



PROFESSIONAL
Social Work

APRIL 2021

Your
Pain is
Our Pain

**Standing together against
violence towards women**

BASW
The professional association for
social work and social workers

ANNUAL MEMBERS' MEETING 2021 A MANIFESTO FOR CHANGE

WEDNESDAY 9 JUNE 12-1.30PM – VIRTUAL MEETING

We will be holding our annual meeting, chaired by the BASW England Committee Chair, Andy Gill

This is your opportunity to hear about some of the work BASW England has led on over the last year and also to share your perspectives and help shape our future activities. This event can contribute to your CPD.

INCLUDES
1.5 HOURS
CPD

This FREE event is open to all BASW England Members
#BASWENG21



BASW ENGLAND STUDENT AND NQSW CONFERENCE 2021

A MANIFESTO FOR CHANGE: HUMAN RIGHTS - PRINCIPLES, ETHICS AND PRACTICE

THURSDAY 10 JUNE – VIRTUAL MEETING

KEYNOTE SPEAKER:

DOMINIC WATTERS – 'ANTI POVERTY & SOCIAL WORK'

Join us for this virtual programme of events which include:

Session 1: Getting your first job in social work workshop

When you have finished university the job hunting starts. This workshop will help equip you with skills and knowledge to overcome those barriers around application forms, being interviewed and getting prepared.

Session 2: Anti-Poverty & Social Work Panel Discussion

Speaker Dominic Watters will focus on the importance of adopting an anti-poverty approach to practice, as well as reflections on his personal and professional experiences.

Session 3: Joint student/England Conference celebration

An evening event of fun, laughter and bingo!

TICKETS

TICKET TYPE	PRICE PER PERSON
MEMBER	FREE
NON-MEMBER	£5.00 INC VAT PER SESSION

INCLUDES
4 HOURS CPD

#BASWSTUDENT21

BASW ENGLAND CONFERENCE 2021

A MANIFESTO FOR CHANGE: HUMAN RIGHTS - PRINCIPLES, ETHICS AND PRACTICE

FRIDAY 11 JUNE – VIRTUAL MEETING

KEYNOTE SPEAKER:

VAVA TAMPA – 'REFLECTIONS ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND ETHICS'

This year's conference will host speakers reflecting on the importance of ensuring human rights and ethics remain central to practice, particularly in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic and the Black Lives Matter movement.

Session 1: "Reflections on Human Rights and Ethics"

Vava Tampa is a social worker specialising in mental health and in health inequalities. Originally from Congo, Vava is also an activist and a freelance writer. Vava will share his experience of caring for victims and survivors of modern-day slavery and the issues of human rights and ethics.

Session 2: Social Work Perspectives on Human Rights, Ethical Challenges and Dilemmas

A panel of speakers from a wide variety of backgrounds and experience will discuss the social work perspective of human rights and the ethical challenges and dilemmas that social workers face.

TICKETS

TICKET TYPE	PRICE PER PERSON
MEMBER	FREE
NON-MEMBER	£6.50 INC VAT PER SESSION

INCLUDES
4 HOURS CPD

#BASWENG21

TO BOOK YOUR TICKETS VISIT

WWW.BASW.CO.UK/EVENTS

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From the Editor
SHAHID NAQVI



'It's not all men, but it is all women'

Whatever you think of mass gatherings of people in a pandemic, the image of male officers from the police force that employed the man charged with Sarah Everard's murder manhandling a woman at a vigil in her name was disturbing.

It forced us to confront the issue of violence against women perpetuated by men.

Latest figures from the Crime Survey for England and Wales estimate 6.2 per cent of women have been raped or experienced attempted rape since the age of 16. The survey also finds that 98 per cent of perpetrators are male.

The injustice is not just at this extreme – it is also in the every day misogyny and structural inequalities of a society that still largely favours men socially, economically and occupationally.

It forces those of us who are male to confront our gender privileges in the same way that the Black Lives Matter movement forced people who are white to confront privileges afforded by colour.

The privilege, for example, to walk home at night without fearing attack. To not, as a matter of course, carry your keys between your fingers ready to use as a weapon against a potential attacker.

We can – and must – do better in the way we bring up men and the values that we instil in them.



IN FOCUS

From prison to social work

Why lived experience is important

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Time to speak truth against injustices

Social work's voice must be heard, says Kath Morris

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AT THE BACK

Managing your return to the office

Alasdair Kennedy shares his top tips

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BASW

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BASW

The professional association for social work and social workers

If you have a view on any of our editorial content or ideas for future articles contact editor@basw.co.uk

BASW's Taught Skills – General



- 20.4.21 **Effective assessment and Evidence Informed decision making in Children & Families Social Care**
Online MS Teams / CPD 6 hours / BASW members: £49 + VAT / Non-members £99 + VAT per session
- 27.4.21 **Moving into Leadership & Management Training with Siobhan Maclean**
Online MS Teams / CPD 6 hours / BASW members: £99 + VAT / Non-members £149 + VAT per session
- 4.5.21-7.6.21 **The Creative Trainer**
6 SESSIONS - ATTEND ALL MS Teams / CPD 21 hours including 3 hours self-directed study
BASW members: £495 + VAT / Non-members: £695 + VAT
- 5.5.21 **Effective assessment and Evidence Informed decision making in Adult Social Care**
Online MS Teams / CPD 6 hours / BASW members: £49 + VAT / Non-members £99 + VAT per session
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Online MS Teams / CPD 6 hours / BASW members: £99 + VAT / Non-members £149 + VAT per session

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- 13.5.21 **Cultural competency, diversity and inclusion**
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OUR ROLLING PROGRAMME FOR PRACTICE ASSESSORS AND SUPERVISORS CONTINUES BI-MONTHLY FROM SEPTEMBER 2021

BASW's Taught Skills Programme for Practice Assessors



BASW's new taught skills programme for
Practice Assessors and Supervisors of early career social workers

- 16.6.21 **Wellbeing in the workplace and professional leadership**
Online MS Teams / CPD 3 hours
BASW members £10 + VAT / Non-members £49 + VAT
OUR ROLLING PROGRAMME FOR PRACTICE ASSESSORS AND SUPERVISORS CONTINUES BI-MONTHLY FROM OCTOBER 2021

FURTHER DATES

- 7.7.21 The right side of regulation: recording with care and critical reflection on learning



Professionals in Practice Series:

- 15.4.21 Current Issues in Drug Use and Treatment
22-4-21 Writing in professional social work practice: from key research findings to usable resources

Success in Social Work Series:

- 29.4.21 Identifying and Responding to child neglect in schools: messages for inter-agency safeguarding practice

BASW members: FREE / Non-members: £12 inc VAT

Full detail of all BASW CPD events available at: www.basw.co.uk/events



Rashida Baig MBE, head of social work with families at Croydon Council, spoke at the event

‘Promote talented women and create a culture of kindness’

Identify female staff with talent, promote them – and create a “culture of kindness” at work.

That was the advice from England’s chief social worker for children and families Isabelle Trowler speaking at an event discussing women in leadership roles to mark International Women’s Day.

It was held amid heightened debate about violence against women and power imbalances ignited by the murder of Sarah Everard.

MPs in the UK parliament warned of an “epidemic” of violence against women as stories of misogyny and abuse were shared. The Law Commission is due to report later this year on whether misogyny should be recorded as a hate crime.

Trowler spoke of the gender-related abuse she has received: “The greatest exposure to sexism in my professional life has been without doubt in this role.

“In social media I am trolled relentlessly, portrayed through hyper-sexual metaphors, references to sexually transmitted diseases, portrayed as a dipsy, brainless blonde. It is so shocking. And the most shocking is that some of this stuff is created and circulated by social workers.”

Trowler urged women in leadership roles to do all they can to support others into senior positions.

“I fundamentally believe the single most important thing an individual can do is help others up the ladder. You spot potential talent at the most junior levels you can reach and you make a beeline for them

and you help them get through. They must get there on their own merit but you can inspire and encourage and push.”

Once in positions of authority, she urged leaders to “create a culture of kindness and flex as well as ambition and opportunity”.

Barriers to women progressing, particularly those from black and minority ethnic backgrounds, were highlighted by Rashida Baig, Croydon Council’s head of social work with families.

Baig, made an MBE in the New Year Honours, said there was “a gap between merit and success”.

“The roles are given to those who look and act the part. Research by the Centre for Talent and Innovation reveal that the top jobs often elude women and professionals of colour because they lack ‘executive presence’ or under-estimate its importance and simply do not get the guidance to acquire it.”

Fran Leddra, England’s interim joint chief social worker for adults, spoke about the traits in her mother that inspire her approach to leadership.

“She befriended a local woman who had Schizophrenia – that was in the 70s when people didn’t understand about mental health. Everyone would bully her, but mum would go shopping with her. My mum wasn’t a leader but she stood above everyone else and said this is a woman who needs support. She taught me really important lessons for anyone aspiring to be a leader. Mum said be kind.”

Concern over long Covid crisis to come

Supporting people with long Covid is likely to be an increasing part of social work it has been warned.

About one in ten people who have had Covid-19 report continuing symptoms such as fatigue, headaches and shortness of breath 12 weeks after testing positive.

But with research in its infancy, many believe the impact on the population could be higher.

Peter Beresford, emeritus professor at the School of Health and Social Care, University of Essex, said: “This is going to be the next big challenge for many many people. We are getting an idea now of the impact long Covid can have on people but we don’t know the scale of it and nor may we for some time.

“We are going to need a politics and policymaking that does not shy away from being honest about this.”

Beresford added social workers will need to help people gain entitlement from a benefit system that was likely to put up barriers.

Daisy Jackson-Bogg, a social work consultant, said: “We potentially have people who have gone from fit and well to not overnight, and who may now be part of the ‘long-term condition’ group without anyone realising it.”

The government has announced funding of £18.5 million for research into long Covid.

Road ahead – page 13

Lack of recognition of profession’s pandemic effort sparks petition

Last month’s budget failed to address the impact of Covid-19 on social care, said BASW. It also

did not recognise the “incredibly hard-pressed” workforce or address enduring inequalities that

will “worsen” in the pandemic’s aftermath. A petition called *Increase local authority funding to*

pay for increase in pay for social workers has been launched by BASW member Hannah Rennie.

NEWS

'Children at risk of long-term harm without recovery plan'

A stark warning about the lasting impact of the pandemic on vulnerable children has been issued by the Children's Society.

