

# Chair's Report, June 2017 - Reflections

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## *Jacqui Lichtenstern*

Whilst writing this final report, I have reflected back over the experience of the last 4 years as Chair and what the Organising Committee (OC) has been busy with. It is challenging for a group of volunteers to organise a national organisation. I have really appreciated that as Gestaltists we know the importance of dialogue, experimentation, creativity and recognition of the wider field and have made space for all of these. I have begun to learn to share responsibility, delegate more, moderate my expectations, value my competencies and accept my limitations.

Whilst 2016 to 2017 has been a year of political upheavals in the UK and beyond, it has been a relatively calm and productive time for the Organising Committee (OC) and UKAGP. The OC has developed into a cohesive working team since 2013 when there was a large changeover, and we have managed to stagger the timing of arrivals and departures to support a smoother running and have experimented creatively with how and when we meet. I would like to thank all eight members of the OC for their time energy and support, and also for those who contribute preparing and cooking our delicious lunches at our meetings.

## *Ruth Nightingale (Finance Officer)*

Thank you Ruth for the last 4 years of such professional care-taking of the finances – we have all appreciated your reliable and confident management of the accounts, which have provided us with a solid base from which to work. Thanks too for stepping in to take on the challenge of the Web Upgrade working group, for working with the COG as well as the OC, and for staying on an extra year when there was no one to take on your position. I know the whole OC wishes you well in wherever your new adventures take you!

## *Liz Beauchamp (Conference Organiser)*

Thank you Liz for your tireless work over the last 3 years, as the first Vice Chair (thank you for suggesting such a useful new position) and then as our first Conference Organiser and chair of the COG. Your commitment and hard work have played a large part in the success of our last few conferences, as you have transferred and adapted your business skills to fit within a totally different context. I'm also delighted that you're standing for re-election for a different position, knowing that you will be there to support the next Conference Organiser as they find their own way.

## *Rachael Kellett (Membership Officer)*

Thank you Rachael for bringing a fresh voice to the Ordinary Member role 3 years ago, and for making the commitment to come to meetings even when you were in physical discomfort. We all appreciated you offering to step into the position of Membership Officer, which I recognise was quite a leap into the dark. I appreciate your time and the effort you put into the work you accomplished with Jen on this project, and for helping us clarify the aspects of the role that need to sit with the administrator. I'm glad that you've decided to stand for re-election and hope you enjoy your new role.

## *Helen Thomas (Training, Pre-Accreditation & Institute Engagement)*

Thank you Helen for the passion you have brought into your role during the last 4 years, and especially the fantastic student day that you co-designed and facilitated with Dawn last year. I hope you also realise that the generosity of the welcome that you give to all of us by hosting our whole day meetings in your home provides the fertile ground from which we meet and work. Even when you were ill in bed, and couldn't attend, you opened your house to the 9 of us for the whole day. I'm thrilled that you're offering to take on the Vice Chair position, and know that you'll support the next Trainee rep as they start.

### ***James Bailey (Publicity Officer)***

Thank you James for your contribution during the past 4 years in publicising UKAGP and initiating a social media presence. I have valued your often different perspective and regular questioning; keeping us on our toes about what we're doing and where we're heading. Thank you also for taking on the additional role of being on the COG for the past few conferences.

### ***Vicky Eugenio (Ordinary Member)***

Thank you Vicky for your new member energy over the past 2 years – it's such an important role and often underestimated! We all appreciated your willingness to jump in by taking on facilitating the Community Day last year – what a success that was! I know your involvement in the COG has been much appreciated, and whatever position you take on next year I'm sure you will be a safe pair of hands. Delicious cake making too!

