

Dedicated to the memory of Dr Dorothy Eagleson,  
(1923-2010), the first practitioner of educational guidance  
for adults in the UK and the founding president of NAEGA.

## OCCASIONAL PAPER



# Championing Adult Guidance: the story of NAEGA 1982-2010

By Jonathan Brown

## Preface

When the NAEGA board decided to commission *Championing Adult Guidance* for the 2010 annual conference at fairly short notice, the person to ask was obvious. Professor Jonathan Brown, the first chair of the association, and the only person to ever hold a chair in educational guidance at a British university. He was the driving force behind the formation of NAEGA, serving for the first four years as chair, as vice-president for twelve years, and president from 1998 to 2000. In 1998, he succeeded NAEGA's founding president, the late Dr Dorothy Eagleson, who sadly died as this publication was going to press. Dorothy will be remembered by her many colleagues in Northern Ireland and the rest of the UK as the pioneering practitioner who put guidance for adults on the map nationally and internationally. Countless adults to whom she offered professional guidance and ongoing support through the Belfast-based EGSA service will remember her simply as the person who helped them to live more fulfilled lives.

Successive NAEGA presidents, including Dr Judy Alloway, Professor Stephen McNair and myself, have had the benefit of the ethos established by Dorothy and the pace set by Jonathan. He has always, in the forefront or behind the scenes, worked tirelessly to promote guidance for adults, and NAEGA, the practitioner organisation which he helped to found.

He has enthusiastically supported and encouraged younger practitioners and academics, some of whom, like the aforementioned, are all now retired. He still regards us all as part of his extensive network, but continues to spot and encourage new talent as he has always done. Jonathan's comment, "*I may have been foolhardy to take it on at such short notice, but I have really enjoyed writing it*" is typical. He adds, "*The story is based on my own recollections of NAEGA over the years assisted by accumulated but largely unsorted reports, pamphlets and other ephemera which clutter my study. Moreover, I think that the current publication suggests that there is a much better story, even a proper history, of our quite remarkable organisation just waiting to be written by someone else.*"

To ensure that the next chapters in the story are there to be written, please make your own contribution by sending NAEGA your own recollections and details of achievements in your own locality to Jonathan at [jonathanbrown@dsl.pipex.com](mailto:jonathanbrown@dsl.pipex.com)

**Vivienne Ravis**  
President of NAEGA 2004-2007



## In the beginning: 1982-1983

The National Association of Educational Guidance Services (NAEGS) was born on 10 July 1982 at a meeting held at Bretton Hall College, Wakefield during the annual conference of now the defunct Association for Recurrent Education. This inaugural meeting elected a small committee to launch the new association. The committee had, and needed, enthusiasm for the task as it had no money and no members. Yet within a year, it had organised the first AGM together with a busy one-day conference held at the City University in London. The first annual report said:

*Put simply we need educational guidance services freely and universally available to enable potential students to grasp the possibilities open to them, to comprehend their own needs and how best they can be satisfied (p.4).*

The 1983 annual report also listed the aims of NAEGS which were to:

- a) encourage the formation of educational guidance services and to assist their maintenance and development
- b) promote high standards of guidance practice
- c) facilitate the training of all involved in providing the services
- d) promote the acceptance of educational guidance services

To understand the future development of the new association it is useful to look at two aspects of the name of the new association.

**Firstly** why was the term educational guidance used? At that time, very few of the local authority careers services dealt with adults and some principal careers officers were actively hostile to the concept of working with adults. Many of the members of the new NAEGS were from an educational and library service background rather than from the careers service. However, the most distinguished practitioner of the time was careers trained and she was a firm advocate of *educational guidance*. Dorothy Eagleson from EGSA in Belfast had almost single-handedly invented, in the UK, the concept and practice of *educational guidance for adults*; a term that

underpins the very title of EGSA (Educational Guidance Service for Adults). For Dorothy, the concept and the practice of *educational guidance for adults* was important in:

- ▶ distinguishing our practice from work with young people and
- ▶ asserting that our (or our clients') aspirations are not confined to the world of work

So, adult guidance is not a mere adjunct at the periphery of statutory provision for those yet to leave full-time education and training. It encompasses work with all adults of whatever age, economic status or aspiration and involves the clarification of options at all educational levels and modes of study. Dorothy, in using the term *educational guidance*, helped us to understand this and to develop services for adults. The first act of the newly-elected NAEGS committee in autumn 1982 was to invite Dr Dorothy Eagleson to become our president, an office that she held continuously until 1998. So, in 1982 we were clear that *educational guidance* was our 'trade'. However, as will be seen, the *educational* label became increasingly ambiguous over time leading to the increasing use of *adult guidance* as the generic term, which was seen as more inclusive by some policy makers and funders interested in guidance as a means of reducing unemployment.

