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National Association of  
Standing Advisory Councils  
on Religious Education

**SACRE BRIEFING**

## Issue: 30

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## Welcome and Update from the Chair

Welcome to this edition of the NASACRE Briefing.

This term has been one of consolidation and renewal for NASACRE and for many of its member SACREs. Consolidation, as we have secured our CPD programme for members, re-established our thriving partnerships with other RE associations, and obtained helpful advice from the DfE. Renewal, as like so many other education networks we have taken inspiration from teachers and other professionals as they rose to the challenges of the new academic year in these tricky times.

The [NASACRE report](#) on SACRE funding remains a source of discussion locally, and at our executive committee meetings and in other RE networks. We're pleased that the report has enabled some SACREs to begin open discussions about funding within their groups, and with local authority representatives.

Similarly, the local area network report 'Still Standing' compiled by our executive committee member, Claire Clinton, and based on research by several SACREs, is promoting dialogue about best practice. It shows the impact that well-informed and highly motivated SACRE networks can have on the subject and its teachers. Both reports can be accessed [here](#).

The editorial in this term's British Journal of Religious Education, written by assistant editor Dr David Lundie, brings together an overview of the challenges we all face. Noting the potential impact of research-informed resources on students David records that:

*'Perhaps no other subject provokes such anxieties from teachers as teaching about religion. Understanding the motivations, worldviews, pressures and funds of knowledge of the fantastic professionals who make up the RE teaching world is essential...'*

Sadly, as mentioned below in the next paragraph, we have to share news of the deaths of two friends and professionals who stood out in their communities. We will be joining in with other RE associations and networks to mark the lives and contributions of these colleagues when it is appropriate, and we offer condolences to their families and friends.

In the meantime, members of the executive wanted to note the major contributions Sharon Artley made to our own association, to RE, and to education in a much wider sense. She was passionate about the subject, and about teaching, a deep thinker and a very practical support in so many settings especially in the world of websites and IT. Her sense of humour, hospitality, honesty and kindness will be missed, and so will her wonderful wildlife photography.

NASACRE needs you to consider how members of SACREs might help the association in the future. Our executive committee still needs a Vice-Chair, who will then become Chair, and we will be actively and strategically advertising this vacancy between now and our AGM in May. We are a democratic organisation, and we rely on members to step forward to join us on the committee. Meetings are usually fun, focused and full of information and ideas useful to SACREs around the country – please do contact any one of the team if you would like to know more. We are aware that the programme of professional development is creating new links and contacts, and we hope some of you will feel inspired to join us to secure the association's future.

More information about the executive committee roles can be found [here](#) and I can promise you a warm welcome if you decide to stand for election!

And finally, please accept our best wishes to all for a joyful, peaceful and fulfilling festive season – thank you for your support to NASACRE, and may we all find a happy New Year.

Linda Rudge, [Chair@nasacre.org.uk](mailto:Chair@nasacre.org.uk)

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## Sad news

We are sorry to inform SACREs of the untimely deaths of Ted Cooke, Chair of Waltham Forest SACRE for many years and Sharon Artley, a former member of NASACRE Exec and an RE Consultant. Both will be sadly missed in the world of RE and SACREs.

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## New website

An overhaul of the NASACRE website is underway with the aim of bringing a fresh design and a more contemporary feel to it.

Content is being streamlined so it's easier to use, combining sections such as the SACRE Contacts Directory and Annual Reports, thereby reducing the number of clicks a user needs to make. Some older things will be archived, but still searchable, and there will be more resources available to subscribed member SACREs at the click of a 'Members' button.

We're also looking at bringing a more 'community' feel, by introducing a section for shared resources and links with NASACRE partners such as the REC.

The new site is due to go live soon, with the intention that webpages will continue to be developed thereafter. From the launch onwards, user feedback will be essential so that the website can continue to evolve.

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## Conference 2022 - Ambitious SACREs

Taking place in Birmingham on Monday 23 May, this conference will provide an opportunity for SACRE members to engage in discussion around issues of RE and Collective Worship. Keynote speakers will be Sarah Lane-Cawte (new Chair of the REC - Religious Education Council), HMI Richard Kueh (Ofsted) and David Hampshire, a previous chair of NASACRE, who will present the analysis of the most recent (2021) SACRE annual reports.

Additional sessions will look at the new SACRE audit tool, Westhill award winners, the LAN report (see briefing item below) and other topical issues of interest to SACREs.

Put the date in your diary now!

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## LAN (Local Area Network) report

**Still Standing** – the REC Local Area Network Report is now live [here](#).

### **The report asks SACREs to consider the following points:**

1. Reviewing SACRE membership in partnership with the LA to ensure that it is representative of the local community, and supports the religions and worldviews included in the Agreed Syllabus. Having a diverse range of voices with specific roles on SACRE is essential if an LA is to be able to discharge its legal responsibilities. SACREs can start the process of working with their LA to update membership now. This may require a change to the constitution or terms of reference; the

LA legally approves your members and there is nothing in the present legislation that would hinder this.