It came as the new Children's Commissioner Dame Rachel de Souza launched a "Beveridge Report for children" with an ambitious call to rebuild childhood after Covid-19.

Dame de Souza has announced a 'Childhood Commission' to identify the barriers, put forward solutions and develop tough targets for the government. The review will be driven by the largest consultation with children ever undertaken in England – "The Big Ask."

While welcoming the review, the Children's Society warns that with an estimated £2.2 billion of children's services cut in the last decade and contracts currently not being renewed, there are still fears of lasting harm to children and young people.

Richard Crellin, policy and public affairs team leader at The Children's Society, said: "It's absolutely vital the government and other funders ensure organisations have the resources they need to provide the help these children desperately need to recover from the harm they may have suffered over the last year.

"Children have been cut off from family and friends by successive lockdowns, while the risks to young people's safety have also been heightened."

The charity launched the See, Hear, Respond partnership with Barnado's, Action for Children and others to enable a fast response to the needs of young people and their families in the wake of Covid-19.

While some children have benefited from more family time, others have experienced an increase in domestic abuse and exploitation.

Crellin added: "In some cases these risks may have gone unnoticed, with many children spending more time at home, hidden from the view of professionals like teachers, social workers and youth workers."

Pandemic referral rates are already under scrutiny at a time when the sector is emerging from lockdown, said Crellin: "An upsurge is likely in the months ahead. However, organisations have real concerns that contracts may not be renewed because pre-pandemic referral targets have not been met.



Dame Rachel de Souza

"Even before this crisis children's services departments were struggling to cope with demand. We estimate they have lost around £2.2 billion in funding over the last decade, forcing them to cut vital but non-statutory early help services."

The charity is calling on the government to increase access to mental health support in schools and colleges and increase investment in youth clubs, family support workers and mentoring programmes.

"The government has made much of the importance of children catching up on their education. But without a properly funded recovery plan for children and young people and new investment in early help, many will be in no place to do this and could suffer enormous long-term harm to their wellbeing, safety and future prospects."

The road out of lockdown – page 13

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

'We have got a responsibility to be looking at the way we educate and the way that all society operates that means women end up being treated as object on our streets. It's not all men, but it is all women.'

MP Jess Phillips speaking in the wake of vigils following the murder of Sarah Everard

Marketplace in care under investigation

The Competition and Markets Authority has launched an investigation into the high prices paid by local authorities and inadequate supply of suitable placements for children in their care.

The regulator's chief executive Andrea Coscelli said: "Children's care is not a market like any other – our clear and overriding priority will be about identifying ways children can get better care."

She added: "We are concerned that some children are not getting access to the right placements due to a lack of availability in the system and that rising prices are putting further pressure on stressed local authority budget."

Some 70 per cent of children in England and 78 per cent in Wales are placed in private sector homes. Scotland does not allow for-profit agencies to provide foster placements.

A recent study by the Local Government Association found some independent providers of children's residential and fostering placements achieve profits of more than 20 per cent of their income.

The CMA is inviting comments on the issues via its website.

Corrections

In last month's PSW, ubuntu, the theme of World Social Work Day, was incorrectly spelt on the front cover. We apologise for the error and any offence caused.

Statistics by Age UK in the page five lead story of the March edition were quoted as being based on a poll of millions. To clarify, they were based on an extrapolation of 2,133 surveyed.



Campaign aims to take stock of words and phrases commonly used by professionals

‘There is language that liberates and language that subjugates’

A campaign to interrogate the language of social work has been launched by activists who claim it’s too often “oppressive, alienating and damaging”.

The drive by the Social Work Action Group (SWAG) in collaboration with parents with lived experience, aims to stimulate debate and look at the impact language used by professionals has on people coming into contact with services through sharing testimonials via social media.

Jason Barnes, founder of SWAG – a network of social workers, people who have used services, academics and students – said: “We believe language is so fundamental to building those trusting relationships for the people we work with and there are changes necessary within that.

“I know myself from being in social work for eight years so much jargon can run off my tongue and it is really important we take stock of what we are saying, how we are carrying out our work and the impact that can have on families and others.”

Chris Wild, a campaigner for young people in care, said his own experiences in the care system highlighted the need for change.

“I always felt worthless when I was in a professional environment and I was referred to as a ‘looked after child’. It’s archaic. The care sector hasn’t changed but the world around it has and we have got to modernise the way we use our language.

“There’s that division automatically between authorities and young people. We have got to try and close that gap somehow and unite as a collaborative and give young people the respect they

deserve and we’ll get it back. Language is the way forward – to change the care sector for the future we’ve got to change the language and that will help everything else around it.”

SWAG was created in 2016 with a mission to bring change in social work culture, education and practice and reform services through “co-produced actions and campaigns”.

In a statement launching the Language in Social Work campaign on 1 March, it said: “The ways in which social workers speak to and engage with parents and families can be supportive and beneficial but too often it is experienced as oppressive, alienating and damaging.

“Social work systems can perpetuate hurt and injustice through language which is judgemental, heteronormative and rigid.”

SWAG’s poverty representative Richard Smith stressed language could be as oppressive as poverty in the way it is experienced by individuals.

“Our collective aim is to bridge the gap between social workers and those who have experience of social work intervention,” he said.

“Part of the reason this exists in the first place is that we don’t talk enough about the most common experience held by people that have a social worker – that is the experience of poverty.

“Challenging structural injustices should be a core part of our role. We need to make sure we are doing so in a way that is ‘with’ and not ‘for’. Our Language in Social Work campaign is within that spirit of unity. There are types of language that subjugate and types of language that liberate.”

Don’t let prison time be a bar to social work

Research on lived experience of prison highlights “limited opportunity for those with a history of incarceration from studying and practising social work”.

A paper in the *British Journal of Social Work* found former prisoners still face problems reintegrating into society, and are often stigmatised and labelled.

The prison population in England and Wales quadrupled between 1900 and 2017. The Scottish prison population nearly doubled in size since 1900 and has risen by 60 per cent since 1990. Numbers increased by 36 per cent in Northern Ireland.

The research authors, based at the Australian Catholic University in Queensland, acknowledge that lived experience is increasingly valued in social work – in the fields of mental health and disability and substance misuse.

They said: “It is recommended that the social work profession takes a more nuanced approach to protecting vulnerable service users, thereby reducing the use of blanket exclusions on people (with) serious criminal histories from entering the profession.”

Lived experience - page 15

Essay comp

Is choosing to become a social worker a political decision as well as an action and, if so, are all social workers activists by default?

The question is being asked by the Social Workers Union in its annual essay writing assignment. Four grants of £500 will be awarded and entry deadline is 4 June. See SWU’s website for more details.

ENGLAND NEWS



Leah Bartoli performed a song expressing her feelings about violence towards women at the event

We have to shed culture of 'too shy to ask' on domestic abuse

More needs to be done to help black and minority ethnic women and people with learning disabilities access support for domestic violence.

That was one of the key messages from a BASW England webinar ahead of this month's launch of its *Domestic Abuse Guidance for Social Workers*.

Asmaat Khan, a social work student who fled a forced marriage after experiencing physical and mental abuse, urged social workers to gain better cultural understanding of communities.

"Understand the dynamic of male patriarchs within the household. The expectation on us as Asian women – not allowed to work, child-rearing, housework, the preference of sons over daughters, how we have to cook for everybody, how we dress."

Activist Pragna Patel, director of Southall Black Sisters, said cultural, social and structural factors resulted in the "under-identification" of violence against black and minority ethnic women.

She said concepts of honour and shame – embedded into the religious and cultural dynamics of some communities – made it difficult for women to seek help.

"I am always horrified at the way in which public bodies including social services refer to local religious leaderships to understand and deal with violence against women and girls without understanding those leaderships might be promoting those traditional values.

"That's why social services and other public bodies must carry out due diligence in who they involve in safeguarding plans."

Patel added the insecure status of migrant women

meant they could end up "trapped" in abusive relationships: "No recourse to public funds is the key barrier that prevents migrant women from having economic independence and from disclosing abuse. They are financially dependent on their abusers and if they leave they have no access to even refuges or safe accommodation, they can't access housing benefit and other benefits to pay for their survival. The state denies them the route to safety."

Sarah Goff, of the Ann Craft Trust which supports young people with disabilities and adults at risk, said disabled people are twice as likely to experience domestic abuse.

"Often they don't have a voice. We found young disabled people were much less visible to services. Often the impact of their learning disability on how they see the world wasn't understood. The blame is put on their behaviour rather than trying to understand what the behaviour is telling us."

She urged social workers to see young people on their own without their carers present: "We have to shed the culture of 'too shy to ask.'"

An anonymous expert by experience survivor urged social workers to look for signs such as body language to assess if a person is being coercively controlled.

She added: "Never give up, although you may be limited to time and don't feel you are getting anywhere, that one session or talk you had might give someone the courage to leave further down the line."

The Domestic Abuse Bill was due its third reading in the House of Lords as PSW went to print.

See country views - page 39 and 40

We will speed up FtP cases says regulator

England's regulator of social workers admitted it was not progressing fitness to practice cases as quickly as it wanted.

Colum Conway, chief executive of Social Work England, said legislative changes allowed it to be more "flexible and responsive" than the Health and Caring Professions Council it took over from in December 2019.

But reflecting on the organisation's first year, he said: "Are we happy at this point that we are able to deal with the cases we received from HCPC in an adequate timeframe?"

"At the minute the answer would have to be no but we are working on it."

Covid-19 had increased challenges, he said. "The pandemic hasn't helped, in that people aren't able to access the office and access information that would help us move this forward. However, we have reshaped our team to address that and we are confident we can move those cases forward."

Last month BASW's advice and representation service wrote to Social Work England highlighting concerns over "unacceptable delays" in resolving cases that it said were having a "life-changing impact".