**Secondly**, why was it an association for guidance services? The answer here is somewhat easier. In 1982, we thought that adult guidance would develop through establishing free-standing educational guidance services: however, membership and services on the ground developed in a variety of ways. Not only was adult guidance offered in EGSA's but also in a wide range of settings including colleges, universities, voluntary organisations, libraries, adult/community education, prisons and rehabilitation centres. Many colleagues working for the Careers Service also joined. For although many such services did not see adults, there had always been exceptions. Indeed the number of careers services seeing adults did grow as a result of the work of UDACE. NAEGS wished to be open to all involved: it was ever an inclusive rather than an exclusive organisation. So, in 1990 NAEGS became **NAEGA** (National Association for Educational Guidance for Adults).

1982	NAEGS founded
1983	NAEGS holds first AGM and one day conference in London Study visit to Denmark by twelve NAEGS members
1984	UDACE created and sets up its first Development Group on Educational Guidance Study visit to West Germany by twelve NAEGS members
1985	UK is base for international study visit hosted by NAEGS
1986	UDACE publishes <i>The Challenge of Change</i> Study visit to Amersfoort, Holland

# Developing NAEGA: 1983-1993

Over the first ten years of life, NAEGA increased its membership across the UK. In 1992 to celebrate the first decade, it published *Creating the Network 1982-1992*. Among several contributions the founder chair wrote:

*The Association has survived and grown at a time when many such bodies in education have struggled. Although it may not have achieved all it set out to do, it has provided an effective national network and a national voice... The Association has continued to cherish the practitioner. Ours is a grassroots movement: NAEGA and good practice flow from this. It is an explanation of the collective vigour of the Association and our collective worries about the impermanence of local and national policy making. Equally NAEGA, both nationally and regionally relies on the voluntary service of practitioners... A by-product of this is that most who have given this kind of service have grown with the job. Because the work involves interaction with adult learners... whose orientation is towards personal growth, that dynamism “rubs off” on the guidance worker. In short, the guidance worker is herself an adult learner. This has shown itself in ways, perhaps most obviously, but not exclusively in career progression. The Association has articulated the need for adult guidance in increasingly clear tones. Educational Guidance between 1982 and 1992 has established itself with a distinctive literature and rhetoric (Jonathan Brown, 21-22).*

These issues of:

- ▶ being a distinctive voice for the furtherance of adult guidance
- ▶ being a grassroots practitioner-focused organisation
- ▶ being run by volunteers
- ▶ encountering serial changes and indecision in national policy (and, indeed, of matching changes and indecision by policymakers)
- ▶ creating a national network
- ▶ contributing to the literature of adult guidance

will recur in the rest of this story of NAEGA.

Looking back to the first ten years, two developments created significant momentum for the newly established organisation.

**The first** was the involvement of NAEGA in four international study visits to Denmark in 1983 and West Germany in 1984. The third study visit was hosted and organised by NAEGA

in the UK in 1985. A fourth study visit to the Netherlands with a slightly different format was added in 1986. **The second** was the establishment by the DES of the Unit for the Development of Adult Continuing Education (UDACE) in 1984. One of the first decisions of UDACE was to set up a Development Group on Educational Guidance. In the story of NAEGA these developments were most fortunate.

## International study visits: 1983-1986

The study visits were funded by the EU (then EEC) and were initiated by a sister organisation in Denmark with each of these countries providing a twelve-strong delegation. The format involved the hosts providing accommodation for the visitors for the first three days of the week-long exchange followed by a two-day residential seminar. During the first part of the week, the visitors work-shadowed the host. It was a successful but demanding format. The fourth (Dutch) visit was more compact and based on one centre at Amersfoort. Over the four study visits, 26 NAEGA members were involved. In addition to leading to a greater understanding of the nature of guidance and the difficulties of translating key words, the visits assisted NAEGA in building networks of guidance workers in the UK. There was also reassurance that adult guidance was not just a peripheral activity of NAEGS/A in the UK, but was matched by similar practice, challenges and concerns in a range of guidance settings in Europe. The visits taken together gave confidence and credibility to the infant NAEGS.

## UDACE and NEGI: 1984-1993

It is difficult to overestimate the impact of UDACE, and the later National Educational Guidance Initiative (NEGI) on NAEGA and its story. UDACE allowed us to understand our position, to clarify the nature of our work and to develop a literature specifically on adult guidance. At the same time, many members of NAEGA assisted UDACE in its work both as volunteer members of the Development Group on Educational Guidance and some (including Judy Alloway, Ruth Hawthorn, Carole Barnes, Letitia Opie, Rob Wood and Vivienne Ravis) as employees of UDACE. In tackling adult guidance, UDACE appointed an expert group. The Development Group on Educational Guidance for Adults had 18 members, many of whom were active within NAEGA. These included: Jonathan Brown (OU and NAEGA chair); Linda Butler (ECCTIS); Dorothy Eagleson (EGSA Belfast and NAEGA president); Geoff Ford (Leeds Careers Service); Ruth Michaels (Hatfield Polytechnic); Vivienne Ravis (EASA, Bradford); and Sue Thurston (Hammersmith and Fulham Education Advice Service).

1987	UDACE report by Judy Alloway <i>Advice and Guidance to Individuals</i> suggests potential demand for guidance of 10 million adults
1988	NEGI created
1989	ESG (Educational Support Grant) circular has adult guidance as a category



In addition, Judy Alloway (then NAEGA secretary) and Letitia Opie (Manchester Education Advice Service for Adults) who job-shared the UDACE national development officer post were also involved in developing the report. So, the NAEGA involvement was active and significant.

