



Report to the Annual General Meeting of the Association for Language Learning

2009-10 has been an excellent year for the Association.

We have kept membership stable against a background of fewer language teachers in most sectors of the profession. Only Primary, where the policy of the previous Labour Government to develop primary languages with the intention of languages becoming statutory in 2011 has meant a rise in the number of primary teachers (both specialists and generalists) teaching languages, has bucked this trend. However, this is a group of teachers new to language teaching and although they are slowly beginning to join ALL, the number of primary teachers and schools who are currently members is very low. At the start of this academic year, we have over 5,000 members in individual and group memberships. ALL membership rates have not increased since 2002 and the current individual membership is £50 or £36 a year depending on the number of publications selected.

The financial position of ALL is strong. Recent years have seen a change in the income patterns of the Association with income generation through internally and externally funded projects now providing the bulk of the income. Annual turnover in 2009-10 is over £900,000. This compares to around £250,000 in 2002. The most recent audited accounts (08-09) show ALL in profit and able to build the reserves of the organisation. This is crucial to the Association as it provides a stable base for our activities and our future planning.

The position of ALL in the national community of languages education is good. In recent years we have been part of a number of important, high profile national and international initiatives, in particular the subject specific support for the new secondary curriculum in England (DCSF-funded; in partnership with CfBT and other subject associations), Links into Languages (DCSF-funded; in a team led by the University of Southampton with ALL and SSAT), the REAL project –the creation of a European network of language teacher associations (EU-funded; a partnership of eight EU language teachers associations managed by CIEP, France). ALL is represented, by staff, officers, trustees and other expert members, on many panels and groups where languages education is discussed, bringing the voice of teachers into these debates. Groups range from those convened by Government, like the National Languages Strategy Schools Implementation Group to advisory panels for other bodies in languages education, to expert groups convened by agencies like TDA or QCDA or selection panels for initiatives like the European Award for Languages.

ALL has built on the knowledge and expertise that we have developed through project work. In 09-10 we launched a new publication, *Curriculum Now*, based on the work of Rachel

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Hawkes, one of the new secondary curriculum regional subject advisers. This has sold well and is the only publication we know of directly linked to languages in the new curriculum. Other spin-off activities from this work include two websites, one on the new curriculum for languages (<http://www.all-nsc.org.uk>) and one for CLIL (<http://clil4teachers.pbworks.com/>, a wiki allowing teachers to upload their own materials to share with others). Publications, including *Languages Today*, have presented the work of our projects, with articles and resources appearing in several of our in-house publications.

2009-10 has seen a marked improvement in the range of benefits and services offered to our members. We introduced a new magazine, *Languages Today*, in March 2009 and this has proved to be popular with members and has received a very positive response from the languages community. In March 2010 we launched our new website, with online subscriptions and payments, a content management system which allows members active in committees and networks to create their own pages and upload resources, and a lively new look and improved content. All members received an additional free publication in 09-10 in memory of Brian Page, ALL's first President. Our language specific journals (Deutsch Lehren und Lernen, Francophonie, Rusistika, Tuttitalia and Vida Hispanica) have been given a new look and editors have worked hard to find stimulating and relevant content for readers. A special mention should perhaps be made to Rusistika which has been revitalised in the last year. In 2006 we also appointed a volunteer as General Editor of the language specific journals, and this has proved to be a most beneficial appointment. *Language Learning Journal*, now managed on our behalf by Routledge, continues to build a high international reputation and has now gone from two issues a year to three. All our editors work on a voluntary basis, many balancing busy day jobs with their ALL work, and their contribution to the work of the Association is invaluable. 2009-10 has also seen a rise in the number of activities for students we offer, especially competitions, organised either by our own language committees (Japanese Speaking Contest; Russian Essay Competition; Spanish Online Quiz – the latter has over 800 entries this year) or in collaboration with our corporate members (e.g. Languages World Cup with a new corporate member Language Perfect, based in new Zealand). These activities are appreciated by teachers

ALL regional and local networks expanded in 2009-10. We now have six large ALL groups in London, Yorkshire, Manchester, West of England, Essex and Anglia and Kent, plus a growing number of smaller networks covering both rural and urban areas. Groups run CPD and social activities for both teachers and language learners; many groups work with Links into Languages centres in their areas. We have developed an online space for ALL networks (a wiki) where group convenors can find a variety of materials to support their activities. Our aim for 2011 is to have an active ALL group in each of the English regions.

International activity is also an important element of our work. ALL is a member of a international monolingual federations: the FIPF (French), MAPRYAL(Russian), IDV(German) and of the multilingual FIPLV, the world federation of language teacher associations. ALL is

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also a founder member of the REAL network, the European network of language teacher associations. This initiative has been funded by the European Commission.

ALL carries out all its activities through staff, consultants and volunteers. The office, based at the University of Leicester, currently has a staff of four full time posts (two professional, two administrative). Membership, project bids, project management and some project implementation, finance, publications, the website, are all dealt with from the central office. The Director and the Professional Officer have represented ALL at many events and meetings in the last year. Consultants have been an excellent way of bringing in specific subject expertise when necessary, especially for project work. For the new secondary curriculum project, which ended in March 2010, we built a team of advisers across the country to work with teachers of languages on the implementation of the new curriculum. Volunteers work on behalf of ALL in a variety of roles – publications, regional and local networks, language committees, trustees, officers. The Association is managed by a board of trustees, the Management Board, made up of the three Presidents, two Officers (Finance and Membership, Bill Musk and Steven Fawkes respectively) and four invited trustees. The Board meets four times a year in Leicester or London.

President of the Association in 2009-10 was Cynthia Martin, a well-known teacher trainer and academic with a strong interest in primary languages, Past President was Pauline Swanton, a national figure in languages in adult education, and President Elect was Karl Pfeiffer of the Goethe Institut. From 1 September 2010, Karl became President, Cynthia Past President and Bernardette Holmes, well-known speaker and writer on the languages education and currently Links into Languages Regional Manager for the East of England, is President Elect. Presidential teams such as these, with a wide range of experience, help us to strengthen and take forward the work of the Association.

ALL's intention for the coming year is to continue to build on our success and our expertise. We have plans to look at how we might support teachers and schools more directly in the open market that might come about from Government reorganisation of education and the role of local authorities. We believe that the moment is right for ALL to speak out on educational policy in general and languages education in particular and to strive to give a higher profile to the voice of teachers and our members. We are currently working on new aims, objectives and a new mission statement for ALL which will be incorporated into our Constitution. We are going into the new academic year with enthusiasm and confidence, strong in the belief of the power of languages, the importance of high quality language learning and the right of every citizen, child or adult, to have access to the very best in languages education.