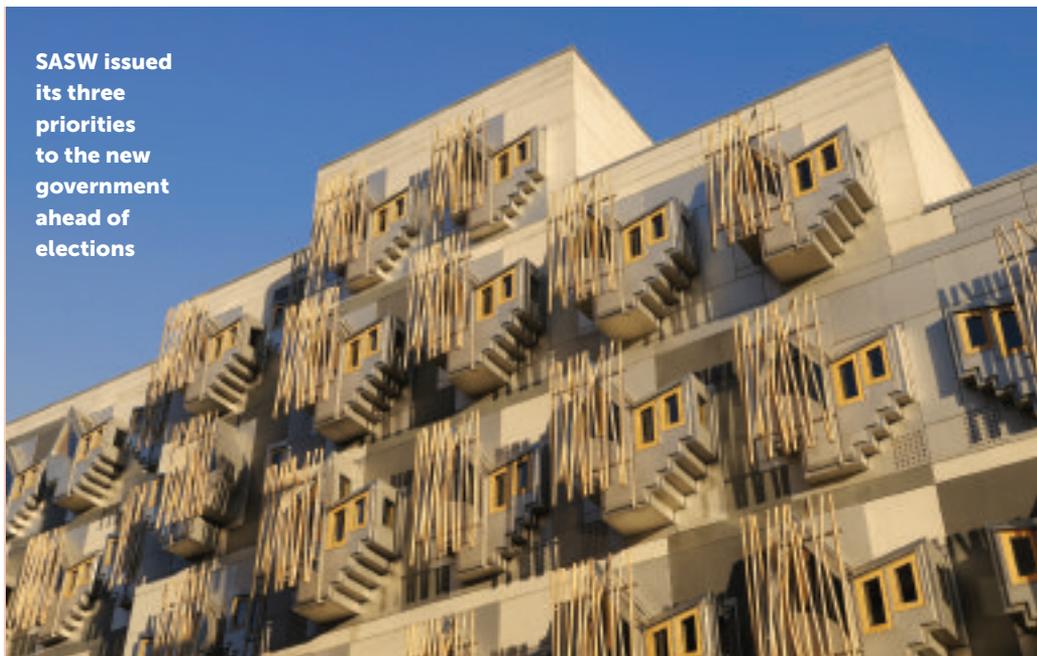
Book launched

A collection of essays, poems and reflections from black and minority social workers has been published called *Outlanders – Hidden Narratives from Social Workers of Colour*.

Review – page 33

SCOTLAND NEWS

SASW issued its three priorities to the new government ahead of elections



We must have a seat at table, manifesto for profession says

Protecting human rights, tackling poverty and ensuring social work's voice is heard by policymakers are the three priorities of a **Manifesto for Social Work in Scotland**.

The document has been produced by the Scottish Association of Social Work (SASW) ahead of the Scottish Parliamentary election on 6 May.

It calls for the creation of a forum to channel the expertise of social work across the diverse settings in which it operates into policymaking.

National director Alison Bavidge said: "We have the implications of our care review on the children's side and the review of adults care.

"The role of social work and the future of social work is completely dependent on what happens in these two policy streams.

"In our manifesto we are saying you need to get us round the table, this is key to our profession."

SASW called on members to help shape the profession's representation and sign a pledge in support of the manifesto launched on World Social Work Day (see BASW's website).

The manifesto also urges the new government to do more to protect human rights.

Scotland has been applauded for being the first country in the UK set to incorporate the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child into law and ban smacking. But the manifesto says many citizens continue to be denied human rights.

It says: "This is evidenced by the tens of thousands of people who do not have enough food to live on, who are without homes and who suffer from high levels of physical and mental ill health, including drug deaths and suicide."

The manifesto also calls on the government to "Reject the principle of 'no recourse to public funds' and ensure local authorities are funded to address the needs of all vulnerable people whatever their immigration status".

In calling on the Scottish government to do more to tackle poverty, it urges ministers to commit to a "Citizens Basic Income or other means of effective and dignified financial support from the state".

Bavidge said: "In terms of recognising the impact of poverty on people, a citizen-based income is a really practical non-stigmatising approach. It treats everybody as a citizen with a right to some of the resources we have in the country."

Covid toll on workers and service users

Nearly two-thirds of Scottish social workers say they have encountered more ethical and moral dilemmas during Covid.

More than four-fifths of respondents also say safeguarding concerns have increased since March 2020 and more than half agreed carrying out adult and child protection visits is harder with social distancing.

The latest findings, from a follow-up to a BASW UK survey launched a year ago, found 85 per cent of workers agree they have encountered more difficulties in accessing essential support services for the people they work with.

For 77 per cent of respondents digital exclusion is making communication harder.

Other areas of concern are about mental health, access to PPE and work conditions with nearly three-quarters saying workplace morale is being adversely affected because of the pandemic. A further 60 per cent agree that working during the pandemic is negatively impacting their own mental health, and 71 per cent find it harder to switch off due to working from home. However, 74 per cent say their employer has taken reasonable steps to support home-working.

Nearly 40 per cent agree they have encountered discrimination or equalities or rights breaches affecting service users.

Stirring up hate an offence under Bill but misogyny is not included

MSPs voted through the Hate Crime and Public Order (Scotland) Bill – but were criticised for rejecting an amendment to include women as

a protected group. Human rights QC Helena Kennedy is leading a separate review to see if there is a need for a standalone offence for misogynistic abuse.

SASW national director Alison Bavidge said: "We want a society where women whatever their background can lead lives where they feel safe and have

opportunity and control over their lives.

"Misogyny runs deep – it is the cultural stuff that we grow up with that is so gendered."

BASW England

The professional association for
social work and social workers

PROFESSIONAL OFFICER X 2

(PART-TIME-12 MONTHS)

PART TIME (17.5 HRS PER WEEK)

12 MONTHS FIXED TERM CONTRACT (SUBJECT TO REVIEW)

GRADE: £35,320-£50,625 PRO RATA

Post 1 will have a thematic focus on Children and Family Social Work and the Independent Review of Children's Social Care.

Post 2 will have a thematic focus on Adult Social Work and mental health.

Are you committed to promoting the voice, values and excellent practice of social work? Are you interested in working in a diverse and hard working national team focusing on social workers, social work, recruitment and the support of BASW England' members and stakeholder engagement?

If you have a passion for social work and the requisite professional qualifications, skills and experience we want to hear from you!

If you have answered yes and have the requisite professional qualifications, skills and experience we want to hear from you!

Application deadline: 19 April 2021

For more information about the role and how to apply, please visit:
www.basw.co.uk/jobs/work-with-us

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UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

BRITISH ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS IN-PRACTICE VISITING RESEARCHER AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

The purpose of the BASW in-practice visiting researcher position is to support a practitioner in their academic development and help them prepare for future funding applications especially for pursuing a part-time or full-time PhD or other funded research.

The visiting researcher will have opportunities to be involved with the Living Assessments study, which explores the experiences and impact of health and social care assessments for children and families, with a particular focus on Section 17 assessments:

<https://research.kent.ac.uk/living-assessment>

The project is being undertaken in conjunction with the British Association of Social Workers, the National Children's Bureau, the University of Kent and the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Children.

Applicants are expected to be a registered social worker and have demonstrated a strong interest in research. Applicants need to have been a member of BASW continuously for the last 12 months.

For full details, closing date and how to apply email:
policyadmin@basw.co.uk

BASW ENGLAND COMMITTEE

(5 VACANCIES) – 4 MEMBERS AND 1 NQSW POSTS

ARE YOU –

- Passionate about social work?
- Committed to inclusivity, anti-racist, anti-discriminatory and oppressive practice, equal opportunities and embracing diversity?
- Committed to high standards of practice?
- Able to demonstrate membership leadership skills and a commitment to ethical practice and a strong value base?
- Interested in shaping and influencing the future work of the BASW England Committee?

IF YES, WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

An exciting opportunity has arisen for 5 BASW England member positions on the England National Standing Committee (NSC). We welcome applications from all parts of the sector including social workers in direct practice, specialist fields, managers, academics, practice educators, independent social workers, and those working in diverse settings.

BASW England seeks to increase the diversity and representativeness of the England Committee regardless of age, disability, gender (or sex), gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy/maternity, marriage and civil partnerships or any other personal characteristic.

The Committee meets 5 times a year and this also counts as continual professional development to help maintain your registration.

Those interested in being involved in the work of the BASW England Committee are invited to apply by Friday 16th April 2021 and nominations will be posted on the BASW England website (membership section) with a closing date of electronic voting by 28th May 2021.

Candidates are elected for two years and can stand again for re-election for a further two-year period. Travel and overnight expenses will be paid.

Application forms are available from Lisa Kennedy:
lisa.kennedy@basw.co.uk

BASW England

The professional association for
social work and social workers

WALES NEWS



Higher rates of depression, anxiety and severe mental illness raises concerns

Support mental health of new mums in care proceedings call

A higher prevalence of conditions like depression and anxiety in mothers at risk of having their newborn babies taken into care has sparked a call for better maternal mental health support in Wales.

It comes after researchers examined data on mental health conditions of mother's whose babies were subject to care proceedings in their first year.

The Nuffield Family Justice Observatory carried out the analysis after troubling findings emerged from an earlier study of mothers of infants at risk of being taken into care it carried out last year.

The initial study, called *Born into Care: One Thousand Mothers in Care Proceedings in Wales*, found more than half (53 per cent) self-reported an existing mental health disorder at their initial antenatal assessment. A further 77 per cent had a mental health-related GP or hospital contact or admission recorded in their health records prior to the child's birth.

The Observatory's new analysis published last month showed:

- 41 per cent of mothers reported depression, three times higher than the comparison group
- 25 per cent experienced anxiety disorders in the two years leading up to birth, more than double the comparison group
- Severe mental illness was present in four per cent of mothers, eight times the rate of the comparison group
- Autism rates, though low, were still nine times higher than the comparison group

Researchers stated: "It is critical to be able to identify and differentiate mental health disorders to enable birth mothers at risk of child removal to receive appropriate support and treatment

sufficiently tailored to need. In uncovering the specific categories of mental health need, it is clear that primary care is the most likely mental health contact and source of help for most of the mothers in the cohort group.

"Early identification and management are essential. However, a recent review of perinatal provision indicated that women are not able to consistently access this support across health boards in Wales."

A 2019 study by the University of Lancaster and University of Swansea revealed the number of Welsh infants being removed from their mothers had doubled in Wales between 2015 and 2018, with 83 per 10,000 births becoming the subject of care proceedings, and 52 per cent under two weeks old.

Half were born to mothers with previous experience of care proceedings concerning another child.

Focus for subsequent research shifted to establish what can be done to keep babies with their mothers.

The mothers who feature in the *Born into Care* paper represent a subset of all birth mothers of infants involved in section 31 care proceedings in Wales between 2011 and 2018.