UDACE, and later NEGI, published a series of reports, evaluations and handbooks on adult guidance. However, the most important single publication in 1986 was ***The Challenge of Change: Developing Educational Guidance for Adults***. Produced by the expert Development Group after a thorough consultation process, *The Challenge of Change* is a seminal document. In particular, it identified the very essence of adult guidance. The process of guidance will, it said, enable adult clients to:

- ▶ *Evaluate* their own personal, educational and vocational development, possibly assisted by a guidance worker and/or formal assessment techniques
- ▶ *Identify* their learning needs and choose the most appropriate ways of meeting them, bearing in mind constraints of personal circumstances, costs and availability of opportunities

- ▶ *Pursue and complete* a programme of learning as effectively as possible (this might include learning through a formal course, an open learning programme, a self-help group or self-directed private study)
- ▶ *Review and assess* the learning achieved and identify future goals.

(*Challenge*, 22)

In *The Challenge of Change*, **guidance** is clearly identified as an umbrella term for a dynamic process in which the seven activities of guidance are all expressed in the -ING format. The section of the report on the activities is reproduced in the box below. If the report were being drafted today, it is likely that the *counselling* activity would be reformulated as **using counselling skills**. This analysis gives the foundation on which training, evaluation and development of adult guidance can be based. Although the focus in *The Challenge of Change* is on educational guidance, the framework can be adopted quite easily to fit all forms of adult guidance.

## The seven activities of guidance

### **Informing**

Providing information about learning opportunities and related support facilities available, without any discussion of the relative merits of options for particular clients. Since most published educational information is produced for promotional purposes, 'pure' information is rare.

### **Advising**

Helping clients to interpret information and choose the most appropriate option. To benefit from advice clients must already have a fairly clear idea of what their needs are.

### **Counselling**

Working with clients to help them to discover, clarify, assess and understand their learning needs and the various ways of meeting them. Clients requiring counselling are likely to be unclear about their needs and require time to explore their feelings about the options; counselling is therefore more likely to involve a series of contacts with a single client.

### **Assessing**

Helping clients, by formal or informal means, to obtain an adequate understanding of their personal, educational and vocational development, in order to enable them to make sound judgements about the appropriateness of particular learning opportunities.

### **Enabling**

Supporting the client in dealing with the agencies providing education or training, or in meeting the demands of particular courses. This may involve simple advice on completing application forms, advice on ways of negotiating changes in course content or arrangements, or assistance to independent learners.

### **Advocating**

Negotiating directly with institutions or agencies on behalf of individuals or groups for whom there may be additional barriers to access or to learning (e.g. negotiating exceptional entry arrangements or modifications to courses).

### **Feeding back**

Gathering and collating information on unmet, or inappropriately met, needs, and encouraging providers of learning opportunities to respond by developing their provision. This may involve practical changes (e.g. changing the presentation of course information or changing timetables) or curricular ones (e.g. designing new courses for new client groups, or changing the way in which existing courses are taught to make them more appropriate for adult learners).

(Adapted from *The Challenge of Change*, 24-25)

1990 NAEGS becomes NAEGA

1991 UDACE merges with FEU





*The Challenge of Change* not only analysed the nature of adult guidance but also made a series of recommendations for action by all the leading players in the policy making arena of the day. In particular, it recommended that the Department of Education and Science should create a National Educational Guidance Development Unit. The response to this took quite a while (one of those involved described the waiting for action as 'a full 18-month period of painful delay') but in the end, there was agreement to create, for a limited period, a National Educational Guidance Initiative (NEGI) jointly funded with the MSC. NEGI was set up in April 1988 and ran for five years. NEGI was most fortunate in its appointment of Vivienne Rivis, an adult guidance practitioner and long time NAEGA member, as its head. Vivienne

*was the first and only head of NEGI, but she had previously been a key member of the Educational Guidance Development Group. She set a demanding pace for herself and others, building networks of support for guidance work in many quarters.* (Stephen McNair, 1992)

The NEGI steering group 1988-93 contained five NAEGA members including our vice-president, Jonathan Brown, who chaired the group during NEGI's first three years.

NEGI, despite having quite limited funding, was involved in developing and evaluating many aspects of adult guidance. It supported directly the development or expansion of over 40 government and local authority-funded services in England and Wales. It continued the UDACE lead in publishing a series of reports. Of particular help to practitioners, was the serial publication of the parts of a handbook in a ring binder format *Delivering Educational Guidance for Adults*. It operated during a period when the number of services grew, although all too many were on temporary funding, NEGI helped to develop competences, occupational and quality standards and, with the BBC and BSS, undertook an initial feasibility study for a national guidance helpline and referral network. (In 1998 the envisaged helpline emerged as *learn direct*).