### ***Adam Smith (Secretary)***

Thank you Adam for going over and above your duties as a Secretary. It's hard to believe you've only been on the OC for 2 years; I think that you've done more than 4 years' work in that time! You have brought your professional expertise with such generosity of your time and attention to detail in this role and that of your role supporting Liz in the COGs. I have been able to rely on your efficiency, knowing that you're on top of dates and tasks, and have felt so supported by you. It's been incredibly satisfying to meet in person and focus on tasks together. I have valued all the extra documents you've produced and been working on – and also hope you initiate some working groups and delegate/oversee some projects – in the interest of not frightening anyone else away from standing for Secretary in the future!

### ***Belinda Harris (Vice Chair)***

Thank you Belinda for agreeing to be nominated directly into the Vice Chair role last year, and for stepping so wholeheartedly into the group - it seems like you have been with us much longer! I have so enjoyed your presence at our meetings; a new voice and perspective, new skills and views and an ability to bring a touch of humour and lightness to heavy discussions. I look forward to introducing you as the new NOGT Representative at the EAGT meetings in September, and know that you will bring your extensive experience in and passion for education, research and leadership and your creative, experiential approach into both that role and that of Chair.

### ***Jen Clayton (Administrator)***

Jen has transformed our organisation over the past two years by being at the centre of our wheel in her part time post as Administrator. Her passion for Gestalt and IT expertise have resulted in a professionalised creative newsletter, which has attracted some engaging articles, and high readership figures.

Thank you Jen for your enthusiasm, reliability and commitment to the work, despite health issues at times. We have all appreciated your patience with us, and your light-hearted engagement. It has been a real pleasure for me to have our weekly check ins when you update me where you are and we discuss priorities for the week ahead. I know I can speak for the whole committee when I say she will be sorely missed and it will be a challenge to find someone to follow her. We wish you well as you continue on your Gestalt training journey and keep our fingers crossed that you will one day be nominated to join the OC!

### ***UKAGP Members***

If you're interested in working with a group of colleagues passionate about Gestalt and facilitating community, being challenged by the balancing act of time, energy and commitments, having the opportunity to process group dynamics and facing old patterns, getting the support to risk and experiment with new experiences, then I suggest you ask someone to nominate you for the UKAGP Organising Committee!

# Chair's Report, June 2017 - Overview

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- *Voicing and representing the interests of the UK Gestalt community in the wider field*
- *Supporting education, research, clinical expertise and professional development*
- *Promoting training and cooperative exchange between practitioners and institutions*

## Developments in the Organising Committee

### *Subscription to a Virtual Office (G Suite):*

- providing ukagp.org email accounts so that the contact address remains the same when a committee member steps down, and the archive is not lost
- giving us the ability to work on documents together in real time
- keeping the organisation's documents filed in an archive easily accessible and retrievable when needed

### *Working Together*

- Individual and small groups via email, phone, zoom, face to face
- Monthly Check-ins – 1 hour via Zoom
- Full Meetings – 3 to 4 times a year, from 10am to 6pm on Saturdays; group process, discussions, business agenda and shared lunch
- Committee meetings have been designed and structured to encompass the expression of our need as a group to allow issues to emerge, to mull over and engage with one another and not to rush into action, instead to provide space for a ground to our action and time to reflect and disengage at the end of our day together.
- Succession planning proposals – agreeing the Chair a year in advance to be Vice Chair

### *Creating new roles:*

- Conference Organiser – Chairing a separate Conference Organising Group (COG)
- Vice Chair – to support the Chair and be in reserve as representative to EAGT meetings and as preparation a year in advance to taking on Chair role

### *Membership Working Group*

- **Set up:** partly in response to: requests from members about the process of gaining individual EAGT membership, the impact of our website upgrade, and the implications of the referendum result.
- **Role:** To address needs of membership admin and management within website upgrade; to maintain income from existing members in transition to new website membership renewal process; to increase our membership numbers; to clarify and simplify the process for our members to join EAGT and ensure NOGT compliance.
- **Impact of Website Upgrade:** changes from Paypal to website based payment; requiring members to update their profiles; checking and approving accreditation status as documents are submitted online; keeping track of members who have not renewed membership after automatic Paypal process cancelled; responding to queries from members about website and membership status.
- **NOGT Compliance:** During the process of preparing for reaccreditation with EAGT, we acknowledged that we award Full Membership to those accredited with a professional organisation listed in the Appendix of our Constitution, and that not all of these meet the EAGT criteria for Full Membership. Therefore we need to review our membership categories and the process by which we ensure our full members meet the EAGT criteria.
- **Joint Membership:** If the EAGT agree to a contract whereby individual members of UKAGP can decide whether or not they want joint membership, then a working party would be formed between the two organisations to agree the details.

