

Minutes of NECTER / RCE North East AGM 2013
Room G.27, Devonshire Building, Newcastle University
4pm, 17th October 2013

Apologies:

Moira Conway, Ian Ground, Ben Holden, Gareth Kane, William Mortada, Jackie Scollen, David Parsons, Sharon Paterson, Julie Ward

Present:

Ed Byers (**EB**), Stephen Clough (**SC**), Dolan Conway (**DC**) Caspar Hewett (**CH**), David Goodacre (**DG**), Vidya Sarangapani (**VS**), Hari Shukla (**HS**), Frances Sule [formerly Enearu] (**FS**), Angela Waldock (**AW**), Oscar Watson (**OW**)

Minutes

The Chair, HS opened the meeting by welcoming new members SC and AW. All those present introduced themselves.

Project reports

Director CH was pleased to announce 14 active projects were reported to the RCE Global Service Centre in the annual report. Special thanks were due to FS for her invaluable help in putting together the reports and submitting them to the online portal.

The Chair invited project representatives to report to the members on the last year's activities.

EB reported for Cinema Politica Newcastle (CPN). In addition to main report (in Appendix 1) EB added that CPN are considering moving to a new model, moving away from the CP library to a more ad hoc approach showing other films since they are often approached by film-makers and others with suggestions for screenings. CPN are keen to remain members of NECTER. They have 2 more screenings this year: "Edible City" and "You'll Never Bike Alone."

DG for Great North Festival: Held three debate-based events so far this year, with three to come and the 'My North East' exhibition in November.

VS on behalf of Saarang (two projects): 1) International learning with schools pilot project 2) project working with artists from non-Asian backgrounds doing work inspired by Asian art.

CH reported on two projects on behalf of *The Great Debate*: 1) the great northern debate 2) great northern youth voices. See Appendix 1 for details.

FS reported on behalf of the eight projects for which representatives were unable to attend the meeting: Colour Your Life with Arts on Prescription and Drama in the Dale (Jack Drum Arts); Explore (North East Centre for Lifelong Learning); HYPODS (NECTER); North East Calendar (North East Film Archive); Our Food (Our Food); The Academy for Possible Futures (Sentient Cities). A complete set of these reports is now available on the website and can be obtained on request.

VS noted that her report on behalf of Saarang had not been very specific about the two active projects. CH indicated that the Global RCE Service Centre have extended the deadline for finishing the annual report, so it would still be possible to submit information on Saarang's 2 projects. ACTION: VS and FS to liaise and submit the additional information to the online portal.

HS emphasised the impressive breadth of what we presented this year and proposed that we produce a brochure report on projects showing the diversity of our work. This would be a good way of promoting the RCE and growing its membership.

Vote on committee membership

Gareth Kane had agreed to stand for election onto the committee. He was proposed by CH and seconded by BH. In his absence FS read out the information given in Appendix 2. **Gareth Kane was elected onto the committee by unanimous vote.**

SC, who was co-opted onto the committee in August 2013, was invited by HS to make his case to take over the role of NECTER Director. SC set out his experience and how he felt it was relevant to the work of NECTER and the RCE North East network, drawing attention to areas he felt were of particular importance including lifelong learning, education research entrepreneurship, social justice, Global Security, partnerships, senior management experience, education policy (including advising MPs) and a strong interest in helping people. He was particularly enthusiastic about NECTER's focus on lifelong learning and on those Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET) and presented some ideas on what he would like to do in these areas. **Stephen Clough was elected to the post of Director of NECTER by unanimous vote.**

Oliver Moss had, with regret, resigned as NECTER secretary earlier in the year. CH asked if anyone present would be willing to stand. To the delight of the members FS volunteered. **Frances Sule was elected to the post of Secretary of NECTER by unanimous vote.**

Finances

The treasurer, DG, submitted his finance report for the year. Total income was £10,000 from Awards for All for HYPODS. Total expenditure to date: £9,009.48.

The meeting agreed to set an accounting period for NECTER to run from beginning of September to end of August each year. This would fit well with the academic year and the timing of the AGM in October each year.

CH requested that it should be noted for the record that he earned £1750 in the course of delivery of HYPODS for his contribution to workshops and to creation and maintenance of web materials for the project (web pages, videos etc.). This figure constitutes his total income earned through his role as Director of NECTER over a two year period.