### Developing the voluntary organisation: 1983-1993

If the international study visits and the work of UDACE and NEGI had provided momentum for the new organisation, how had NAEGS/A itself developed during the period up to 1993? Increasing activity by volunteers was at the heart of our development. Activity which produced:

- ▶ A series of annual conferences
- ▶ An increasingly frequent newsletter which became *News and Views*
- ▶ The Directory of Adult Guidance Services

- ▶ Regional branches of NAEGS/A
- ▶ A series of Occasional Publications

### Annual conferences

The first two conferences in 1983 and 1984 were busy one-day events, but in 1985, our third conference took place over two days at Woolley Hall near Wakefield. The continuous series of NAEGA annual conferences since then has been residential. During the period from 1983-1993, NAEGA members planned, organised and ran increasingly complex conferences. The National Executive Committee organised the first three conferences, but from the 1986 Stoke Rochford conference onwards, regional branches, which had emerged by that time, headed the organisation of the event. There was no paid assistance for this work. The annual conferences became increasingly complex as NAEGS/A developed. One feature which stands out is that many of the workshops were conducted by practitioner members of NAEGA for their fellow NAEGA members. It allowed for spreading good practice but also gave members an opportunity to become workshop leaders.

### News and Views

NAEGS/A was slow to develop a newsletter. The problem was always identifying a member willing to take on such a chore. But eventually *News and Views* emerged and by the early 1990s, in the capable hands of Chris Cooper, had become a well-produced, printed A4 magazine issued three times a year.

### The directory of educational guidance services for adults

From the outset, NAEGA had been anxious to ensure that there was a UK directory to help members. The directory went through several phases but the last in the series, published by NAEGA alone, was probably the 1990-1991 edition jointly edited by Jane Barrett and Rosemary Jolley. This edition contained no less than 190 entries, a truly monumental work for such a small organisation to undertake. NEGI/UDACE jointly published a further expanded version in 1992.

### Regional branches

The National Executive did not set up branches: it was far too busy with other issues. But the branches emerged from local action. The second annual report (1983-84) notes the establishment of a Yorkshire and Humberside branch and, by the next year, there were also branches for Greater London and Greater Manchester and the North West. The national response was to give branches a delegate on the Executive Committee. By 1993, there were eight branches including a very active one for Scotland and Northern Ireland.

1992	NAEGA launches <i>An Adult Learners Charter</i>
1993	NEGI completes five year programme Adult Educational Guidance Initiative in Scotland (AEGIS) launched
1994	Guidance Council set up



### Occasional publications

The initial series of 17 Occasional Publications was short (no more than 12 pages) and in A4. It was a service to all

members and gave a platform to others. It also added to the growing literature on adult guidance and tackled issues of policy and practice.

#### NAEGA Occasional Publications 1984-1992

1	Linda Butler	<i>EGSAs: Their emergence, their operation and reaction of clients</i>	1984
2	Report	<i>Study Visit to Denmark</i>	1984
3	Jonathan Brown	<i>The Company We Keep: educational guidance and a monthly magazine</i>	1984
4	ER Morgan	<i>A Feasibility Study into the development of an information and advisory service in Wales</i>	1984
5	Lindsay Martin	<i>REPLAN and the Future of Adult Education</i>	1985
6	John Payne	<i>Educational Guidance Services: Advocacy &amp; Education for Adults</i>	1985
7	Report	<i>UK Study Visit</i>	1985
8	Geoff Ford	<i>Educational Guidance for Adults: The Independence Issue</i>	1986
9	Letitia Opie	<i>Network Training in Manchester</i>	1987
10	Ruth Hawthorn & Vernon Smith	<i>Training in Educational Guidance</i>	1988
11	Yve Schelhaas	<i>Evaluating Educational Guidance Services</i>	1988
12	Jonathan Brown	<i>Educational Guidance: a national perspective</i>	1989
13	Richard Edwards	<i>Separating Educational and Vocational Guidance</i>	1989
14	Kate Grillet & Lesley Haughton	<i>Educational Guidance at Work: a training course for educational guidance workers</i>	1990
15	Rob Imeson	<i>Educational Guidance and Counselling: The Assessment of Prior Experiential Learning</i>	1990
16	Richard Edwards	<i>Understanding Guidance Practice: some critical thoughts</i>	1990
17	Richard Edwards	<i>Guidance, Research and Evaluation &amp; Mary Thorpe</i>	1992

### NAEGA officers 1983-1993

This account of the first ten years would not be complete without noting some of the people who held national office and made significant contributions to developing the new organisation. The late Ros Gillham (1947-2009) was NAEGA's second chair: she made a significant contribution to NAEGS/A and to her clients at the Wandsworth Education Shop. Judy Alloway was our second honorary secretary in the 1980s

at a time when she was also working flat out with UDACE where she became senior development officer. Judy returned to NAEGA as president in 2000. Anne Docherty was also a multiple office holder being chair from 1988 to 1990, then secretary and membership secretary, a role she undertook for many years. Volunteering is about people: NAEGA attracted into service a number of quite remarkable people of whom those mentioned are but leading examples.