2. Continue to build local partnerships with the LA to ensure necessary funding.
3. Within the present legislation regarding their ability to widen their membership, the CoRE report helpfully suggests SACREs think about adding to their membership - if they haven't done so already - education departments at museums and universities, local ITT providers, local RE CPD providers, training school hubs, parents, governors, pupil voice, academies and free schools, to name but a few possibilities. Widening representation and local buy-in strengthens the work of high quality RE in schools.

Claire Clinton, the report's author, believes that there are some useful documents developed by SACREs who participated in the project, for other SACREs to use in their work, including

- An audit tool for Agreed Syllabus reviews
- A simple participatory action research template
- A membership tool

NASACRE hopes that there will be an opportunity for SACREs to find out more about these tools and discuss the impact of the report at our (hopefully!) face-to-face May 2022 conference in Birmingham (see conference item above).

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## **Clerks' and Chairs' contact details**

Other national bodies e.g. faith bodies, the DfE and the REC, make use of NASACRE's list of SACRE contacts for getting in touch with you. As the first meetings of the calendar year often bring changes to personnel, please

ensure that the [details](#) NASACRE holds for your SACRE are up to date.

NASACRE needs to have contact details for clerks, advisers, LA officers and chairs to ensure that information gets to the right people.

Please contact [admin@nasacre.org.uk](mailto:admin@nasacre.org.uk) to send your amendments for the site.

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## **Jewish SACRE representatives**

The Board of Deputies of British Jews is working to find a Jewish representative for every SACRE in England.

Please can your clerk let us know if this position is filled, and if so, it would be helpful to send their details to [Sheila Gewolb](#). Please use the same contact details if you would like us to find you a suitable person.

Many thanks for your help.

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## **SACRE Self-evaluation tool**

The development group has worked hard on reviewing, updating, and improving the SACRE self-evaluation tool. This tool will enable you to consider your SACRE's effectiveness in all areas of its work in order to produce a targeted and costed Development Plan in partnership with your LA.

The SEF is available [here](#) for use at SACRE meetings.

There will be a workshop at our conference in May 2022 around how to use the tool to best effect.

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## **NASACRE's new online Training programme**

*"It is excellent that NASACRE is doing these online sessions."*

*"Really clear and useful information and chances for thoughtful discussions. Thank you."*

*"Such a great programme this year! so helpful."*

These are just a few of the comments from the chat at the online training sessions that have already taken place.

You can access these recorded sessions [here](#) along with the Ppts and resources.

The programme for 2021-22 can be accessed [here](#).

Our next training session will be on **18 January 2022 from 7-8pm:**  
***An introduction: How to be an effective SACRE Chair***

This session will help SACRE Chairs to reflect on their present practice and share with other Chairs around the country some top tips for effective chairing.

Sessions are free to SACREs who have paid the annual training subscription

fee of £50, but will otherwise cost £20 for each session for a subscribed SACRE and £30 for a non-subscribed SACRE.

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## FOI Project

If your SACRE has initiated any discussions with the Local Authority as a result of the data shared in the project, NASACRE would love to hear from you. What response did the LA give? Has your funding increased as a result? Your experience might be useful to other SACREs, and anonymity will be preserved.

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## Westhill Awards

Over the last sixteen years, the Westhill/NASACRE Awards have successfully given SACREs opportunities to enhance their capacity to generate high quality experiences in RE (or collective worship) for their schools.

NASACRE is now encouraging and inviting individual SACREs (or SACREs in partnership) to apply for a Westhill/NASACRE Award for 2022-23. Awards of up to £4,000 may be applied for via the [application form](#) on our website.

Projects should offer pupils the opportunity to engage in compelling learning experiences in RE (or collective worship), within the broad theme of "Education into Diversity", understood as diversity across the spectrum of faiths and worldviews.

Any SACRE wishing to submit an application is strongly advised to look at the [revised briefing notes](#) which accompany the online application form and the

[materials](#) shared in the December Training session.

For queries, advice or further information, please contact [Michael Metcalf](#), the convenor of the Awards Panel.

**Closing date: 31 March 2022**

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## Items for your next agenda

- Book places for your SACRE members on relevant [online training events](#)
  - Holocaust Memorial Day 2022
  - Share the REC report *Still Standing* and consider and respond to the questions it raises for SACREs
  - Consider applying for a [NASACRE/Westhill Award](#)
  - Introduce the date of the [2022 NASACRE Conference](#) to SACRE members and decide who is going to represent your SACRE
  - Check that we have your most recent contacts on our [website](#).
  - Send your SACRE [annual report](#) to NASACRE and to the DfE
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