Meeting dates for next year

The following dates were agreed for quarterly meetings over the next year:

15th January 2014

10th April 2014

8th July 2014

16th October 2014

Self-evaluation of NECTER / RCE North East

CH reported that UNU IAS had invited the RCEs to carry out a self-evaluation and had asked the following on the online portal:

“Has your RCE undertaken any self-evaluation process over the course of this year? If yes, please briefly describe: (a) Criteria/indicators used to assess aspects of RCE work/project; (b) Successes of RCE and lessons learned; and (c) Challenges experiences.”

The timescale for responding to this is very short in that the original deadline was 14th October, although correspondence with the Global RCE Service Centre had indicated that this had been extended by 2 weeks. CH asked whether the members thought we were in a position to submit anything. It was agreed that a full self-evaluation would be a very valuable exercise over the course of the next year, but that this was not feasible in the timescale. For now it would be useful and appropriate to submit some reflections on the current state of play. SC agreed to put something

together using material from the director's annual report in collaboration with CH which they will then circulate to the members for comment.

Reporting to UNU IAS

CH had included in the report to the Global RCE Service Centre some candid reflections on the last year (see Appendix 3). He noted that other RCEs and the Global RCE Service Centre had shown interest in some of the problems RCE North East had experienced since the formation of NECTER and how we had dealt with them. He added that some other RCEs had shown great support for RCE North East, mentioning in particular his appreciation of the support and interest of colleagues from RCE Rhine Meuse.

UN Decade of ESD Final Report

CH reminded the members about the invitation circulated by email to contribute to the Final Report on the UN Decade of ESD. The report is due by 31 October 2013. OW suggested that an email be circulated to remind members. ACTION: CH to circulate reminder.

Project proposals

SC proposed a project for NEET young people. ACTION: CH to send SC proforma for him to fill on for this project.

Renewing domain

The web domain rcenortheast.eu on which NECTER / RCE website resides is up for renewal. At present the domain and hosting are still paid for personally by CH. EB pointed out that Cinema Politica Newcastle had pledged £10 towards this cost last year which they had not paid and gave £10 to CH in cash for this. OW suggested that NECTER should ask its members for subscription/donation to cover web and other costs. DG proposed that this year's renewal be paid from the HYPODS budget since the website was a key tool in disseminating project information and publishing videos. This was agreed by all present.

Thanks

HS thanked CH for the work he has done over the last two years in keeping RCE North East going and in bringing us to such a positive juncture.

CH wanted to thank everyone for their support in that time, in particular the current committee. Special thanks were also due to Lucy Latham (former treasurer) and Oliver Moss (former secretary) for their invaluable help and support in NECTER's first year of existence.

Appendix 1: Summary of project reports

The Academy for Possible Futures

The Academy for Possible Futures is a practice based learning environment which will attempt to rejuvenate the local economy through the creation of the kinds of jobs which will help bring us closer to an ecologically sustainable culture. These jobs will include , micro renewable engineering projects, ecological design and manufacture (beginning with aquaponics greenhouses), film making workshops and public debates, web-development and digital design (creation of ecological design tools), scientific research and arts collaborations, educational workshops and arts interventions. The workshop will be home to the Sentient Cities project whilst being open to other organisations and individuals, beginning locally but with a view to becoming an international place of learning for an ecologically sustainable future.

Project Status: On Going

Brighter Futures Together

Sustainable Communities Initiative, Brighter Futures Together Toolkit [The project was known as the Sustainable Communities Initiative North East until July 2012]

The project provides factsheets on projects that local groups have developed and completed. It is specifically a “We can do it, so can you.” piece of work targeting determined groups that just need to know that others have been where they want to go. Please see fact sheets at www.brighterfuturestogether.co.uk for details on each project.

Project Status: On Going

Activities between October 2012 and October 2013 included: 5 dissemination workshops; 2 displays at local conferences; and 1 display at a local sustainability week exhibition