**1995** NAEGA membership survey shows members are 81% women; 43% unpromoted; and 13% part-time  
HEQC *Quality Assurance Framework* published reducing principles of adult guidance to just five

**1996** NVQ in advice and guidance launched

**1997** Adult Guidance Networks established across Scotland



# NAEGA 1993-2010

When NEGI came to the end of its five-year contract it was not replaced. Political priorities had shifted to the Department of Employment in its various guises and to the newly established Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs). The ready access which NAEGA had enjoyed through UDACE and NEGI to national developments and especially to intelligence on what was happening in our field came to an end. Henceforward, it became more difficult both to influence and to understand policy development. What has earlier in the period 1983-1993 been identified as '*encountering serial changes and indecision in national policy (and, indeed, of matching changes and indecision by policymakers)*', became even more marked in the later 1990s and in the first decade of the new century. Throughout, NAEGA has responded to changes in policy and emphasis with clear message about the need for a full service of adult guidance everywhere in the UK available for all. That has been the aspiration and it can be seen in NAEGA responses to

consultative documents, White and Green Papers and other policy reviews in the period from 1993. For NAEGA officers and members this has been a frustrating process. During this period, as will be seen later, the policy framework has become increasingly problematic in England whilst Scotland and Wales have moved in different and seemingly more secure directions. One result of policy drift and uncertainty has been that services in England have increasingly relied on cocktails of unstable and temporary funding.

This, then was the background to NAEGA's work from 1993. Some specific aspects to consider are:

- ▶ NAEGA landmarks between 1993 and 2010
- ▶ Service delivery in England: from IAG Partnerships to **nextstep** and now to Next Step
- ▶ Qualifications
- ▶ Quality standards and the development of 'matrix'

## A cocktail of unstable and temporary funding – an example from York

*Last year Future Prospects had 27 different funders (some were used for more than one period). All of this funding is short-term. You have to keep bidding to support the workers. Anything that funds for over a year is a godsend. We have no sustainable funding for a permanent staff of 10 with another 17 on temporary contracts. Each separate bid requires different approaches and all require novelty: funders want something that is new. All funders require different forms of reporting, quality assurance and inspection/audit. (Interview with Sandra Furby MBE, Manager of Future Prospect in York, News and Views Autumn 2004).*

## NAEGA landmarks from 1993 to 2010

The voluntary nature of the organisation which developed in the years up to 1993, has in the main, been retained. Annual conferences have continued to be key events in the NAEGA year. Their organisation by local branches was in place up to 2007, but as the branches contracted, there has been increasing involvement of national officers in conference planning. From 1999, it became necessary to bring in some help with the conference. From 2003, the requirement to be more businesslike, led to appointing professional conference organisers. *News and Views* became increasingly professional in both appearance and content up to 2006, when the board decided to discontinue the hard copy publication and publish an electronic version using the same title. Occasional Publications became even more occasional after 1992 but the ability to publish high quality papers and reports was retained.

## Later Occasional Publications: 1993-2007

NAEGA and ICG	<i>A Guidance Entitlement for Adults; a joint statement by NAEGA and ICG</i>	<b>1993</b>
John Payne & Richard Edwards	<i>Impartiality and the Self in Guidance: a report on three London Colleges</i>	<b>1996</b>
Martin Oakeshott	<i>Student Finance Update</i>	<b>1996</b>
Judy Alloway	<i>Report on UNESCO Fifth International Conference on Adult Education</i>	<b>1997</b>
Robin Charnley	<i>NAEGA Development Proposals</i>	<b>1998</b>
Jonathan Brown (Inaugural Lecture)	<i>Does Guidance Have a Future? Moving Towards a Distinctive Position</i>	<b>1999</b>
Segal Quince Wicksteed	<i>The Demand for Guidance</i>	<b>2001</b>
Jonathan Brown (editor)	<i>The Challenge of Change: developing guidance for adults (An edited version of central sections of 1986 UDACE report)</i>	<b>2003</b>
Geoff Ford	<i>Am I Still Needed? Guidance and learning for older adults</i>	<b>2005</b>
Vivienne Rivis	<i>Learning from Adult Guidance Practice: NAEGA case studies</i>	<b>2007</b>



### **Branches and the branch development project**

Branches continued to flourish into the 1990s. But from the turn of the century, branch activity, with the honourable exceptions of the East of England and London, tended to fall away. The original branch officers were difficult to replace; there were now many other training opportunities available and many members found it difficult to obtain permission to attend branch meetings. So in 2004, NAEGA obtained funding from DfES and the LSC for the Branch Development Project (BDP) to try to revive activities in the several regions. Led with enthusiasm by ex-chair of NAEGA, Kathy Blackmore, the BDP set out to promote adult guidance through branch activity.

