fixed assets**

	Office Equipment	Fixtures, fittings & equipment	Total
	€	€	€
<b>Cost</b>			
At 1 January 2008	101,379	16,491	117,870
Additions	27,666	11,380	39,046
At 31 December 2008	129,045	27,871	156,916
<b>Depreciation</b>			
At 1 January 2008	85,930	8,685	94,615
Charge for the year	34,588	4,641	39,229
At 31 December 2008	120,518	13,326	133,844
<b>Net book value</b>			
At 31 December 2008	8,527	14,545	23,072
At 31 December 2007	15,450	7,806	23,256

**6 Stocks**

	2008	2007
	€	€
Stock of Stationery	2,576	2,576
Stock of Books	10,848	19,610
	13,424	22,186

In the opinion of the directors, there is no material differences between the replacement cost of stock and the balance sheet amounts.

**National Adult Literacy Agency Limited**  
**Notes To The Financial Statements For The Year Ended 31 December 2008**

**7 Debtors**

	2008	2007
	€	€
Trade debtors	27,867	41,100
Staff Loans	232	2,663
Prepayments and accrued income	5,676	4,021
	33,775	47,784

**8 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year**

	2008	2007
	€	€
Credit Card Balance	2,792	-
Trade creditors	71,458	33,301
Other creditors	28,666	25,821
Accruals and deferred income	21,185	12,024
	124,101	71,146
Included in other creditors are amounts relating to taxation, as follows: P.A.Y.E. control account	28,666	25,821

**National Adult Literacy Agency Limited**  
**Notes To The Financial Statements For The Year Ended 31 December 2008**

**9 Accruals and deferred income**

	Government grants
	€
Balance at 1 January 2008	519,520
Grants received during the year	672,950
Amortisation in the year	(806,116)
Balance at 31 December 2008	379,694

Grants are deferred in respect of estimated, but specific expenditure, including monies received in 2008 for activities in 2009.

**10 Pension and other post-retirement benefit commitments**

Defined contribution	2008	2007
	€	€
Contributions payable by the company for the year	60,608	59,753

**National Adult Literacy Agency Limited**  
**Notes To The Financial Statements For The Year Ended 31 December 2008**

**11 Statement of movements on income and expenditure account**

	Income and Expenditure Account
	€
Balance at 1 January 2008	487,775
(Deficit) for the year	(518,517)
Balance at 31 December 2008	(30,742)

**12 Reconciliation of movements in funds**

	2008	2007
	€	€
(Deficit)/Surplus for the financial year	(518,517)	376,064
Opening funds	487,775	111,711
Closing funds	(30,742)	487,775

**13 Pension Information**

	2008	2007
	€	€
Employer Contribution to pension scheme	60,608	59,753

The company operates a defined contribution scheme. The company contributes 10% of employees salary. The scheme is operated by New Ireland Assurance.

## **National Adult Literacy Agency Limited**

### **Notes To The Financial Statements For The Year Ended 31 December 2008**

#### **14 Employees**

<b>Number of employees</b>		
The average monthly number of employees (including directors) during the year was:	<b>2008 Number</b>	<b>2007 Number</b>
	19	26
<b>Employment costs</b>		
	<b>2008 €</b>	<b>2007 €</b>
Wages and salaries	1,140,052	1,202,419
Other pension costs	60,608	59,753
Other pension costs	1,200,660	1,262,172

#### **15 Directors Interests**

The directors have no interests in the company.

#### **16 Related party transactions**

There were no related party transactions during the year except staff loans. At the start of the year, there were staff loans outstanding of €2,130, a loan of €1,735 was granted in the year. and loan repayments totalled €3,634. The outstanding staff loan balance at the 31st December was €231.

#### **17 Liability of Members**

In the event of a winding up of the company, the liability of the members is limited to €1.

#### **18 Approval of financial statements**

The directors approved the financial statements on the 10 February 2009.