## Conferences

### *Conference Organising Group – initiated 2014, flourishing well!*

- Chaired by Conference Organiser in OC and created anew each year with different members
- Inviting new energy and ideas and a way to get involved
- Collaborating with other organisations
- Freeing up the OC to continue with other work

### *Last Year's Conferences*

In June 2016 we held two separate day events at Colet House in West London, both had smaller numbers than

residential conferences, and with that brings opportunity for a more intimate meeting.

- 'Who's in Your Tribe: An experiential exploration into being a Gestaltist in Training' – for students. This was reported as a meaningful and energising experience for those who attended. One inspiration it led to was a successful Kickstarter campaign attracting international support for a web-based Gestalt journal for new Gestalt writing '[Gestalt New Voices](#)' – a place to experiment and dialogue, and to develop the support for essays to become published articles.
- A Community Day for all, offering an emergent space to meet creatively without speakers. It was a day of dialogue, contact and discussion, voicing differences. It supported the AGM that followed. In feedback, 85% said they had attended in order to connect with the community.

## Administration and Website

### *Administrator Post*

- Jen Clayton: February 2015 to date

Jen has continued to play a significant role in the development of our Association. Jen has supported the website upgrade, the membership working group, produced the newsletters, dealt with payment and database issues; supported the OC, attended our meetings and has offered a warm and welcoming response to enquiries from members. We are very sorry that she is standing down this summer, and appreciate that she will be available to do a thorough hand-over to the new person.

- Recruitment Call – A new part-time Administrator is needed from Summer 2017

### *Voluntary Website Content Manager Role – Sylvia Parry beginning Summer 2017*

This is a new voluntary role designed in part by Jen, as she identified tasks that do not come under the administrator role but that she has been working on due to her technical expertise. We thank Sylvia for applying for the role and warmly welcome her.

## Consultative Group

### *Initiation and Vision*

- At the 2015 Conference we initiated and formed a new group; the UKAGP Consultative Group made up of delegates from 14 Gestalt organisations in the UK.

The vision behind this group was to build bridges. Creating a space for dialogue and collaborative cooperation between all the different Gestalt communities in the UK; to support the legitimacy of the UKAGP Representative to EAGT in his/her role; to increase communication and connection between the delegates' organisations and the wider international Gestalt communities represented in EAGT; and fulfilling the role of UKAGP as an umbrella organisation.

### *Meetings*

- We have met twice a year in between the two EAGT meetings. These have been rich and inspiring for all attendees. It is a challenge to find dates when everyone can attend, and we may well experiment with some additional virtual meetings in the future. Meeting notes are available to read on the website.

## EAGT

### *EAGT – To Join or Not to Join?*

- Belinda and I wrote an opinion piece, which received positive feedback and support from members. I read some excerpts to the General Board in March this year, requesting that they consider creating a feasible Joint Membership contract with the UKAGP in support of strengthening connections after the referendum. This was met with overwhelming support and led to a passionate and heartfelt energetic discussion with many members sharing their views and experiences from their own country's experiences and there was a commitment to feed this directly into the EAGT Strategic Policy Plan.

### *Individual Membership of EAGT*

- We are currently in discussion with the Executive Committee about the practicalities of setting up a Joint Membership Contract as a more direct and economical way for UKAGP members to get individual membership with EAGT.

### *Newsletters*

- EAGT newsletters are available on the Membership Services tab under downloads at: [www.eagt.org](http://www.eagt.org)