#### **The Branch Development Project 2004-2005**

The Branch Development Project (BDP) ran from January 2004 to March 2005. Its purpose was to contribute to continuing professional development (CPD) for practitioners across the adult guidance sector by increasing the number of members and the level of participation in opportunities offered by NAEGA. BDP activity took place against a backdrop of continuing change in the guidance sector, and provided us with an opportunity to review our role and profile. As a consequence, we adopted a new strapline on our publications to reflect the changing pattern of membership: *Promoting Adult Guidance on Learning and Work* replaces *National Association for Educational Guidance for Adults* in our publications. A key aim of the BDP was to ensure that any progress could be sustained in the future and so the Board agreed a new branch communication and funding structure to support this. We also developed a branch pack as a resource for the ongoing activities of branches. The DfES also funded a project to develop the website and membership database. This contributed greatly to achieving the outcomes of the BDP. We increased membership by 30% in England, and established activity in each area which has continued beyond the life of the project. (Kathy Blackmore, 2005, NAEGA Annual Report)

### **Developing NAEGA and becoming a company**

Running NAEGA after 1993 became more demanding. The newer members elected to office and to the National Executive from the mid 1990s asked sharp questions about the conduct of business. In 1997-98, with a small grant from the DfEE, Robin Charnley looked at NAEGA's position.

In his report published in February 1998, Robin outlined the achievements of NAEGA and made proposals for our future development. The report contained a raft of proposals to improve and develop. Robin Charnley was an enthusiast for NAEGA and its work, however many of his suggestions required more energy than a volunteer body could give. But his emphasis on the need for better communication with members did start to improve the layout and professionalism of *News and Views*. Also the emphasis on modernising NAEGA led to consideration of changing the basis on which NAEGA operated which culminated in the change to a public company early in 2002. The national committee became the board of NAEGA.

NAEGA Ltd *'is a non-profit making organisation. At the end of the financial year any excess of income over expenditure is retained by the business... NAEGA's aims and objectives make our prime purpose in promoting and developing adult educational guidance very clear. NAEGA does this through services to our members.'* (*News and Views* Spring 2002).

### **NAEGA in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland**

From early days, NAEGA attracted members from Scotland, and many became active both in running the national association and in developing a Scotland branch. Among those who held national office were Anne Docherty who served as national chair, secretary and, for many years, as membership secretary; Ian Ledward (chair and vice-chair), Lennie Gilham (chair) and Ann Southwood (vice-chair). The operation of UDACE and then NEGI created particular interest. If England could have a *Challenge of Change* where was the Scottish equivalent? Ever enterprising, Anne Docherty set to and produced a just such a report. If England could have a NEGI, why not one for Scotland? As a result of that question, AEGIS (Adult Educational Guidance Initiative for Scotland) emerged in Scotland in 1993 just as NEGI closed its doors. AEGIS, like NEGI, was well served by NAEGA members including Ann Southwood and Liz Thomson. Largely as a result of the work of AEGIS, in 1997 Local Guidance Networks were established across Scotland providing a service of

1998	Scottish Guidance Group set up with strong NAEGA representation Learning Direct free telephone service set up
1999	NAEGA welcomes the mainstreaming of adult guidance in the White Paper <i>Learning to Succeed</i> NAEGA Development Plan project launched with small grant from the DfEE
2000	Adult Education Guidance Initiative (AEGI) created in Ireland IAG partnerships introduced in England Guidance Council publishes quality standards





guidance for adults. NAEGA was also represented by Liz Thomson and Jonathan Brown (the only member of the group to be 'allowed' to cross the Border!) on the Scottish Guidance Group whose work spanned the final years of direct rule and the early months of devolved government. However, the report of the Duffner Committee (2000) recommended an all-age service for Scotland and the Local Guidance Network became part of the new Careers Scotland from its introduction in 2002. Throughout the period up to 2002, NAEGA had taken a keen interest and had participated in development in Scotland. However, since then NAEGA has been less active in Scotland and membership there has dwindled.

In Wales, despite repeated attempts to stimulate activity, especially during the time of NEGI and later during the BDP period, there has been little development of NAEGA. In Northern Ireland from the outset there have been strong links with EGSA. Dorothy Eagleson (1923-2010), the original director of EGSA, was our president for the first 16 years of NAEGA. Since Dorothy's retirement from EGSA, its activities and service reach have grown greatly. EGSA remains a beacon of good practice in the delivery of adult guidance in the UK.

### **NAEGA and Ireland**

During the 1990s there was increasing contact with colleagues in the Republic of Ireland where, in 2000, the final 'Initiative' was born as the Adult Education Guidance Initiative (AEGI). The AEGI offers a guidance service to adults which includes impartial adult education information, one-to-one guidance and group guidance which will help people to make informed educational, career and life choices. Colleagues from the Irish services have visited and run workshops at NAEGA annual conferences for the last several years.

### **Service delivery in England: from IAG Partnerships to nextstep and then to Next Step**

During the 1990s, NAEGA took every opportunity to press for a universally accessible service of adult guidance. Responses from government were slow, hesitant and changing. NAEGA encountered 'serial changes and indecision in national policy (and, indeed, of matching changes and indecision by policymakers)'. However, with the launch of *learning direct* (later to become *learnirect advice*) in 1998, things started to move with the pilots of what became the *IAG*

(*Information, Advice and Guidance*) *Partnerships* in 2000. NAEGA never liked the IAG designation. It did not fit with the use of guidance as the umbrella term with the activities in the -ING form. *Information* is not *informing*. Nevertheless, the new funding did assist with building networks. At the beginning, the new system was run directly by the DfES but was later handed on the LSC which introduced the *next step* branding. As Martin Peel puts it, under DfES was 'a good time in many ways as targets were few and there was plenty of network development'. But with LSC came competitive tendering and the target culture. It was not the universal service that NAEGA advocated. These points were being put strongly in 2006 and 2007 to the extensive IAG Review. Taking advice from the IAG Review, the case for universality came from the Treasury sponsored Skills Review conducted by Lord Leitch and his report (2006) *Prosperity for all in the global economy – world class skills*. From the Skills Review has come a new universal and integrated careers service for adults. Branded as Next Step the new service was launched in August 2010.

