

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

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19 Bahá 171 B.E.

All believers in the United Kingdom

Dearly loved Friends,

The National Assembly, in collaboration with the Counsellor, has once again been reflecting on the evolving role of Summer Schools in the UK and is delighted to share with you some exciting plans for the coming year.

We are gradually learning what it means to create the kind of spiritually charged environments envisaged by the beloved Guardian, where each school would serve as a powerful centre of Bahá'í learning, fulfilling *“its true function of deepening the knowledge, stimulating the zeal, and fostering the spirit of fellowship among the believers in every Bahá'í community.”* We were struck by how these words so aptly describe the impact of the Youth Conference last year, when so many Bahá'í youth and their friends returned home with a renewed vision, energy and purpose, and a desire to serve the spiritual and social transformation of their communities.

The National Assembly has therefore decided that this year's Summer Schools will apply some of the rich learning from the Youth Conference. This learning includes the importance of the period of preparation beforehand, with collaboration among individuals, cluster agencies, and institutions to ensure that as many participants as possible were given the opportunity and support to attend; the joyful atmosphere that pervaded the conference; and the energy and spirit of service it injected in cluster after cluster when the conference ended.

The learning from the Youth Conference also included the effectiveness of the soul stirring workshop materials, which had been developed at the World Centre. Following this example, the National Spiritual Assembly has decided that the morning workshops for adults and youth in all the Summer Schools will be based around these materials and include the following themes:

- Our place in history and the central role of service in our lives;
- Early adolescence;
- Mutual support and encouragement;
- Community building and building a new civilisation.

The afternoon sessions will offer participants a choice from four courses, with creative elements on the following topics:

- Opening up creative channels: the promotion of the arts at the grassroots;
- Enhancing the devotional character of the community;
- The spiritual education of children;
- Releasing the powers of junior youth.

The Summer Schools are open to everyone who wishes to work for the transformation of themselves and society. The invitation to the Summer Schools will, therefore, be extended not only to Bahá'ís, but also to those of our friends and co-workers from the wider society who are investigating the Faith and may already be engaging in the community-building activities. It is the heartfelt wish of the National Assembly, therefore, that the friends will begin to gather together in their clusters during the weeks leading up to the Summer Schools to consider how to prepare themselves and their friends and co-workers to attend the Summer Schools. It would also be wonderful for the friends to reach out to those members of the Bahá'í community who may not be so actively engaged in activities at present and lovingly encourage them to join them in attending a school.

Details of the UK Summer Schools are included below and the National Assembly is delighted to announce that Mr Hooper Dunbar will be the plenary speaker at both the English schools this year. The National Assembly is confident that if the schools are held in this loving spirit of inclusivity, where we can learn with our friends about releasing the society-building power of the Faith, we will witness profound transformation in ourselves and our communities, and in the process contribute to the vision of Shoghi Effendi that these special days of "*commingling and fellowship*" may be the means of "*bringing forth hitherto unsuspected capacities among the friends*".

Beloved friends, as you set about making your plans for attendance at the Summer Schools, the National Spiritual Assembly hopes that these words will fill your hearts with joy and inspiration: "*The Guardian cherishes the hope that at the termination of your school this summer, every one of the attendants will have derived such mental and spiritual benefits, and acquired such fresh enthusiasm to serve as will enable him, upon his return to his local community, to labour with a determination and vigour that will excite the envy and admiration of his fellow-believers, and stimulate them to great heights of consecration to the service of our beloved Cause.*"

With abiding love,

National Spiritual Assembly

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Patrick O'Mara', with a horizontal line underneath.

Patrick O'Mara,  
Secretary

## SUMMER SCHOOLS IN THE UK, 2014

**Overarching Theme:** *To Serve Humanity*

There will be five Summer Schools in the UK this year: two in England (Wellington and Keele); one in each of Northern Ireland, Scotland, Wales.

### **Northern Ireland Summer School**

**Dates:** 21-27 July

**Venue:** Lorne House, 30 Station Road, Craigavad, Hollywood, Co. Down, BT18 0BP?

**Registrar:** Noni Sanders: [register@summerschool-ni.org.uk](mailto:register@summerschool-ni.org.uk) or 028 87 761457

### **Scottish Summer School**

**Dates:** 2-6 August

**Venue:** Strathallan School, Nr Perth

**Registrar:** TBA

### **English Summer School, Keele University**

**Dates:** 3-8 August

**Venue:** Keele University

**Registrar:** TBA

### **English Summer School, Wellington College**

**Dates:** 10-15 August

**Venue:** Wellington College, Nr Crowthorne, Berkshire

**Registrar:** TBA

### **Wales Summer School**

**Dates:** 21-25 August

**Venue:** Llangrannog (Urdd) Residential Education Centre, Ceredigion (Nr Cardigan Bay)

**Information:** Tracey Roberts-Jones, (Welsh Summer School Coordinator) on 01554 741815 or email [traceyrobertsjones@gmail.com](mailto:traceyrobertsjones@gmail.com)

Further information about each of the schools will be announced in due course by the Residential Schools Committee for England and by the Baha'i Councils for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland respectively.