Mental health disorders commonly experienced included anxiety and depression, autism spectrum disorder, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, development disorder, conduct disorders, eating disorders, and severe mental illness such as schizophrenia and bipolar disorder.

A spokesperson for the Nuffield Foundation said: "Understanding the lives of these mothers and the factors that might be bringing them into the family justice system is vital."

£500 bonus for 'courage' during Covid

Local authority-employed social workers are among those getting a £500 bonus from the Welsh government this month to say thank you for their work during the pandemic.

It follows similar moves by the Northern Irish and Scottish governments.

Health minister Vaughan Gething said health and social care staff had shown a "remarkable amount of commitment and courage" throughout the pandemic.

Allison Hulmes, national director for BASW Cymru, said: "Social workers have told us that they have felt invisible and undervalued in comparison to health staff, so this payment will go some way towards acknowledging their essential work."

Equality must be promoted

Public bodies in Wales now have a duty to promote socio-economic equality under new regulations that came into force on 31 March.

It follows similar rules in Scotland introduced in 2018. Last month also saw the Welsh government pledge a further £10 million to be made available to help people experiencing extreme hardship during Covid.

Emergency Assistance Payments are for vital costs, such as food, fuel, clothing, white goods and furniture.

A government spokesperson said: "Unfortunately, we expect many more people will see their income drop in the year ahead."

Campaigners say many people haven't even heard of the scheme which is open to applications until 30 September.



We must tell 'shocking' stories of poverty to change narrative

Social work has an important role to play in highlighting the impact of poverty on people.

That was a key message from a webinar hosted by BASW Northern Ireland as part of the association's World Social Work Month celebration.

It came a day after Chancellor Rishi Sunak's budget was criticised for not doing enough to address inequality.

Speakers at the event, titled *Poverty is a political choice: a social justice response to addressing economic Deprivation*, warned the pandemic had forced more people into hardship.

Dr Ciara Fitzpatrick, a social security researcher at Ulster University in Northern Ireland, said: "Poverty is a huge problem here and we need to constantly bring attention to it. We need to hold our elective representatives to account and ask what they are doing and what they plan to do to take a structural and sustainable response to poverty.

"If you see something in your practice that is bothering you and it is the direct impact of poverty I would encourage you to get in touch with your local councillor and say 'this is a real problem in your community at the moment and we need to see action on this'.

"The more voices our elected representatives hear, the more forceful our message can be."

Homelessness activist Father Peter McVerry urged frontline workers to tell the stories of poverty to create a "groundswell" of public outrage that pushes government to make changes.

"That groundswell has to include middle-class people and the way you get middle-class people on

board is to tell stories. You can give statistics until the cows come home but it doesn't move people, it is the stories that move people, the stories of people struggling, in difficulty – that's what moves people."

Fr McVerry is founder of the Arrupe Society which changed its name to the Peter McVerry Trust and is now one of the Republic of Ireland's leading homeless charities.

He blames the housing crisis in the Republic and poverty on government policies that have pursued a "neoliberal" agenda.

"The Republic of Ireland has nine billionaires," he said. "Last year they saw their wealth increase by 3.84 billion euros, some of it pushed into off-shore accounts. If we want to understand poverty we have to analyse wealth.

"If we were to fairly tax those who could afford to be taxed we would have no poverty in this country, we would have no poverty in the world."

Fr McVerry said poverty has become "normalised" as an unavoidable part of society, a narrative that must change.

"We need to get rid of that narrative and ensure poverty is understood as a failure of government policy. We can eradicate it if we put our mind to it."

BASW said last month's budget had "failed to address the impact that the pandemic has had on health and social care" and the causes of poverty.

It added: "There was no plan – indeed virtually no mention – on how to tackle the systemic social and economic problems fuelling poverty, insecure work and the housing crisis, all of which predate the pandemic and which will only worsen in its aftermath without a genuine plan to reduce inequality."

Your skills will be needed in times ahead

Social work's contribution will be needed "more than ever" in the months ahead, Northern Ireland's health minister Robin Swann said.

In a message to the profession on World Social Work Day, he expressed "deep appreciation to every social worker for everything you have done over the course of the last 12 months".

He acknowledged the efforts of social workers on the frontline supporting people and families and the pressure they and those close to them have been under.

He added: "As we begin to rebuild our lives and our services, the skills and knowledge that social workers have will be required more than ever, particularly in supporting those who have been most affected by the pandemic."

Greater focus on end of life care needed

More resource is needed for end of life care in Northern Ireland, said Marie Curie.

A petition set up by the charity calling on the government to act highlights more than 16,500 people have died of all causes in the country since the start of the pandemic.

Despite extra need due to Covid, it says Stormont's executive programme for government "doesn't say a word about death, bereavement or end of life care".

Almost 7,000 people have signed the petition.

Life After Lockdown

As society prepares for a new 'new normal' **Louise Palfreyman** asks social workers and a trauma studies expert to examine the lasting effects of the pandemic and outline their concerns for the future...

The Trauma Expert

Antonia Bifulco believes that post-pandemic, unprocessed trauma will present one of the biggest challenges.

As professor and director at the Centre for Abuse and Trauma Studies at Middlesex University, Antonia is an expert in lifetime development, trauma, attachment and emotional disorder. She says: "There will have been traumatic experiences in all of this, and lockdown has prevented the processing of that trauma.

"A whole range of things about lockdown have made people stuck, unable to move forward, and in terms of trauma we are looking at life-changing negative events: loss and bereavement, spiralling damaging relationships, deprivation. It occurs on different levels, but a lot of it has to do with being isolated and having to use your own resources.

"Trauma also involves threat to life, violence and witnessing these and issues around bereavement.

"Where the grieving process has been restricted, you can't see the person to say goodbye, or mourn publicly, and that will make a loss traumatic. We have seen how the health dangers associated with Covid-19 can happen to anybody. There is trauma there, too around danger."

In terms of specific areas for social workers, Prof Bifulco said: "There have been increases in domestic violence and people being trapped in a conflict situation at home. The stress of lockdown has led to an increased likelihood of violence due to entrapment.

"Also workers on the frontline are witnessing what is happening to others, and seeing how it could happen to them too, so that can constitute vicarious trauma too."

Considering what is needed to resolve trauma,

Prof Bifulco points to the work of Judith Herman on recovery: "She says you need safety and stabilisation, remembrance, mourning, reconnection and integration – this involving public recognition and support. Being safe has an environmental as well as a psychological aspect; remembrance and mourning are social, as is reintegration and healing for the future."

At a more personal level, Prof Bifulco adds: "What is needed is healing relationships, distractions, and activities that give you a sense of positive self-esteem and purpose."

"We need more positive messages. This is particularly true in terms of how we support children and young people, who have missed out on schooling and peer contact. They've communicated digitally but lost out on the positive emotion of seeing friends face-to-face. But children and young people are incredibly resilient and with the help of families and teachers, most will bounce back.

"Schools are saying they will help children with the catch-up and many of the things experienced around life events will be reversible."

The Big Picture

BASW England professional officer Liz Howard said the big question for social work now is "what's coming" next? "During the lockdown we haven't been able to visit people and see what's going on. There are all these hidden harms caused by the pressure on families and relationships, on unpaid carers who have been struggling throughout the pandemic without additional support, the closed cultures within care homes during the pandemic.

"Then there's the impact of isolation on the mental and physical health of people – it's going to be massive and we will start to see it over the next few months which will add to the pressure on social workers and social services."

Daisy Jackson-Bogg, a social work consultant, is concerned about the long term health implications, with a reported one in ten of people who had Covid-19 still reporting symptoms: "One of my concerns is the

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impact of Long Covid on the population overall. We potentially have people who have gone from fit and well to not, overnight, and who may now be part of the 'long-term condition' group without anyone realising it. We know that health inequalities are still hugely prevalent and living with any long-term condition, physical or mental, is tough."

Workforce Morale

Greg Slay, an Approved Mental Health Professional in England, says: "Morale in the social care workforce is going to be an issue. The government continues to say nothing and do nothing about the reform of long-term funding for social care.

"It requires cross-party consensus, but I fear it won't be progressed because the government appears uninterested in dealing with this matter. There is a sense of denial over our contribution in the past 12 months, and our role as we all exit the pandemic.

"We have been involved in delivering frontline services to people who have been personally and physically affected by Covid-19 as well as those whose mental health has taken a hit.

"I am increasingly being asked to see and assess people whose mental health has deteriorated over recent months. I think it is going to take many months to reset people's expectations and confidence."

Another anonymous social worker said: "There has been no time to grieve for family and colleagues who have died. I have seen great kindness from people but also toxicity from others, and post-traumatic stress for staff and families is a big worry."

Children And Families

Social worker Eddie O'Hara is worried about children and families, and said: "Social workers have not been getting out and seeing families. It's been emergencies only, and families often can't access services because they've moved online. A lot of hidden harm has been happening.

"There has also been an exacerbation of the lack of priority given to children and families, particularly poor children and families, and a normalisation of reduction of services because we are in 'unique times'. And you get a sense these moves could be permanent."

Children In Care

One social worker noted a positive during lockdown with children in care having more time to form attachments with foster parents: "There are so many examples of children who were assessed as having disorganised attachment and they are now securely attached. The virus has offered opportunities to children to grow and develop."

However, Lesley La-Croix, a social worker and

doctoral researcher investigating the journey to permanency, says: "The past 12 months have been particularly unsettling for a number of children, staff and foster carers. There have been experiences of conflict, particularly with teenagers failing to adhere to lockdown rules.

"Covid-19 has also magnified the vulnerabilities of children who are looked after, with worries about stability, catching the virus and lack of contact with friends and family. Social workers have had to rethink creative ways to best support fostering households.

"Adjusting to virtual supervision and creating fun activities has been a challenge, but has also highlighted new opportunities and ways of working.

"Social workers have continued to visit some households to prevent placement breakdown and are working tirelessly to stabilise families, often giving secondary thought to their own health and wellbeing. Self-care has been a dominant feature within supervision and team meetings."

Domestic Violence

For Kath Morris, a senior lecturer in social work at Staffordshire University, the pandemic aftermath is going to involve a long and complex process of recovery.

She points to recent domestic violence figures: 61 per cent of survivors felt they couldn't access support during lockdown despite a 66 per cent increase in calls, according to charity SafeLives.

Kath says: "We all know domestic violence rates worsened during the pandemic, but what hasn't been said so much is that the impact on children in these families is immense.

