



Death of English UK Chief Executive

News release

18 November 2015

English UK is very sad to announce that its Chief Executive Eddie Byers passed away suddenly on Tuesday morning. The thoughts of all our staff and board members are with his family and friends: he leaves his wife, Samantha, and children Richard and Iona.

Mr Byers, who was 48, joined us in February 2014, and had been working tirelessly to put in place a long-term strategy for the association which included campaigning, member engagement and lobbying of opinion-formers.

Steve Phillips, chair of English UK, paid tribute to Mr Byers' hard work. He said: "This is an enormous shock to all of us who have worked closely with Eddie. English UK has benefitted enormously from his vision, drive and experience, and the organisation is very different to the one he joined. On a personal level we are all devastated. Eddie's death will touch many English UK members too, as he had made it a mission to meet as many of us as possible, and despite all his other commitments had visited over a third of our member centres."

We are considering ways in which members, colleagues and friends can pay tribute to Eddie. We will update you on developments as soon as we can.

The 2015 member roadshow programme, which was due to visit Bournemouth, London, Edinburgh and Liverpool, has been postponed until 2016.

Mr Byers joined English UK from the British Council where he was managing director of its Programmes & Projects unit, a multi-million pound commercial contracting unit delivering services for clients including the European Union, the UK and Scottish governments, and other international agencies.

He was a director of Education UK, which brought together more than 300 universities and businesses to promote the UK's education offer, and was also responsible for the Erasmus and Comenius scholarship and exchange programmes.

Mr Byers had also spent six years as director of Industry Engagement for VisitScotland, helping to merge 15 area tourist boards, stimulating partnership working and developing increased commercial activity.

Notes to Editors:

1. English UK is the world's leading language teaching association, with around 480 accredited centres in membership. It covers university and further education college language departments, international study centres in independent schools, educational trusts and charities, and private sector colleges. English UK is a UK registered charity (www.englishuk.com).
2. We are sorry, but we cannot provide any more information at present: we will do so as soon as possible and no later than next Wednesday.