

# National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United Kingdom

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### **Institutional meeting**

The National Spiritual Assembly was thrilled to join the Regional Bahá'í Councils, Training Institute Board, Auxiliary Board members, area coordinators and statistics officers at a national 'institutional meeting' in February.

The meeting naturally followed on from the many significant efforts that have been made by the community and its institutions over the last year, including the preparations for the youth conference; the youth conference itself and the vital work that ensued; and specific efforts in recent months by each of the Councils and the Training Institute Board to reflect, in conjunction with the National Assembly, on the particular role they have to play in advancing the processes of growth. The institutional meeting was thus an opportunity to take stock together and to build a vision across the institutions regarding the ways in which the pressing goals of the Plan can be achieved.

Over a weekend rich with insight and learning, those present rigorously explored such vital facets of the Plan as accompaniment and the vital skill of reading the reality of our clusters as a basis for effective planning and action. Fortified by fresh insights and a broadened understanding, plans were then made to progress the work in clusters across the UK, and these plans are now being pursued vigorously by the institutions concerned.

The National Assembly is ever-grateful for the dedicated work of those serving on the institutions, and indeed to all the believers in the UK, for their every endeavour offered in service to the Cause!

### **Working with youth**

The National Assembly has been reflecting upon recent guidance from the Universal House of Justice, notably including its letter dated 5 December 2013 to the Bahá'ís of the world and its letter of 29 January 2014 to Bahá'í youth in the Cradle of the Faith.

Moved by the stirring call to action contained in the 5 December letter, the National Assembly commissioned an audio-visual presentation to highlight some of the letter's major themes, including the significance of this moment in the unfoldment of the Plan and the opportunities to build vibrant communities that lie before us. It will be shown at major upcoming events, such as National

Convention and the summer schools, and it is therefore hoped that as many members of the community as possible will get a chance to see it.

As you may be aware, the Bahá'í World Centre recently released a series of films collectively entitled *To Serve Humanity*. The films can be downloaded or viewed online, in a number of languages, at [www.bahai.org/toserve](http://www.bahai.org/toserve). The National Assembly wrote a letter to all youth who attended the London Youth Conference to inform them of these films and to encourage them in all their efforts to serve humanity.

### **Unit Convention resolutions**

The National Assembly was pleased to receive resolutions from the Unit Conventions that took place in December, and appreciates the thoughtfulness and care that has been invested in each one. The resolutions touch on a wide array of subjects, including the way clusters can assist each other in initiating programmes of growth; the role of Bahá'í Centres; communications in the community; additional strategies for working with youth; and issues relating to the summer schools. The National Assembly is in the process of considering these resolutions, drawing on information from its various agencies as needed, and looks forward to sharing its responses with the community in due course.

### **Homefront pioneering and youth year of service**

In light of experience gained to date, the National Assembly has been reflecting on the processes surrounding the deployment of pioneers, including youth who are undertaking a year of service in the UK. The National Assembly, in consultation with the various agencies concerned, is endeavouring to refine the process and heighten understanding as to the particular roles the different institutions and the community can play, in the hope that we will all be increasingly better able to raise up, prepare, and support the increasing number of dear souls who arise to homefront pioneer.

### **Regional Bahá'í Council election procedure**

On rare occasions, the membership of Local Spiritual Assemblies changes between the time when materials for the Regional Council elections are distributed and the date when votes are due. The National Assembly has decided that, to avoid any ambiguity over who can vote in the event of a membership change on a Local Assembly, 20 October will be regarded as a cut-off date for eligibility to vote. That is to say, individuals who become members of their Local Assembly after this date, but before the election of the Councils, are not eligible to vote.

### **Landscaping at the Guardian's Resting Place**

Members of the Guardian's Resting Place project team met with the National Assembly to review plans prepared by a firm of professional landscapers, and to discuss plans for the landscaping work at New Southgate Cemetery. The National Assembly is doing its utmost to ensure that the surroundings to this immeasurably precious site are beautified befittingly and maintained with all dignity and care. After considering a range of options, we are pleased to say that many elements of the plan have now been decided upon, and the work will now proceed into the implementation phase.

### **Dates of upcoming events**

For ease of reference, the dates of the large Bahá'í events scheduled for this summer are listed below:

- Northern Ireland Summer School – 21-27 July
- Intensive Training – 19 July-2 August – Keele University
- Scottish Summer School – 2-6 August
- Northern English Summer School – 3-8 August – Keele University
- Southern English Summer School – 10-15 August – Wellington College

- ISGP Undergraduate Seminar – 17-27 August – Wellington College
- Welsh Summer School – 21-25 August - Llangrannog (Urdd) Residential Education Centre

The National Assembly sends you its loving greetings, and wishes you all a very happy Naw-Rúz!

With our warmest love,

National Spiritual Assembly

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHÁ'ÍS OF THE UNITED KINGDOM