Cinema Politica Newcastle

Website - <http://www.cinemapolitica.org/newcastle>

Cinema Politica Newcastle’s activities continue to bring documentary and debate to Newcastle upon Tyne. Since January, 8 films have been screened and a number of speakers have come to stimulate debate with the audience after the documentaries. Speakers have ranged from academics to activists, and has included a skype discussion which was a first for CPN. Audience numbers continue to average at about 30 per screening, which makes for a good dynamic in the discussions. Documentaries have included topics such as oil pollution in Ecuador, eco-terrorism and deforestation in the US, carbon credits trading, beekeeping, whilst future films will include critical mass cycling and urban food growing. Finances are stable, with pretty much the only expenditure relating to payment of the screening licence fees to Cinema Politica. There has also been cooperation with NReS who have helped with speakers and publicity. CPN intends to continue next year, although may change to a slightly different (and more affordable) model of the way screening licences are procured. Screenings are always free and open to the public, although we encourage donations of £1 from the audience. Screenings continue to occur at the Culture Lab, which provides high quality audio-visual equipment and space for use. Our relations remain strong and there is no charge for our use of these facilities. CPN remains committed to operating as a partner of NECTER, in

jointly support the aims of delivering high quality and accessible opportunities for learning and disseminating information on sustainable development to the public.

Project Status: On Going

Colour Your Life with Arts on Prescription

Jack Drum Arts runs the Durham Dales Arts on Prescription hub. As part of the Lindisfarne Gospels Festival in 2013 clients in the Dales area enjoyed themed projects inspired by the heritage, history and artwork surrounding the story of St Cuthbert and the other Northern Saints. Groups went on trips to heritage sites and enjoyed talks by experts from a number of disciplines. Together with their artist/tutors they then collaborated on a range of exciting projects for a group exhibition as well as making films, animations and sound art. One group of clients studied old English poetry for a public reading in Escomb Saxon Church. Working with professional artists, as opposed to art therapists, elevates the work and affords the clients a feel-good factor when they witness the results of their efforts being shared, appreciated and enjoyed with the wider public.

Promo film – <https://vimeo.com/72759470#>

Project Status: On Going

Drama in the Dale

After the initial production was finished the participants wanted to do more and so a community play association was constituted with a committee of local people who have continued to meet and generate new projects with the help of a Big Lottery social enterprise grant. In June 2013 the group recreated “The Bonny Moorhen” as an outdoor promenade production on-site at Killhope Lead Mining Museum as part of Festival of the North East. Other projects have taken place in partnership with Beamish Open Air Museum, Bowburn Banner Group, Heritage Open Days and Escomb Saxon Church. The group has just been selected to work with the Royal Shakespeare Company as part of the Open Stages project. It is interesting to note that many of the participants in “The Bonny Moorhen” were carers or people with mental health problems, including a military veteran suffering PTSD. Two participants provided case studies for the Harvard Educational Review in respect of ‘arts – opening the doors to a wider world’.

Project Status: On Going

Explore

After four years of successful community engagement, the Explore programme at Sunderland University’s North East Centre for Lifelong Learning has come to an end.

Conceived as a creative response to the withdrawal of funding for adult learning under successive UK governments the programme operated as a ‘gym for the mind’ in which a single subscription payment gave access to an entire programme of more than 1600 contact hours across four subjects and thirty JACS subjects taking place morning, afternoon and evening 6 days a week. About a thousand people joined the programme with around 450 members at any one time.

The Explore programme ran for 4 years, running 4,500 individually scheduled sessions, in galleries, theatres and arts centres across Newcastle upon Tyne. During this time, there were nearly 30,000 attendances on “open” sessions and 37,000 attendances on bookable course sessions. In 2010, the

scheme won the Universities Association for Lifelong Learning (UALL) 2010 National Award for “creativity, innovation, impact and transferability.”

Explore was a unique experiment in lifelong learning that was loved by its members and tutors and received national acclaim. Sadly, due to financial pressure on the host university, and the additional loss of funding for public language programmes, the Explore programme closed in September 2013 and with it the North East Centre for Lifelong Learning.

But the idea of Explore – of learning for its own sake, open to all and funded by subscription - may yet live again. With the in kind support of Sunderland University and staff members of NECLL, former students members of Explore have set up a Community Enterprise Company to run Explore as a social enterprise. A new, if much reduced programme, begins in October, 2014. If it succeeds, this will be the first time in the UK that a community education programme has transferred from the HE to the third sector. Watch this space!

Project Status: Complete

The Great North Festival

The Great North Festival Company launched its campaign for a Great North Festival to celebrate innovation and discover hope within the North East, so far with three debates; the first was in Newcastle 'Embracing the Future' with contributions from a Newcastle MP, an immigrant from a Newcastle refugee service, a manager of an organization enabling young people to realize their dreams and a university student imagining a future for the North East. The second was on renewable energy at the country home of the great North East entrepreneur William Armstrong, Cragside in Rothbury. An evening at the university heard a re-enactment of Armstrong's great 1963 speech on the future of industry. Finally a third debate explored the spirit and underlying values which inform our culture. All this to prepare for a larger event in the future. As one person at the Cragside debate advised us. 'Keep on innovating.' We intend to.