**National Adult Literacy Agency Limited**  
**Detailed Trading And Profit And Loss Account**  
**For The Year Ended 31 December 2008**

	2008		2008	
	€	€	€	€
<b>Income</b>				
Department of Education & Science Grants		1,987,905		1,853,639
Other Government Grants		635,274		547,009
Other Income		248,902		534,653
Resource Room		3,157		36,279
		2,875,238		2,971,580
Property Expenses	84,370		62,324	
Administration Expenses	234,259		175,604	
Objective & Project Expenses	3,075,126		2,357,588	
		(3,393,755)		(2,595,516)
(Deficit)/surplus For The Year		(518,517)		376,064

**National Adult Literacy Agency Limited**  
**Schedule Of Property And Administrative Expenses**  
**For The Year Ended 31 December 2008**

	2008	2007
	€	€
<b>Property Expenses</b>		
Rent & Cleaning	60,392	51,226
Insurance	4,433	3,583
Light & Heat	5,407	4,253
Repairs & Maintenance	14,138	3,262
	84,370	62,324
<b>Administration Expenses</b>		
Telephone	35,973	21,286
Stationery	36,977	13,179
Postage & Printing	49,881	46,428
Bank Charges	1,154	1,107
Accountancy	4,607	3,238
Audit Fees	9,113	9,075
Miscellaneous	6,726	6,698
Office Machine Maintenance	33,453	35,195
Depreciation	39,229	29,467
Bad Debts	1,018	-
EU Projects	16,128	9,931
	234,259	175,604

**National Adult Literacy Agency Limited**  
**Schedule Of Expenses Per Objective**  
**For The Year Ended 31st December 2008**

**Objective 1: Secure the support of policy makers and politicians for providing increased resources to adult literacy and numeracy services**

	2008
	€
Salaries	346,488
Travel	5,814
Project 1 Expenses	11,691
Project 2 Expenses	28,416
Project 3 Expenses	180
	<b>392,588</b>

**Objective 2: Make it easier for more adults to develop their literacy and numeracy through education and training programmes**

	2008
	€
Salaries	288,821
Travel	3,605
Project 1 Expenses	66,826
Project 2 Expenses	80,261
Project 3 Expenses	38,989
Project 4 Expenses	94,489
Project 5 Expenses	613,522
	<b>1,186,512</b>

**National Adult Literacy Agency Limited**  
**Schedule Of Expenses Per Objective**  
**For The Year Ended 31st December 2008**

**Objective 3: Make approaches to teaching and learning more effective**

	2008
	€
Salaries	248,737
Travel	8,144
Project 1 Expenses	302,325
Project 2 Expenses	7,653
Project 3 Expenses	151,221
Project 4 Expenses	17,911
Project 5 Expenses	11,449
	<b>747,440</b>

**Objective 4: Persuade organisations to be fully accessible to people with literacy and numeracy difficulties**

	2008
	€
Salaries	105,048
Travel	2,908
Project 1 Expenses	102,966
Project 2 Expenses	31,988
Project 3 Expenses	2,038
Project 4 Expenses	9,317
	<b>254,265</b>

**National Adult Literacy Agency Limited**  
**Schedule Of Expenses Per Objective**  
**For The Year Ended 31st December 2008**

**Objective 5: Strengthen NALA's effectiveness as an organisation**

	<b>2008</b>
	€
Salaries	211,566
Travel	6,417
Project 1 Expenses	26,819
Project 3 Expenses	14,440
Project 4 Expenses	32,698
Project 5 Expenses	177,950
Project 6 Expenses	24,431
	<b>494,321</b>
<hr/>	
<b>Total Objective &amp; Project Expenditure</b>	<b>3,075,126</b>

# Glossary

**Accreditation**

A process that allows a person to get credits from a particular institution, such as a college or university for a course that they have completed

**Ad hoc**

Something that is not regular or planned and happens only when necessary

**Analyse**

A process of studying the details of something to understand or explain it

**Assessment framework**

A guide to knowing what stage a learner is at when they start tuition and how well they are progressing

**Attribute**

A quality or characteristic that someone or something has

**Benchmark**

A point of reference

**Best practice**

A term to describe good quality work or good working habits

**Brainstorming**

A method of giving ideas and opinions freely within a group of people to generate new ideas about a problem

**Collate**

A way to analyse and compare information to identify points of agreement and differences