"The figures for child homicide have also risen. It's not just about separating out 'domestic violence' and 'child abuse' - it's about their integration. Children get hurt by domestic violence, too.

"Family life for some has been like a long magnifying glass concentrating the rays of the sun onto a situation that is already inflammatory. This is about imprisonment, on top of traumatic bonding. We need to consider the emotional damage suffered by children. Social workers need to listen to the child's voice."

On building an effective social work response in the months ahead, Morris said: "It's about self-compassion, as many social workers may have experienced family problems themselves.

"The response has to be at an organisational level, and it has to be more than just handing out numbers for counselling services.

"Principal social workers can do a lot in terms of innovation. We need a whole organisation compassionate approach. We all need to heal."



It is going to take many months to reset people's expectations and confidence



Many social workers have experienced family problems themselves

Tell us your concerns for the year ahead as we come out of lockdown.
Email editor@basw.co.uk

IN FOCUS

Adam Pagett tweeted about his journey into social work, and the response was overwhelming.

He wrote:

18 yrs old joined the army
25 yrs old discharged via military prison
30 still a homeless drug user
35 serving 10 yrs in prison
40 yrs old out on 5 yr licence
47 enrolled Leeds Uni LLC
48 started SW degree Bradford College
52 my birthday today, a newly qualified social worker



With 147,000 likes and 10,000 retweets and counting, Adam's life story, condensed into just a few lines, spoke volumes. His current employer, Bradford Council tweeted back: 'Very proud of Adam Pagett who is now part of #TeamBradford working as a qualified social worker in Adult Social Care...'

And the story could end there, a happy conclusion to a long and troubled journey. Only, for the world of social work, the story is just beginning. Because recent research published in the *British Journal of Social Work* indicates lived experience of prison is far less valued in the profession than lived experience of mental health, disability or substance addiction.

Of course, the irony is that many people with lived experience of prison also have lived experience of the other kinds.

The authors of *How Does Lived Experience of Incarceration Impact Upon the Helping Process in Social Work Practice?* found a lack of social work research into lived experience of prison, and evidence of restrictions on ex-prisoners entering the social work profession.

"Lived experience is something I feel so passionately about," says Adam.

"I've been thinking recently about how the word 'rehabilitation' doesn't really have any meaning, because in society's eyes a punishment has no end. If you are

My difficult journey into social work

Interview
by Louise
Palfreyman

Pictured above:
a photo of Adam
and his mother
while he was in
prison

convicted and you serve more than 30 months then even when you get out, society doesn't see that as spent.

"You have trouble finding work. If there are 20 applicants for a job and you've ticked that box, do you think they are going to even look at your application?"

"A lot of people have been through the prison system, but they keep it a secret, often so they can get a job. It shouldn't be a secret."

Adam went to prison at the age of 35, for drug offences. His arrest in 2005 saved him from a life of substance abuse, petty crime and homelessness. Time served in Guernsey

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Prison led to him gaining new qualifications and resolving to help others once he got out.

Diagnosed with polysubstance abuse psychosis, he was treated by a psychiatrist and a psychologist who helped him confront his issues. But it was his work with John Knight, a substance misuse worker, and colleague Tracey Rear that set him on the career path to becoming a social worker.

“They said I must have a lot of skills to have been able to survive on the streets. And it’s true, I can talk to anybody. I’ve had to approach people and befriend them.

“People don’t understand homelessness, or the issues beneath it like substance misuse. Drug and alcohol abuse is actually the longest suicide note in history. And yet people think it’s their own fault, they can stop if they want to.

“The input of John and Tracey was hugely significant because I’d got stuck and they helped me look at the circumstances behind my crimes. It was substance misuse. Take that away and you take away the need to commit crime.

“There’s a saying, ‘When the right conditions are met, healing flourishes’ and that was so true. In a way, prison was an alternative to rehab. And in Guernsey, which was a smaller prison, you got plenty of one-to-one time. There was a very person-centred approach.”

On release, Adam found it hard to adjust at first, moving in with his sister and only leaving his room to go and get food. “It was just a cell without bars. I went to my probation appointments and remember applying for jobs and getting nowhere.

“It’s such a vulnerable time when you are first released because doors are being shut all the time. It’s easy to say ‘everybody gets a second chance’ but it’s rarely acted on. It’s discrimination, really, and it leads people back into crime.

“And when you want to work with people, it’s extra hard. Out of all my job applications back then, I only got one reply saying I was ‘unsuitable.’”

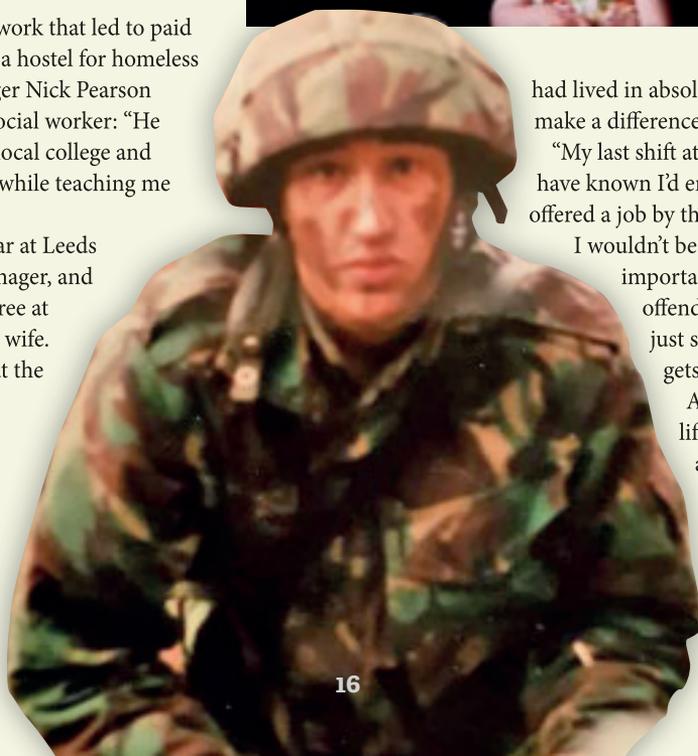
Eventually, he got some voluntary work that led to paid work with the charity Framework at a hostel for homeless people. It was Adams’ service manager Nick Pearson who saw his potential to become a social worker: “He encouraged me to do courses at the local college and get my GCSE in English and maths, while teaching me during lunchtimes at work.”

Adam enrolled on a foundation year at Leeds University, still supported by his manager, and then embarked on a social work degree at Bradford College, encouraged by his wife. From his second year, still working at the hostel, the local authority supported him through his degree after seeing him speak about hate crimes against the homeless. He spent his final placement with Bradford Council.

“Twenty years earlier, I had been sleeping rough in Bradford, so I was returning to a place where I



Clockwise from top left, Adam with his mother shortly after she left his father; Adam aged 22 on an army tour in West Belfast; his mother aged 24 and Adam with his wife and children. Below, in full military kit



had lived in absolute poverty, only now I wanted to make a difference.

“My last shift at the hostel, I thought, ‘Who could have known I’d end up as a social worker?’ To be offered a job by the council meant so much. It meant I wouldn’t be in debt after my studies, and most importantly, they didn’t just look at my offending. At the end of the day, we’re all just spinning plates, and sometimes it gets out of control.”

Adam talks frankly about his early life. “I grew up in poverty, the son of a single mixed race woman. She left my dad when I was a baby because he came out as gay and had married her to hide his sexuality. She raised the three of us and I saw her racially abused as a

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'Drug and alcohol abuse is actually the longest suicide note in history. And yet people think it's their own fault, they can stop if they want to'

child, and I myself had racial abuse growing up and later in the army.

"They'd make racist jibes about being a 'nig nog', not celebrating Christmas because I was a 'Paki', and it was devastating because I had been looking for a sense of belonging that just didn't happen.

"I remember coming back to my quarters one day and my kit was all smashed up and covered in curry powder. I was 18-years-old and I broke down. I thought, "This isn't how it's supposed to be."

Adam spiralled out of control, ending up dishonourably discharged for drug offences. His own drug habit saw him fired from jobs and declared bankrupt because he was feeding a heroin and crack cocaine habit that would eventually lead to prison.

In his early social work career, Adam would tell care leavers at risk of homelessness: "Your first dealer is usually one of your friends." He is passionate about breaking the cycle that leads young people into drugs and crime.

He recently moved to working with young adults with learning disabilities for Bradford Council's CTLD Team.

"I wanted a new direction. I'd seen people on the streets

with learning disabilities and I knew that the system had let them down. So when I saw the role advertised, I was told 'Apply!' because the council wanted to keep me. They were really supportive.

"It's been a hard learning curve and I found it difficult during the pandemic, feeling like I'm not out there earning my wage, doing virtual visits where bonding was difficult. I've just been off with Covid, and was quite poorly for four days, but after a bit I was climbing the walls and wanting to get back to work.

"I find the people I work with often don't realise how much choice they have. They've lived with their parents and may be looking at independent living because their parents are getting old, and it's about helping them realise this is achievable with the right support."

On how to use his lived experience, Adam is quite clear. "It's about when it's appropriate. It can help sometimes to have a conversation starter, but lived experience is also about recognising that many people we help live as part of an undercurrent, rejected by society.

"It's about having that deep understanding. I won't disclose my time in prison unless I know it will build a relationship. But if a client needs some hope, I will share it. And there are also the practical elements of lived experience, because clients so often are looking for what's next, what's the catch?"

Building bonds, Adam says, is also crucial in using lived experience in social work. "Getting to know that person is crucial. I've had breakthroughs just by sitting and talking, and listening. It helps, sometimes, to look at the bigger picture."

Adam says it's all about finding ways in, conversation starters, common ground. He uses a briefcase full of toys and games in his current job, including a Magic 8-Ball (a toy that can tell fortunes and give advice).

But social work is also about empathy, and sometimes empathy arises from the most challenging of circumstances. Adam lost his mum while he was in prison and he was unable to attend her funeral.

The circumstances of her death are shocking: "She was sexually assaulted by a child, aged 12, who knocked on her door and forced his way in, saying how he wanted to come and live with her, and then he attacked her. She was in ICU for ten days, but died. She was 75."

Adam found his social work studies to be a kind of healing process, as he learned about sexual script theory and families: "The kid had had a difficult life. It was good for me to get an understanding of that. I don't hate the person. He'd be older now, and I hope things have got better for him.