### **Training and qualifications in guidance practice**

From the outset in 1982, NAEGS/A supported training for guidance practitioners and saw its activities at meetings, annual conference and publications as being involved in training. Indeed two of the original aims of NAEGS were in this arena: promoting high standards in guidance practice and facilitating the training of all involved in providing the services.

Training was also a critical issue for UDACE and NEGI which NAEGA supported. Indeed for several years in the 1990s, after the demise of NEGI, NAEGA kept alive what had been the NEGI training panel. It became clear quite early on that there were three separate issues involved in the training agenda. **The first** was the development of an initial professional qualification in guidance for all those whose work was primarily in adult guidance. **The second** was an additional qualification for those whose guidance role was an add-on to their main professional focus. (Perhaps a more elegant way of seeing this is as a new specialism within an existing profession as it can be for teachers, lecturers, librarians, community workers et al). **The third** was continuing (or continuous) professional development (CPD). Most progress has been made in furthering the first and third issues.

2001	Review of Higher Education Careers Services (Chair: Harris) reports Careers Wales becomes operational as an all-age service
2002	NAEGA becomes a not-for-profit, limited by guarantee, private company Matrix quality standards launched based on the Guidance Council model Careers Scotland becomes operational as an all-age service
2003	NAEGA re-publishes an edited version of the central section of <i>The Challenge of Change</i>
2004	NAEGA Branch Development Project created funded by DfES and LSC NAEGA wins CRAC 40th anniversary medal for an outstanding contribution to careers and lifelong learning



### **Initial professional qualification in guidance**

Initially, the only qualification in the field was the Diploma in Careers Guidance (Dip.CG). Some adult guidance practitioners held the DipCG, but many did not. Most of the places on the diploma involved one-year full-time study. So what was required was a forward looking modular qualification which could be taken whilst still working in which adult guidance could be a focus. The NVQ system gave a way forward. The process of obtaining NVQs in advice and guidance took quite a time to develop. There were many stakeholders in addition to NAEGA who had to be consulted and there were extensive trials. Discussion on the NVQs commenced in the early 1990s and the advice and guidance qualifications launched in 1996. The development of NVQs in advice and guidance have made a significant difference to the qualification base of adult guidance workers since 1996. For CPD, progress has been less straightforward. NAEGA increasingly stressed over the years that its conferences were part of CPD for members. The views of NAEGA were eventually codified in publication of the *Continuous Professional Development Strategy* in 2007. This was a significant statement of NAEGA's position.

### **Principles underpinning NAEGA's CPD strategy**

The following principles underpin NAEGA's approach to competence and CPD:

- ▶ The competence of practitioners is key to the delivery of effective information, advice and guidance services
- ▶ Qualifications do not necessarily guarantee that practitioners are competent and practitioners without qualifications may be competent to deliver effective services
- ▶ People with qualifications other than advice and guidance ones can be competent practitioners and such qualifications can provide evidence of competence

- ▶ Practitioners should deliver information, advice and guidance services in line with NAEGA's *Principles of Ethical Practice*
- ▶ Competence needs to be maintained and this means developing and progressing in the light of research and practice-based evidence
- ▶ The purpose of information, advice and guidance is to enable clients to develop their own career management skills and to become self-sufficient but recognise when they need support
- ▶ We recognise and celebrate diversity in provision (types of practitioners, job roles, qualification routes and organisational settings) BUT practitioners need to ensure they maintain and develop their competence through reflective practice and CPD
- ▶ NAEGA believes that to be competent all practitioners delivering information, advice and guidance regardless of setting, job role or sector should be competent in the range of skills and knowledge outlined in the competence framework

### **Quality standards and 'matrix'**

Closely linked to NAEGA's interest in training and qualifications was a concern for quality and standards. The latter was a priority for NEGI and led to the publication in 1992 of *The Quest for Quality* by Jackie Sadler and Vivienne Ravis. However, the Guidance Council, of which NAEGA was a member, took up the baton on quality standards from 1994. The Guidance Council developed the standards with active encouragement from government. By 2000, the Guidance Council had piloted the standards which eventually, in 2002, became *the matrix quality standard for information advice and guidance services*.