**Consensus**

Agreement between all members of a group on a particular subject

**Consistent**

Something that happens or behaves in a similar way

**Curriculum**

A set of topics that make up an educational course

**Distance education**

A form of learning that takes place in a person's home without supervision

**Educational Disadvantage Committee**

A Government committee devises solutions to tackle educational disadvantage

### **Educational Equality Initiative**

A programme funded by the National Development Plan under which different projects develop different ways of tackling educational disadvantage

### **Empowerment**

A process of transferring power from influential people to poor communities and individuals who have been traditionally excluded from decision making

### **Ethos**

An idea or belief of a particular person or group that guides their actions

### **Evaluation**

A process of studying something carefully to see how good or bad it is

### **Facilitator**

A person who helps a group to develop and work together effectively towards their common goal

### **Focus group**

A group of people who are brought together to discuss what they think about something

### **Framework**

A basic structure that supports something, such as a building, and gives it its shape

### **Generic**

General, not specific

### **Guiding principles**

Values or rules that guide an action or decision

### **Holistic**

A way of describing something that deals with the whole of something or someone, not just their parts

### **Implement**

A system or plan to make something happen

### **Library Council**

#### **(An Chomhairle Leabharlanna)**

An organisation set up to advise local authorities and the Government on libraries

### **Local Government**

Local and regional bodies, including County Councils, City Councils, Urban District Councils and Town Councils, set up by the Department of the Environment and Local Government, that provide services to local communities

### **Mentor**

An experienced person who gives help and advice to a less experienced person

**Mission statement**

A statement that explains a person's, group's or organisation's main aim

**Monitor**

A process of watching something carefully and recording your results

**National Development Plan**

The Government's plan to use EU and other funds to develop the economy and to help spread resources more equally between different groups in society

**National Literacy Expert Advisory Group**

A group made up of all those with an interest and input in adult literacy that oversees how the adult literacy sections of the Government White Paper are implemented

**Networking**

A process of using social events to meet people who might be useful to you

**Partnership**

A process of two or more people or organisations working together to achieve something

**Performance indicator**

A way to measure whether a person or an organisation is meeting their objectives

**Plain English**

A way of writing and designing material that makes it easier to read and understand

**Process**

A series of actions to achieve a result

**Qualitative**

A way of describing something that refers to how good it is

**Quality**

A way of saying how good or bad something is

**Quantitative**

A way of describing something that refers to how much (or how many) of it there is

**Return to Education**

A nine hour a week basic education programme for people on Community Employment schemes

**Skillnets**

Skillnets is responsible for the operation of The Training Networks Programme. Skillnets facilitates an enterprise-led approach to training and development through supporting the development of flexible and effective training delivery methods amongst those enterprises that previously had difficulty in accessing or benefiting from training.



**Social cohesion**

A process of bringing together economic, social, health and educational policies to help people take part in society

**Social exclusion**

A process of preventing certain groups from accessing power and decision-making bodies or building up social and community networks because they are poor or they do not have enough education or life skills

**Social inclusion**

A process of making sure that people who are poor or marginalised can take part in the decision making process so that they can raise their standard of living and improve their quality of life

**Social interaction**

A process of talking to or doing things with other people

**Social partnership**

A way of reaching agreement between the Irish Government and various social partners – employers, trade unions, farmers and community and voluntary groups – on pay, tax, working conditions and social welfare, and other economic and social issues

**Social partnership agreement**

A document outlining a range of

steps agreed by the Government and the social partners on economic and social issues

**Stakeholder**

A person who has an interest in an organisation, a project or an issue

**Statutory**

Something decided or controlled by law

**Strategic intent**

A statement of what a person, group or organisation intends to do

**Tender**

An application by a person or group to do a piece of work, describing how they plan to do the work, when, and how much they will charge

**Traveller Training Centre**

A local organisation that provides vocational training for adult Travellers

**White Paper**

A document produced by the Government that outlines its future plans on a particular topic

**Youthreach Centre**

A local training unit that provides vocational and basic skills to early school leavers under 18 years of age

## Acronyms and abbreviations

**ABE**

Adult Basic Education – the development of competence in adult skills, such as literacy numeracy and communications, that people need to take part fully in society

**ADM**

Area Development Management – an organisation set up by the Department of An Taoiseach that funds and oversees local development projects