Website: <http://greatnorthfestival.com>

Project Status: On Going

great northern youth voices

great northern youth voices is a citizen journalism project providing documentary-making training for young people currently Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET). It is a project for the YouTube generation focused on giving a voice to young people.

The project started in 2011 when The Great Debate won a successful bid to Big Lottery Fund's Awards for All scheme which provided the funds for professional quality film-making kit and a series of pilot workshops. This project established a film-production team and made a series of short documentaries. At the close of 2011 we obtained follow-on funds from The Dulverton Trust which enabled us to continue to offer film workshops to disadvantaged young people into early 2012. Thanks to NECTER our team were able to continue to provide training workshops through the HYPODS project, which ran from March to September 2013. Now we are delighted to announce a further grant from Big Lottery Fund which will allow us to resume our programme in late 2013 – watch this space for dates and details.

Following on from NECTER / RCE North East's highly successful HYPODS (Hearing Young People on Development and Sustainability) project in 2013 and the previous great northern youth voices series held in 2011-12, The Great Debate has obtained funds for a new series of workshops starting in Autumn 2013. Recruitment for the latest round is starting October 2013.

Website: <http://thegreatdebate.org.uk/YouthVoices.html>

Project Status: On Going

HYPODS Citizen Journalism: Hearing Young People on Development and Sustainability

This project provided young people with the opportunity to learn about documentary-making and reportage, whether interested in camera work, sound, editing or presenting. A series of FREE workshops were held starting in March 2013. The programme focused on developing the voice of participants. Sessions were organised in progressive stages to build confidence and skills within a supportive team environment. The group was mentored by media professionals and functioned as a documentary 'learning' crew – sharing knowledge and exploring camera, audio, research, interview and presenter roles.

Early sessions developed basic camera, composition and communication competencies. Mid-stages were practice-based and built team awareness, social and functional skills. Later sessions introduced edit decisions for Internet publication. Multi camera event filming required high-level teamwork, which stimulated cooperative behaviour and collective standards

This unique educational framework introduced participants to a range of debates with subjects including community issues, art and politics, energy and the work of Tyneside engineer William Armstrong. The group devised their own questions and solicited opinions from community members, leaders, activists and the general public.

The participatory approach places emphasis on direct engagement and equality of voice. Interviews posted on the Internet form a body of work that is accessible to the group and also the wider public. The work is linked to community and education sites that support open public networks and inclusive participation.

HYPODS was organised by NECTER / RCE North East in partnership with Great North Festival, The Great Debate and Lodestone Studios, and provided documentary-making training for young people currently Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET).

As of October 2013, work is in the final stages and will soon be available on the NECTER site. Some HYPODCasts generated during the project can be viewed at <http://www.thegreatdebate.org.uk/HYPODCasts01.html>

Project Status: Complete

Our Food

Our Food is a new initiative that is working towards allowing excluded voices more say in the future of food and farming. Our Food is a collaboration convened by SPEAKS, with a range of other partners from universities, food producers, retailers, government and community organisations.

Our Food has demonstrated something that many commentators had doubted was possible. Working with members of the Co-op and other community groups, we have built a robust forum for dialogue and mutual learning with professional researchers, ourselves included, on the future of food and farming. We have brought people together into an informed dialogue, drawing on perspectives on the food system from the UK and abroad. A range of writers, artists and performers have contributed their imagination and skills to enhance our ability to transform what were previously arenas of conflict into sites of collaboration. We are now planning how we can scale up our activities to bring about a transformation on a wider geographical scale and across multiple sectors. The full report is at: <http://ourfooduk.files.wordpress.com/2013/09/our-food-final-report-v2.pdf>

Project Status: On Going

Saarang

Saarang is a creative cultural company based in the North East of England. We currently work in the areas of cross-cultural understanding, international learning and empowering artistic excellence. We develop specific projects to address our focus areas by engaging extensively with the education sector in the North East. We also work with artists from culturally diverse backgrounds to showcase their work in world-class venues and to raise their profile nationally and internationally. The 2011 census showed that around 2.5 million people lived in the North East of England. Around 4.6% of that population were from the BME communities or diverse ethnic populations. The North East is the least diverse area in Britain. The region also faces various other challenges such as high social deprivation and support for various right wing political parties which has led to the prevalence of ignorance and misconceptions about members of diverse ethnic communities. Saarang is one of the many organisations that helps young people to understand and accept that people are different and it's ok to be different.