"I feel privileged I could get that support through learning at college. You carry hatred and it can eat away at you, but I was able to look beyond that."

Adam gained a first class degree in social work, one of only two people in his year at Bradford to do so. He has recently been offered work as a guest lecturer at Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario, discussing the links between addiction, homelessness and offending

SOCIAL WORK

A vision for the future

This is an abridged version of a talk given by service user activist, writer, researcher and campaigner for citizen participation **Peter Beresford** during Social Work England's Social Work Week last month

I believe social work has a positive future for both its workforce and the people it works with. At the same time, you don't need me to tell you how difficult these times are and have been for social work and indeed health, care and public services more generally.

Covid-19 is just part of the context facing social work and social workers. Social work has always been a weathervane for the politics of its age. It has had to weather left of centre politics that have sometimes devalued it crudely as a sticking plaster for capitalism. More recently right of centre neoliberal politics have seen it more as an expression of the over-extension of state interference in people's lives, of a mollycoddling and dependency-inducing model of state welfare. The effects have been to further marginalise and restrict social work. Thus we have seen:

- ▶ An increasing emphasis on the social control aspects of social work narrowly conceived as its core 'role and tasks'
- ▶ A preoccupation with keeping costs down in family and children/child protection policy and services
- ▶ The running down and defunding of social work with adults
- ▶ The continuing marginalisation of mental health social work as part of the broader failing of mental health support
- ▶ Cuts across all areas of social work just as wider social and economic policies and rising poverty and inequality have increased need
- ▶ The introduction, resourcing and expansion of so-called 'elite', 'fast-track', employer-based pathways into

professional social work in England like the Frontline, and Think Ahead programmes to create a corps of disciplined future managers, in line with neoliberal ideology

- ▶ The widespread closure of undergraduate social work courses that encouraged diverse entry to the profession and their replacement by apprenticeships tied to existing agency practices
- ▶ the 'McDonaldisation' of social work, that is to say, increasing surveillance and routinisation of practice and its micro-management
- ▶ political support for a range of unevidenced, cost-cutting, individualising approaches to social work practice with service users, including 'motivational interviewing', 'strengths-based' work, 'personalisation' and the 'three conversations'

However, just as broader formal political developments have impacted on social work, so it has also been influenced by a set of progressive aspirations and commitments.

Progressive social work has always seen the person in context. There has never been the pretence that a person is an island 'entire of itself'. Of course, we all have agency to some degree at least, but we are also constrained by our place in the world; by the impact of our environment on who we are. And we are differently affected by this according to our demographics, our educational and other opportunity.

Social work has been a pioneer in user and carer involvement. This has the potential to be a game-changer for the profession and practice of social work. Some of the

'Social work has always been a weathervane for the politics of its age'

IN FOCUS

innovations and advances that this has led to include:

- ▶ The establishment of requirements – following the introduction of the social work degree – for the involvement of service users and carers in all stages of qualifying and post-qualifying social work courses
- ▶ The defeat by the Disability Rights Commission of an attempt by the General Social Care Council [former regulator of social work in England] to exclude competent social workers with experience of using mental health services
- ▶ The introduction of formal arrangements for the involvement of service users and carers into the governance of social work and social care organisations such as the Social Care Institute for Excellence and Skills for Care
- ▶ Recognition of the importance of user and carer involvement by successive social work regulators
- ▶ The increasing recruitment of applicants with lived experience of using services, as well as other requirements, to become social workers
- ▶ A growing recognition of the value of service users' experiential knowledge and their involvement in participatory, collaborative and user-led research
- ▶ A return of interest in more person-centred, relationship-based social work, engaging with service users

As the anti-democratic thrust of neoliberal, market-led policy and tokenistic involvement has become more explicit, so service user movements have increasingly recognised this and strengthened their challenge against it.

We must be clear, as the Social Work Action Network has argued, about what kind of social work we should be fighting for. It is not enough that it is some 'care management' role primarily concerned with rationing social care services that are still essentially based on poor law principles of 'needs' and 'means' testing to match grossly inadequate budgets. The resulting social work is reactionary and will have little to offer most service users.

We need to be clear about what social work is, based on what principles we are talking about, if social work is to be renewed and have a liberatory future committed to social justice. Here are some of the principles I believe offer ways forward for such social work:

- ▶ Co-producing social work at every level, from direct practice jointly constructed between social worker and service user, through to policy and provision
- ▶ Prioritising the social work skills and qualities that service users repeatedly highlight they value: treating people with equality, respect, warmth, reliability, listening, being non-judgemental. Valuing a relationship-based model of social work that has the best elements of a friend helping formalised with recognition of boundaries and equalities
- ▶ A commitment to treating diversity with equality, and this reflected in social work's process, practice, theory, learning and knowledge development
- ▶ Advancing an inclusive and diverse knowledge base that gives equal value to service users' lived experience and experiential knowledge and challenges the conflicts between this and traditional medicalised and psychiatrised individualistic models and interpretations



Peter Beresford

'Social work should be developed as a universal service, funded out of general taxation as part of a re-visioned social care system, free at the point of delivery'

- ▶ Drawing more on social models developed by service users which value people in context rather than pathologising or victimising them
- ▶ Based on a commitment to sustainability and the future of the planet rather than social work being narrowly tied to an economic model putting production, the purchase of goods and employment at any cost, regardless of individual wellbeing and the safeguarding of the environment
- ▶ Working for co-producing social work learning and education
- ▶ Supporting user-led organisations and seeing them as an important home and facilitator for co-produced social work
- ▶ Working for social work that is participatory in all its aspects and at every level, enabling effective user, family and worker participation

Social work generally speaking is and has long been what's called a residual service – only available to people seen as poor or problematic. This is part of a broader philosophy much in vogue under present politics that most of us can and should get by on our own resources and that welfare services are just for a small group who drop through the net. So social services more generally have been cut.

But this doesn't fit the reality. It's at odds with the working philosophy of the NHS which is to be a universalist service available largely free at the point of delivery. To sum up, social work should be developed as a universal service, funded out of general taxation as part of a re-visioned social care system, free at the point of delivery, that recognises that we may all have needs that can benefit from social work support with its emphasis on a social approach and recognition of the importance of the intersection of the personal with the social and political.

Amy Richards highlights the difficult judgements social workers are having to make during the pandemic

In the instant that Helen decided to return home, I knew she was making a decision that ultimately could end her life.

Three weeks earlier an urgent referral came in for Helen, an 80-year-old with dementia needing support, as her husband Richard had been taken to hospital.

I tried to complete an initial assessment over the phone – during Covid-19 this is becoming the norm.

Helen informed me she was staying with a friend and the friend confirmed she would support Helen while Richard was in hospital. I was relieved knowing Helen was okay and that someone who knew her would be there for her, particularly as it was a Friday when arranging support can be neigh on impossible. Richard was Helen's main carer and she needed assistance throughout the day to manage her daily living tasks.

Richard was admitted to hospital after attending a routine GP visit that he had delayed due to fears of leaving the house during Covid-19. A few days later, he was discharged and told to isolate as he had been in contact with someone on the ward who was Covid positive.

At the point of discharge Richard had not been tested for Covid-19. I asked Helen whether she wanted me to arrange support for her while Richard was isolating. She told me: "No, I want to be at home with my husband, our vows were in sickness and in health."

Although Helen had a diagnosis of dementia, she was managing well and understood her decision to return to isolate with her husband. Social workers have been given guidance on how to complete Mental Capacity Assessments virtually under the Mental Capacity Act (2005) during Covid-19, but the act itself remains unchanged.

From the discussions I had with Helen and the reasoned arguments she made for wishing to be with her husband, I did not have cause to doubt her capacity, therefore using the principles from the act (c.1 (2)), a formal capacity assessment was not completed.

Helen told me she had seen the news of people dying in care homes and believed she would be better off at home. Never in my professional career had I actually wished someone did not have capacity until that day – but would it have made any difference? The learning from previous training rung in my ears: "An unwise decision doesn't mean an incapacitated one."

Additionally, if Helen had not had capacity to make this decision, what would I have found to be in her best interests? The Mental Capacity Act (2005) also refers to individuals' previous wishes, involving them in decision making, and keeping their wellbeing at the forefront of any best interests decisions. Therefore it's likely the outcome would have been the same.

I could understand Helen's decision to be with her husband – even more so later when my partner and I

One of the worst things as a professional working during Covid is that feeling of absolute helplessness

contracted Covid-19 and made the decision to isolate together.

I rang Helen and Richard most days to check they were okay, and agreed to go and visit them at the end of their isolation period. The day before my visit I rang to check if they had any Covid symptoms, as we were now completing risk assessments prior to face-to-face visits.

A voice I didn't recognise answered the phone, who turned out to be Helen's brother, Paul. Paul informed me he had moved in with Helen as Richard had been rushed to hospital with breathing difficulties. I knew straight away he would have Covid-19, and that Helen and Paul were now seriously at risk too.

While I was speaking to Paul it was clear he was out of breath and I could also hear Helen coughing in the background. I arranged home testing kits to be delivered the next day. I remember going to sleep that night angry that the situation had been able to develop as it had, and how powerless I felt. I wished that when Richard was re-admitted to hospital I was told so I could try and arrange some respite care for Helen.

One of the worst things as a professional working during

'Helen told me she had seen the news of people dying in care homes and believed she would be better off at home'

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informed me Paul and Richard had both passed away, the cause of death was Covid-19. Helen was not able to see Richard before he died as he was in a different hospital, and she was too unwell to make the journey.

Eventually Helen was discharged to a care home. I remember going to visit her to see how she was doing, fully gowned up in PPE. There was no indication as to why Helen's Covid-19 symptoms were more mild than her relatives. Perhaps Richard's underlying health conditions made him more vulnerable to the virus.

By the time I saw her, Helen's memory had deteriorated quite a lot but she was talking of Richard. She seemed to be aware that he had died but told me different stories of how – all of them much more pleasant than the reality, which was a comfort.

As I turned to go, she reached out for my hand and said: "He was everything to me," and in that instant I knew she had made the choice that was right for her, putting her own health at risk to be with him until the end.

There was so much to reflect on after this experience that it took me a few days to process what had happened and how quickly. As social workers we are encouraged to promote choice and independence, yet during the pandemic it's like walking a tightrope with perilous risks on either side.

If Helen did not have capacity to choose to isolate with Richard, would I have found this to be in her best interests? If so, how would I feel knowing that that decision led to her illness, and her brother's death?