2005	Launch of IAG review <i>Am I still Needed: Guidance and Learning for Older Adults</i> by Geoff Ford published as a NAEGA Occasional Publication
2006	NAEGA publishes <i>Case Studies: Learning from Adult Guidance</i> , by Vivienne Ravis as response to IAG review Leitch Review of Skills recommends an adult careers service for England
2007	NAEGA responds to consultations on the IAG review, the Leitch review and proposals in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland (and continues to do so in 2008, 2009 and 2010)



# Where is NAEGA now?

After the first ten years (1982-1992) NAEGA was described as:

- ▶ being a distinctive voice for the furtherance of adult guidance
- ▶ being a grassroots practitioner-focused organisation
- ▶ being run by volunteers
- ▶ encountering serial changes and indecision in national policy (and, indeed, of matching changes and indecision by policymakers)
- ▶ creating a national network
- ▶ contributing to the literature of adult guidance
- ▶ Effective system of monitoring and evaluation, to include user profiles; user requirements; user satisfaction with services received; user outcomes – short, medium and long-term; user feedback on opportunities pursued
- ▶ Building on feedback from clients to improve guidance services and to influence the range of opportunities for learning, training and personal development available
- ▶ Recognisable service identity not dependent on short-term branding to publicise particular funding initiatives
- ▶ Stable funding regime that allows practitioners to use their professional judgement in gauging the most appropriate levels and type of service to offer to each individual client and that guarantees continuity of service for clients

In looking at the distance travelled between 1982 and 2010, how far do these features still apply to NAEGA? Well, the voice advocating a full, universal guidance service has been persistent over time.

## A universally available service of adult guidance

A universally available service of adult guidance should include the following features:

- ▶ Statement of entitlement for all adults requiring help in making life transitions
- ▶ Comprehensive, flexible and genuine choice of services available to every adult appropriate to their individual requirements, including:
  - one-to-one and group sessions
  - face-to-face and telephone, email and web-based services
  - accessible, local, community-based and well publicised specialised regional and national services
  - free core services, to include information, advice and guidance and repeat contacts
  - additional specialist services which might incur a cost for those able and willing to pay i.e. well-qualified people in employment seeking career development or change
  - good impartial guidance available to adults in continuing, further and higher education
  - effective guidance available in training programmes, via employers' organisations and in the workplace
- ▶ Extensive and effectively funded-referral networks, linking professionals from all key agencies concerned with adults, and underpinned by collaboration, information sharing and joint training
- ▶ Common professional ethos underpinned by high-quality training and continuing professional development
- ▶ Professional recognition for guidance practitioners with support for reflective practice to ensure continuous quality enhancement of services provided

(Adapted from Vivienne Ravis, 2007, *Learning from Guidance Practice: NAEGA Case Studies*)

The 2007 position has recently been endorsed by our president, Stephen McNair, in his letter to members of 1 July 2010 when he writes:

*NAEGA will continue to argue for well funded, high quality and impartial careers guidance for adults irrespective of delivery structures. We are, of course, concerned that a move towards an all age service might result in a diversion of the adult resources of Next Step to young people, and there is no doubt that there will be strong lobbies pressing for this.*

NAEGA remains a practitioner-focused organisation run by volunteers. The only paid help NAEGA receives is over membership records, the website and annual conference administration. The rest is done by members for members. There is still concern in the present climate after the 2010 general election about changes of government policy.

2008	EU declaration on better integrating Lifelong Guidance into Lifelong Learning strategies.
2009	NAEGA consulted about the new Adult Advancement and Careers Service
2010	Launch of Next Step (the name chosen for the Adult Advancement and Careers Service) an integrated adult careers service in England

This is especially so as at least one part of the new government believes that the all-age service models used in Wales and Scotland could be advantageously applied to England as well. Finally, NAEGA remains a UK wide network and is still contributing to the literature of adult guidance.

However, having said all of that, 2010 is a remarkably different environment to 1982. As Vivienne Ravis says:

*For the first ten years at least guidance was largely about helping people to improve their basic standard of education, to retrain and to get access to HE, and above all, to learn in order to improve their life chances – which paradoxically was easier for adults without qualifications than it appears to be now – and certainly much cheaper.*

The environment in which NAEGA was born was one where, in lifelong learning terms, there was room and space for grassroots initiatives. Indeed, the whole development of what we then called *Educational Guidance Services for Adults* was a product of that very environment. There was experimentation. There were bottom-up developments. Such grassroots development would be extraordinarily difficult today. Despite this, the aim of NAEGA in both educational and employment terms should be to help adults to learn, not merely in the acquisition of new skills, but in finding new aspirations. In short, NAEGA's task is that of **championing adult guidance**.

Finally, I have not been able to resist a postscript on the 'e' word. At the start of the NAEGS/A story above, I explain why the association used the term *educational guidance*. Now is the time to look at this in the context of the present position of adult guidance. There is increasing unease about the continuing presence of the 'e' word in our name. Indeed, from 2005 NAEGA has stopped using the title in full in favour of the NAEGA initials followed by the strapline *Promoting Adult Guidance on Learning and Work*. This works imperfectly as there is still a need to explain who we are and what the initials mean. Perhaps we are nearing the point where NAEGA should become NAGA?

## References

UDACE (1986) *The Challenge of Change*, Leicester: NIACE for UDACE [Partially republished as BROWN J (Ed) (2003) *The Challenge of Change*, Belfast, NAEGA]

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