



Advisory Council for the Education of Romany and other Travellers

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DRAFT Minutes of 2025 Annual General Meeting

Thursday October 2nd 2025 at 17.30 on-line

Present

Anne Walker, Margaret Wood, Marie Bowers, Esther Stubbs, Candace Thomas, Valdemar Kalinin, Thomas Acton, Colin Clark, Sally Barter, Hazel Marsh

Apologies

Aluna Lepadatu, Brian Foster, Chelsea McDonagh, Lisa Smith, Jo McShane, Stephen Cartwright

Welcomes

Candace welcomed everyone to the AGM.

Minutes of 2024 AGM

Approved. Candace and Marie will sign them off.

Finance Report

Anne presented the [report for the year 2024-2025](#). Over the past year income has met day to day expenditure and our balance is very similar to last year's. If we are running a conference in the future we will need to plan carefully for meeting significantly increased costs.

Anne explained that while she would like to remain on the EC, she would like to stand down as treasurer now or soon and would be pleased to support a new treasurer. The meeting thanked Anne and approved the finance report.

Chair's Report

Candace presented a very positive [report of ACERT's activities and achievements](#). She highlighted restructuring of the organization including new working groups focused on conference planning, education, higher education, youth projects and community engagement. Candace also mentioned the launch of a new podcast funded by Moving for Change. The Education Network continued to meet six times a year, with various speakers presenting on topics such as Gypsy, Roma, Traveller History Month and Sex and Relationships Education in schools. ACERT took its seat on the Stakeholder group and applied for new grants. She explained that in the coming year it is hoped that the different teams within the EC will be working together in between the monthly EC meetings.

The meeting approved the report.

Election of Officers and Executive Committee (EC) for 2025 to 2026

Candace explained that Lisa wishes to stand down as co-chair because of other commitments. She very much wishes to maintain her involvement with ACERT and would be happy to remain as an ordinary EC member.

The following were elected, all unopposed.

Position	Name	Proposer	Second
Co-Chairs	Candace Thomas Marie Bowers	Margaret Wood Candace Thomas	Colin Clark Colin Clark
Vice Chairs	Aluna Lepadatu Esther Stubbs	Margaret Wood Marie Bowers	Candace Thomas Colin Clark
Treasurer/Membership	Anne Walker	Margaret Wood	Esther Stubbs
Co-Treasurer	Colin Clark	Marie Bowers	Candace Thomas
Committee (up to 10)			
1	Hazel Marsh	Colin Clark	Margaret Wood
2	Thomas Acton	Colin Clark	Esther Stubbs
3	Sally Barter	Margaret Wood	Marie Bowers
4	Lisa Smith	Margaret Wood	Marie Bowers.
5	Chelsea McDonagh	Candace Thomas	Colin Clark
6	Brian Foster	Colin Clark	Thomas Acton
7	Margaret Wood	Thomas Acton	Marie Bowers

Colin agreed to act as Co-Treasurer alongside Anne, who may step down later for health reasons.

For the moment nobody is leading on Membership.

While Candace is away on maternity leave Esther will act up as co-chair alongside Marie.

Esther will represent ACERT on the DfE Stakeholder group.

Planning for the Future:

Candace gave a very [optimistic and inspiring presentation](#) with support from other EC members including Margaret, Esther and Marie. She explained ACERT's mission to promote equal access to education for Travelling communities and emphasized the importance of accurate representation and community led initiatives.

Members and supporters need to engage with and share social media content to increase visibility and credibility, particularly for funding applications and to encourage new members and EC members.

Grant applications and fundraising activities need to be prioritised.

ACERT plans to update the ACERT website (Brian and Marie), launch a second series of the podcast, and explore partnerships and fundraising initiatives, including potential crowdfunding campaigns.

A conference will be held in the coming year,

Discussion youth engagement and community involvement

This was a general discussion covering various topics and suggestions including:

- Increasing community engagement via a WhatsApp or perhaps Facebook group where parents could discuss their concerns e.g. Elective Home Education, Vocational and "Other than at School" opportunities post 14. ACERT EC members might take it in turn monitoring and signposting.
- Sharing the positive experiences of many young people and not just the negative experiences of some. We could contact School Pledge secondary schools to reach young people.
- Focusing on youth involvement, perhaps including mentoring and a youth council.
- Taking every opportunity to encourage people to become ACERT members. Co-Chairs could attend Education Network meetings to speak about membership.
- Using Social Media.
- Working with other organisations.

AOB

ACERT needs to change the registered office address. It is currently Margaret's home address.

Esther proposed thanks to Candace for her extremely hard work as Co-Chair and wished her well for her maternity leave,

In turn Candace thanked everybody

The meeting closed at 7.10 p.m.