Saarang was launched in 2010 and all our projects are long-term on-going projects. For more information please do visit www.saarang.org.uk

Project Status: On Going

Social Innovation Fund

Sustainable Communities Initiative, NESTA Social Innovation Fund

The project proposes engaging with 50 rural community buildings across the North East of England. It is a pilot project using community buildings as a catalyst to tackle intractable problems in the rural community:

- marginalised groups: aged, infirm, disabled, young, isolated
- fuel poverty especially in relation to community building use
- exploring community solutions to the lack of local public service delivery

All initial work will focus on the Community Building and seek to use energy efficiency measures as a catalyst to demonstrate revenue saving possibilities. This will produce a warmer and more comfortable hub facility in each community. We will then work with the building management and users to demonstrate the benefits of energy efficiency in a practical way: supporting local community building activities and delivering a range of local taster courses and relevant workshops.

The aim being to widen the community building user circle, to make the circle aware of its need for inclusivity and as a hub for social justice.

Project Status in October 2013: In planning

For more information please contact: Ross Weddle, Chair, Sustainable Communities Initiative, 07758 800650

the**great**northern**debate**

the**great**northern**debate** is an Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) project focused on a variety of topics including: Energy generation, Developing Countries, Climate Change, Sustainable Education (Education, education, education?) and 'What does sustainability mean? The project involves a range of activities including public discussions and workshops, debating workshops for schools and in universities, public engagement training for engineers and film-making training for young people not in employment, education or training. The project is run by The Great Debate, a not for profit community organisation dedicated to sustaining a space for public debate in the North East of England. Website: <http://thegreatdebate.org.uk/EfSD1.html>

In the last year we have worked in partnership with NECTER / RCE North East, Newcastle University, Northumbria University, Sunderland University, North East Centre for Lifelong Learning, Economic and Social Research Council, Newcastle Institute for Social Renewal, Great North Festival and Festival of the North East to deliver a diverse series of events for general audiences including: Whatever Happened to Equality? – a day of debate and documentary-making held in November 2012 which took a critical look at how the ideal of equality has been eroded in recent times; The Science of Humanity – a series of seven evening seminars for adults between January and March 2013 exploring how successful the natural and social sciences have been at telling us about what we are and our place in (or out of) nature; Media, Culture, Voice: Tackling inequality and marginalisation – a debate held in July asking what roles media and culture can and should play in tackling inequality and enabling the marginalised to 'speak'; and three discussion-based events in partnership with Great North Festival: Embracing the Future in April, Water and wind – Can renewables deliver? in June and Northumbria Stories in September.

Project Status: On Going

The North East Calendar

The North East Calendar is a great new way to share gems from our regional film collections with online audiences. Each week, the North East Calendar brings sixty seconds of archive film footage to give visitors to your website a flavour of the people, places, traditions and events that make the North East so special. The North East Calendar can be easily incorporated into any website by means of a simple piece of HTML code, free of charge. So whether it's a grand opening, a royal visit, or just a fun day out for the family on the beach at Redcar, Tynemouth or Bamburgh, the North East Film Archive have selected a variety of film clips from our collections that online visitors can look back on and enjoy the great memories, every week of the year. The calendar includes footage from around the whole of the North East.

The project is run by North East Film Archive

Contact: David Parsons, Film Archive Co-Ordinator (D.Parsons@tees.ac.uk)

The Calendar was launched in February 2013 and has proven popular across a number of regional website and can be viewed at our hub site as well as at:

- <http://www.kathryntickell.com/home>
- <http://tyneandwear.sky.com/news>
- <http://www.gazettelive.co.uk/news/nostalgia/>

Project Status: On Going

The World at 7 Billion: Re-Thinking Development

The Society is best known for organising the International Development Conference which follows similar events in Oxford, Leeds, Cambridge and Warwick. The conferences are student led events which aim to educate, inspire and raise awareness about global development issues by bringing together a diverse audience; students, academics, field practitioners, global organisations, politicians and journalists. As a society we aim to raise awareness about other issues around the world. We take parts in campaigns, rallies and hope to keep international issues on the student agenda.