There were also considerations under the Human Rights Act (1998) – Helen's right to a private and family life in balance with her right to life.

The consequences of best interests decisions should never be undermined and are never one single person's decision, but in the light of Covid-19 they can be a death sentence.

Meanwhile, there is a growing caseload of other people that need support, and an enormous amount of people being affected by Covid-19.

What stood out most in this case, indeed what often stands out the most in social work, is the importance of humanity, being human, and the relationships that exist to get us through every single day.

With an ageing population, social workers come into a lot more contact with death than the general public. Death feels more acceptable when it's the result of deterioration of health over time, or when we have been able to support someone to have what they see as a 'good death'.

Covid-19 is neither of those things. My concern is that as vaccinations increase, and deaths and restrictions decrease, we will have a new pandemic of burnt out professionals experiencing post-traumatic stress from the events of the past 12 months and the sheer volume of death they have had to work through.

'What stood out most in this case is the importance of humanity'

Covid-19 is that feeling of absolute helplessness. Any which way you turn the virus can rear its ugly head, and the speed at which it spreads makes you feel as though you're always on the back foot. Even if I could have arranged respite for Helen, it was possible that she could have contracted Covid-19 in the care home. Or even worse, she could have gone in without symptoms for them to show later and it then spread through the home putting a lot of vulnerable people at risk.

Helen and Paul tested positive for Covid and were admitted to hospital. At the point of a hospital admission as a community social worker your role is generally put on hold until the person is medically fit for discharge. It was such a strange time knowing all that had happened and the relationship you had built with someone, to then be told by nursing staff they cannot share any information with you due to data protection.

It is frustrating that social care and health still do not have access to the same systems of information.

The next update I had was from another relative who

- Names and some details changed to protect confidentiality
- Amy Richards is an adults social worker in a community team
- BASW's Covid-19 Pandemic – Ethical Guidance for Social Workers can viewed on its website



For most students, going on placement is their first proper taste of being part of a social work team.

The pandemic, however, has fundamentally changed that experience.

“I have not been able to visit any service user. Everything has been virtual,” says Truphosa Odima, a social work student at the University of Hertfordshire.

For Truphosa, going on her work placement with Hertfordshire County Council’s post hospital review team has meant sitting at home in front of her laptop.

“Sometimes working from home can be isolating. You don’t have that contact with people around you.”

Having a good practice educator in such conditions is vital to ensuring a successful placement, says Truphosa. She feels lucky to have had that in Ewa Dorofiejczyk.

“She has been very supportive from day one, very proactive in asking for opportunities for me, and introducing me to the team. It wouldn’t be the same experience without her support and sense of humour.”

Ewa is all too aware of the added strain on Truphosa – as an experienced social worker she has felt the struggle of working from home herself.

“The pandemic has turned social work upside down,” she says. “After one year, I’m still trying to find my way of working productively for eight hours in front of the screen.”

“I was worried when Truphosa joined our team how I would virtually support her and how she would meet all her objectives and ensure the standard of her placement

How are students coping on placements during the pandemic? **Shahid Naqvi** spoke to Truphosa Odima and Omonigho Akhabue from the University of Hertfordshire and their practice educators to find out

was kept high.” One of the biggest challenges was making sure Truphosa felt part of the team. Ewa was careful to include her in the various online meetings, both formal and informal, set up within her team.

“We have a morning group in WhatsApp where we just say good morning before we start work, so we know everybody is okay and ready for the day, and she’s included in that,” says Ewa.

Truphosa adds: “The team has been really supportive. They have a daily professional connected lives meeting, where all the members of the team come together with any challenging cases anyone may have.”

Omonigho Akhabue, also a social work student from the University of Hertfordshire, is on a placement with the Watford & Three Rivers Adult Disability Team, part of adult services at Hertfordshire County Council. She has also found attending online meetings vital for connecting with the team.

“We have a peer group meeting which is every Wednesday. There is that relationship building there and discussion of cases. We have staff meetings twice a month.

“I have regular supervision with my team which is reflective every week. I am able to discuss with my PE if

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From left, Ewa Dorofiejczyk, Omonigho Akhabue and Truphosa Odima

from the service user to see if I am allowed to shadow.”

Lauren adds: “Omonigho and me had an initial conversation about whether she kept her camera on or not. If she is just this little face watching, how comfortable does that feel for the service user?”

“Should she turn her camera off or is that rude because she’s not visible but still there listening? We had to figure out what would be appropriate and talk to the service users about it.”

Most people preferred her to be there with the camera on, says Lauren. Truphosa also notes some benefits from a virtual placement.

“Working remotely, I have been able to do things that I wouldn’t have been able to do face-to-face. I managed to shadow a roundtable meeting where professionals come together in support of a service user before a case is taken to court, and then go to court.

“That is rare, especially in adults services, to be able to go to court at this early stage in my profession. I don’t think I would’ve been able to do that if it was face-to-face.

“Also, I have been able to shadow so many processes – all it needs is me being in one team in one hour and in the next ten minutes I’m in another one. That would not be possible one-to-one.”

As a single mum of two, Omonigho says doing her placement virtually has helped with childcare.

“I am able to go to meetings even though my children are here. They know I am working, I can go down and prepare lunch and go back to work. That balance has been good, as I have struggled over the years trying to cope with childcare.”

There are, however, some things that can’t be experienced virtually, says Lauren.

“I was conscious I did want Omonigho to do some face-to-face visits and have that experience because at some point we are coming out of this pandemic.

“We have a duty team and sometimes we have to do urgent visits where we might be concerned about someone, so we have to go out.

“Omonigho has been able to go out with one of our social workers in quite unusual circumstances and was able to reflect on that.

“Also, to reflect on the personal safety stuff – when we come out of this we need to talk about how as a newly qualified worker you would work through some of those personal safety things like lone working. I didn’t want her to miss out on that.”

Both students and practice educators long for a return to some kind of normality.

Ewa says she is looking forward to her team being able to do their charity walks together rather than separately and Lauren to seeing her team “in one room, having cake, the bring and share lunches”.

Truphosa and Omonigho are just eager to experience working face-to-face with other professionals.

“I want to see members of our team and know them,” says Truphosa. Omonigho adds: “I want to be a social worker going into work and meeting people, the way it ought to be.”

there is anything I am struggling with and put that on the agenda.”

Like Ewa, Omonigho’s practice educator Lauren Taber was initially apprehensive about how she would provide support in lockdown.

“I was really excited to take on a student but before the interview I was thinking, ‘Oh, we are in a pandemic, how are we going to do this?’

“I was conscious she was going to be on her own at home, it’s not the office environment where you can just lean over and talk to someone and ask general quick questions.”

Lauren’s immediate priority was ensuring Omonigho’s first two weeks were full.

“That two weeks was solid with opportunities, whether shadowing, meeting other professionals, coming along to peer groups. Because she was busy she had a lot of things to reflect on at the end of the week.”

Ironically, says Lauren, the pandemic may have created more opportunities for Omonigho, with the team reaching out to offer their support.

“They have really pulled together for her. They would give me a shout and say, ‘I’m doing this, do you want to shadow and see what this is about?’

“In a normal context they may have forgotten, or people get busy, or are all out on visits. You could feel that they felt we need to pull together to give her the opportunity.”

Shadowing social workers virtually brings a new dimension to placements. Omonigho says: “The team will book a Microsoft meeting and have to obtain consent

‘Before the interview I was thinking ‘Oh, we are in a pandemic, how are we going to do this?’

Andrew Murray, director of Family Support for Safe Families based in Scotland, on the crucial role played by charities and voluntary organisations during the pandemic

Has it really been over a year since the start of lockdown? It's hard to remember what life was like before.

The last year has tested us all. Many of us have struggled with our own mental health and just the sheer monotony of life without much human contact.

I work for Safe Families, a growing family support charity that believes everyone deserves to belong. We are passionate about connecting people into community. We believe in hope, compassion and hospitality.

Since the first lockdown on 24 March 2020, we have helped 1,413 new families to be connected with a volunteer (over 100 per month) benefiting 3,066 children. Safe Families offers overnight hosting and over the last year 119 children been hosted for a total of 649 bed nights. We have started work in at least six new local authority areas and we have seen a 52 per cent increase in families engaged in active support.

How does a charity that is so passionate about connection respond during lockdown and what challenges have we seen?

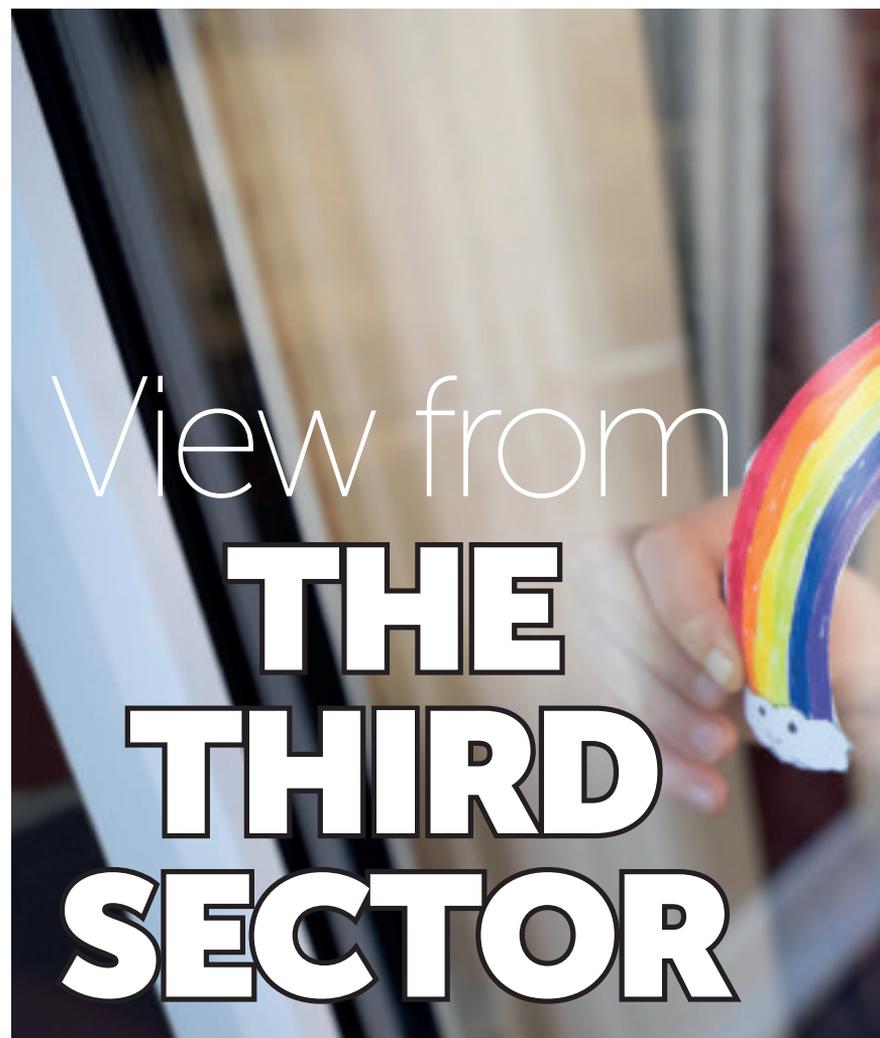
Issues facing families in lockdown

Families have faced a huge range of challenges over the last year. Four of the key challenges we have seen across the UK are: food poverty, digital poverty, isolation and a widening attainment gap.

