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Dear Peter

Annual Conference

Thank you for your letter of 12 February. However, I would be grateful if you could stop sending anything addressed to me as Chair of the NEC either to my home address or to my home e-mail. I really don't have the facility to deal with correspondence there, and also am often away for some time which means things are not opened. Anything to me at Victoria Street, by contrast reaches me with far greater efficiency.

To turn to the substance of your letter, extensive consultations took place after the NEC discussion on 31 January (far more, I think, than you will have managed to undertake) and the response to the new format (Saturday to Wednesday) was overwhelmingly popular. There were, understandably, some queries about the practicality of making this change in 2008 rather than 2009, but even these were outweighed by the general support for the earlier time. This came particularly from younger members, and those who find it difficult to take time off work, for whom a day and a half of full conference over the week-end was a bonus. (You will appreciate that I come into one of these categories, but not the other! No prizes for guessing which one.)

There was also support for the increase in the overall length of the conference, which provides for more sessions and thus more input from delegates.

I look forward to seeing you at what will, I am sure, be a highly successful and enjoyable conference in Manchester.

Yours sincerely



Dianne Hayter
Chair, NEC