The 2012 conference was concerned with the world's population hitting 7 billion; human development is being hailed as both the cause and the solution to our population crisis. Should we be celebrating the successes of development or should we be concerned about rising inequalities across the world?

Website: <http://www.idcnewcastle.com/2012-conference—the-world-at-7-billion.html>

Project Status: Complete

Appendix 2: Gareth Kane

Gareth Kane is an internationally recognised environmental and sustainability expert, specialising in embedding sustainability principles into industry, the public sector and social enterprises. In the last fifteen years he has worked with hundreds of organisations to improve their environmental and economic performance, diverting 100,000s tonnes of waste from landfill and cutting 10,000s tonnes of carbon emissions. He has trained more than 3,000 people in sustainability issues. His clients include the BBC, BAE Systems plc, Johnson Matthey plc, the National Health Service, East Coast Mainline and Viridor.

Gareth is an experienced project manager, an in-demand speaker and a highly effective and trained facilitator of group problem solving. He appears regularly as a media pundit on sustainability issues on, for example, the BBC Six O'Clock News, Countryfile, The Politics Show and local radio. In 2008 The Journal newspaper named Gareth as a 'Rising Star, Future Leader' for his work on sustainability. In June 2010 his company, Terra Infirma Ltd, was praised in the press by UK Environment Secretary, the Rt Hon Caroline Spelman MP, and in 2013 it was shortlisted for "Green Consultancy of the Year" in the Business Green Leaders Awards.

Gareth has been an elected member of Newcastle City Council since 2004. Between 2004-2011 he served as deputy to the Cabinet member for Environment and Sustainability and was instrumental in the city being designated the UK's most sustainable in 2009 and 2010 by Forum for the Future. He is currently opposition spokesman on green issues.

Gareth's first book, The Three Secrets of Green Business, was published by Earthscan in December 2009. His second, The Green Executive, was published in 2011, also by Earthscan. His ebook Green Jujitsu was published by Dō Sustainability in 2012, and his second, Building a Sustainable Supply Chain, is due out in winter 2013.

Appendix 3: Director's Report to UNU IAS

The second year of NECTER's existence has been one of change. In the first part of the year we were still beset with difficulties, so much so that in February an emergency meeting of the committee was held instead of a General Meeting. Northumbria University had received correspondence from RCE North East's former co-ordinator and a colleague from Newcastle College which had resulted in Northumbria University deciding not to host the NECTER General Meeting. It was not clear what had been in this correspondence since the committee were not party to it, but it is known that some of the correspondence from our Newcastle College colleague had been mistakenly interpreted by Northumbria University as an official complaint from Newcastle College about the University hosting the meeting. There was also much confusion over correspondence selectively circulated by the same individuals suggesting that the Global RCE Service Centre at UNU IAS had concerns about NECTER and making a variety of accusations against the committee including fraud. After investigation by the committee it transpired that the Service Centre had expressed no concerns and the committee were unable to ascertain on what basis accusations against it had been made. The main concern was that relationships with Northumbria University and Newcastle College may have been damaged. Newcastle College did not reply to correspondence from the Chair and Treasurer, so it is still unclear where we stand with the college.

We had one other major piece of bad news this year in that that Sunderland University took the decision to close one of our partner organisations the North East Centre for Lifelong Learning (NECLL), which ran our flagship project 'Explore'. Sunderland University announced: 'Despite the best efforts of all the staff at the NECLL the changes to the higher education funding regime led to the centre becoming financially unviable.'

However, on a much more positive note other activities were progressing well as 2013 advanced: The Great North Festival were up and running with their first round of events; NECTER had begun delivering its first grant (all previous grants had been held by partners) for HYPODS (Hearing Young People On Development and Sustainability), a film-making training programme for young people not in employment, education or training; The Great Debate had won three public engagement grants; and Northumbria University had made a point of inviting NECTER to jointly host a public flagship event (with Vinod Pavarala, UNESCO Chair on Community Media, University of Hyderabad) - a signal that our relationship was as strong as ever after the confusion of the early part of the year. As this more positive period advanced, new relationships were formed which potentially will be the foundation for a new era for NECTER and RCE North East – some major announcements are expected soon regarding our leadership and direction. We are excited about the future and certain that the hard work of the last two years will ensure the sustainability of RCE North East.