**AEOA**

Adult Education Organisers' Association

**AGM**

Annual General Meeting

**ALO**

Adult Literacy Organiser

**ALOA**

Adult Literacy Organisers' Association

**ALS**

Adult Literacy Service

**BETA**

Basic Education Tutors' Association – an organisation representing paid adult literacy tutors

**BSA**

Basic Skills Agency – an organisation that supports and develops ABE in England and Wales

**CAIT**

Community Application of Information Technology Initiative

**CDP**

Community Development Project

**CE**

Community Employment – a FÁS employment training programme

**CEE OA**

Chief Executive and Education Officers' Association – an organisation representing Chief Executive Officers and Education Officers in VECs

**CEO**

Chief Executive Officer – the most senior management position in a VEC

**CIF**

Construction Industry Federation – a body representing employers in the building sector

**CTC**

Community Training Centre – a training unit, in different centres around Ireland, providing vocational and adult basic education skills to early school leavers over 18 years of age

**CWC**

Community Workers Co-op

**DES**

Department of Education and Science

**DETE**

Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment

**ESOL**

English for Speakers of Other Languages

**EU**

European Union

**FÁS**

Foras Áiseanna Saothair – the national training and employment authority

**FSAI**

Food Safety Authority of Ireland – a body established by the Department

of Health and Children to oversee food safety improvements

**FETAC**

Further Education Training Awards Council

**EGSA**

Education Guidance Service for Adults - a local, independent, voluntary organisation that aims to connect adults with learning in Northern Ireland

**IBEC**

Irish Business Employers Confederation – the organisation representing all employer bodies and associations

**ICCPE**

Irish Centre for Continuing Pharmaceutical Education

**ICT**

Information and Communications Technology

**ICTU**

Irish Congress of Trade Unions – the organisation representing all trade unions around the country

**ISC**

Information Society Commission – responsible for developing ICT in Irish society

**ISME**

Irish Small and Medium Enterprises Association – an organisation representing small and medium businesses

**ITUT**

Irish Trade Union Trust

**IVEA**

Irish Vocational Education Association – an organisation representing Vocational Education Committees

**MLJ**

Mapping the Learning Journey - an assessment framework to support the teaching and learning process in adult basic education

**NALAG**

National Adult Literacy Advisory Group - the main stakeholders in adult literacy NALA brought together to develop a plan to help achieve the goals outlined in the White Paper

**NALC**

National Adult Learning Council – a body established by the Department of Education and Science to oversee the implementation of the White Paper 'Learning for Life'

**NALP**

National Adult Literacy Programme

**NAPS**

National Anti-Poverty Strategy – a Government plan to tackle poverty

**NCCA**

National Council for Curriculum and Assessment

**NCGE**

National Centre for Guidance in Education

**NDP**

National Development Plan – a Government medium-term plan for economic and social development

**NQAI**

National Qualifications Authority of Ireland – a Government-funded body that manages qualifications at national level

**NTDI**

National Training and Development Institute – an independent education organisation that provides courses in different centres around Ireland for disabled people

**SIPTU**

Services, Industrial, Professional and  
Technical Union

**Teagasc**

The Irish Agricultural and Food  
Development Authority

**VEC**

Vocational Education Committee a  
committee that manages adult and  
further education at county (and  
sometimes city) level

**VTOS**

Vocational Training Opportunities  
Scheme

**VTSU**

Vocational Training Support Unit

**WAI**

Web Accessibility Initiative – an  
international group of companies,  
disability representatives, universities,  
governments and research centres that  
have developed guidelines for making  
the Internet easier for disabled people  
to use

**WIT**

Waterford Institute of Technology

[www.literacy.ie](http://www.literacy.ie)

## What is NALA?

The National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA) is an independent membership organisation, concerned with developing policy, advocacy, research and offering advisory services in adult literacy work in Ireland. NALA was established in 1980 and has campaigned since then for the recognition of, and response to, the adult literacy issue in Ireland.

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## **Websites:**

NALA website: [www.nala.ie](http://www.nala.ie)

Literacy learning and tuition website:

[www.literacytools.ie](http://www.literacytools.ie)

The Really Useful Guide to Words and

Numbers website: [www.rug.ie](http://www.rug.ie)

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