During the first lockdown an assumption was made that families could easily and quickly move online: education, shopping, banking and, of course, work. But for most of the families we support poverty presents huge challenges. The pandemic has exposed the issue of digital poverty and how disabling this can be in our modern society. Many of the families we work with are already dealing with trauma, overcrowding, poverty and then very suddenly they were faced with much of everyday life going online.

Last March this was particularly acute with regard to something as basic as getting food. Our staff were very quickly supporting basic food distribution but it was heart-breaking to see the anxiety and fear in so many families as to where their next box of food would come from as food poverty increased. I personally supported a family who had their universal credit suspended for ten weeks during lockdown and were completely dependent on emergency food parcels and the supermarket vouchers so generously donated by local churches.

Without doubt isolation has had the biggest impact on families. Social workers and other professionals have been amazingly adaptive and have been able to offer contact and



The pandemic has exposed the issue of digital poverty and how disabling this can be in our modern society

services online, but it is a poor substitute for face-to-face contact. Our support has had to adapt to lockdown with much of it moving to virtual. But staff and volunteers have been incredibly creative. They have been helping children with their homework via WhasApp, sending crafts to children who they are supporting, singing together online, playing online games and a whole range of other ideas.

In a limited number of cases, we have continued to see families face-to-face and this has been a lifeline in situations that were often at breaking point. We ran online sessions for volunteers to share creative ideas for working with families virtually and for staff to share good practice including:

- ▶ Letting the child control the length of the session
- ▶ Being clear on ground rules
- ▶ Keeping as interactive as possible
- ▶ Keeping good case notes and following up with Safe Families staff
- ▶ Always following up with the parent after your session

The pandemic has undoubtedly compounded academic attainment gaps and life chances. Many children from situations of poverty are further behind and the 'attainment gap' has got wider over the last year.

Addressing these issues will be a huge challenge for all of us in social care who have a passion for social justice.

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Challenges facing the third sector in pandemic

As with all parts of social work and social care, the third sector has faced a huge challenge during lockdown.

Many smaller charities were not prepared for such a monumental shift to online support and struggled for the first few months. Many third sector charities also felt a lack of support from statutory services as they were in the frontline of family support.

Strong and resilient organisations like the Edinburgh Voluntary Organisation Council have been vital in connecting organisations and sharing good practice. But necessity is the mother of innovation and in Edinburgh we have seen the development of local neighbourhood Locality Operational Groups during lockdown. Every week partners in the third sector, social work and lifelong learning come together to discuss identified local needs and referrals for support.

The third sector has faced a huge challenge in funding. Many charities have limited reserves and the cancellation of funding events and sponsorship has had a huge impact on income. Many charities are heavily reliant on charity shops which have had to close during different periods of lockdown.

There has been a sense amongst third sector colleagues that the combination of funding challenges, uncertainty

and rapid change have all combined to have a lasting effect on many people.

Supporting staff wellbeing

All staff teams have faced challenges over the last year. Juggling work, family life, education and home working have tested the most resilient of us. Organisations that have thrived have been responsive, agile, and adaptable. We had made the switch to Slack to communicate just before lockdown and this has proved a game-changer in connecting the organisation, supervision and team meetings.

My own team has met around three times a week for a 'check in' which has helped people to remain connected. We have also been able to have occasional UK-wide staff team meetings with around 120 staff. The chief executive has been able to speak directly to every staff member to thank them for all they are doing and to offer clear guidance and vision. Teams have come up with all sorts of innovative ideas to connect with each other socially.

When lockdown regulations allowed, we created team 'bubbles' where team members went for a walk with each other once a month. There was also lots of catch ups over Zoom and Slack including a recent Friday night quiz night in the virtual 'Belonging Inn'. I heard of one third sector organisation that has a 'water cooler' check in with their staff every morning just in the same way as if they would if they were all in the office.

Role of volunteers

The role of volunteers has been brought into sharper focus throughout the pandemic and will become increasingly important as communities seek to recover.

The Safe Families approach is premised on the notion of promoting positive change, with research showing that such change comes through relationships. It is recognised within relation-based practice models that the impact of relationship is the primary force for producing positive outcomes.

In addition, the qualities of hope and expectancy that change will occur are also implicated in delivering successful outcomes. It is acknowledged that what individuals' value most highly are relationships where they are accepted and 'ordinary friendship' is developed on equal terms. The volunteer model is well suited to meet this.

Clearly this has been a huge challenge in lockdown with many relationships starting remotely. But we have seen the power of connection even over the phone or online. Isolation can be crippling and even having a phone call once or twice per week can be incredible. One of our volunteers who lives on a farm often video calls a seven-year-old girl she has befriended and then shows her some of the animals on the farm which she absolutely loves. Not quite the same as being there but a lifeline for a girl locked in a very tough situation.

Andrew Murray is director of Family Support for Safe Families in Scotland and has been a social worker for 25 years
For more information about the charity visit www.safefamilies.uk

'When lockdown regulations allowed, we created team 'bubbles' where team members went for a walk'

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Still living with the wounds

Richard McCann's childhood was blighted by trauma, most horrifically the murder of his mother by serial killer Peter Sutcliffe when he was only five. He tells **Maggie Fogarty** how he survived – and ultimately thrived

Today Richard McCann is a proud father of three children, something he once thought that he didn't deserve because of the wounds left from his own traumatic childhood background.

Richard was just a week away from his sixth birthday when his mother Wilma became the first known victim of serial killer Peter Sutcliffe. Even before then home life was blighted by domestic abuse, his father's violence and Wilma's declining mental health, leading to him and his three sisters being placed on the child protection register.

This – alongside poverty and neglect – resulted in no less than 126 visits by social workers and spells in foster care before Wilma's murder in 1975.

By the time he was in his 20s, drugs, prison and a mental health breakdown were the legacy of a childhood of unimaginable adversity.

I first spoke to Richard back in 2004 when his debut book *Just a Boy* was published, a story of his traumatic childhood

experiences and the impact this has had into adulthood. A bestseller, the book changed his life and over the intervening years he has become a successful speaker, campaigner and educator, giving talks to a wide range of professionals, including social workers.

Richard has only fleeting memories of Wilma who was 28 when she lost her life so brutally.

He recalls the family made a makeshift swimming pool in the garden, Wilma laughing as she was thrown in. This stands out because he doesn't have many memories of his mum having fun.

Others are tinged with sadness including Wilma being beaten by his father. "When I got hold of a copy of my social services file 30 years later, it came home to me just how hard life was for mum, four children with no money and a violent husband," says Richard.

On the morning that Wilma died the children were taken into a local children's home in Leeds and later told that their mum had "gone to heaven" and wasn't coming back.

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Within days, a photo of the four children sitting together was published in the local paper which also showed the murder scene where Wilma's body lay covered up. "Our bewildered and glum little faces would soon be all over the local papers," Richard recalls.

After a short spell in the children's home, Richard and his siblings were placed in the care of his birth father – before Wilma died the couple had divorced – along with his new partner and their child. All moved to another part of Leeds and when Richard looked at the social services files, contact with social workers seems to have dropped off at this time, despite earlier concerns about his father's behaviour. Richard thinks that this could also be a result of his father's distrust of 'authorities', including social workers.

There was no talk about what had happened to Wilma and his dad's drinking continued along with the violence. On one occasion Richard recalls how he drowned the family dog in their bath and the children were sometimes beaten for the smallest transgressions. Although drinking changed his personality, Richard says that when sober he had a better side.

"We could have done with some support, a check that our emotional wellbeing was being dealt with. It wasn't," Richard says.

He isn't sure whether trauma counselling was an option back then but it didn't happen. He knows from his own contact with families who have experienced murder or violence that children can still slip through the net "due to a lack of adequate funding, resources and professionals being overworked".

In a comment that resonates today with concerns about child protection during lockdown, Richard says that school was a safe haven, a chance to feel 'normal' and he recalls one teacher who was especially supportive.

"When there was all this stuff going on at home, walking on eggshells and at times experiencing violence, school was a safe place. I could pretend I was like everyone else."

At one point the young Richard got a paper round and couldn't escape the lurid headlines during the police hunt for the man who had killed his mum. When Jayne MacDonald, a babysitter to the McCann children, became the latest victim Richard convinced himself the killer was out to get him. He remembers harbouring 'dark' violent thoughts – all signs of untreated childhood trauma.

The newspaper and broadcast media coverage of his mother's killing is something that still hurts. It resurfaced recently when a Netflix documentary series changed its main title from 'Once Upon a Time in Yorkshire' to one named after that notorious Victorian serial killer with the moniker 'The Ripper'. Richard says that even as a child he was unsettled by this historical comparison: "The papers were saying that mum and the other women were prostitutes, somehow less deserving of sympathy. Others were described as 'innocent' – as if mum and the earlier victims weren't. Language really does matter here."

He cried when he finally received a recent long overdue police apology for this distressing narrative.

In his late teens, Richard joined the army and continued

**'Our
bewildered
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**'You have
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on in there'**

a pattern of hiding his background. This all changed when he had a breakdown while based in Germany.

"The *Murder Casebook* magazine series was published and of course it featured the Yorkshire killings. That's when it came out about who I really was. I got drunk and went on a rampage – I just remember thinking that I wanted the attention he had. It was obvious that I'd not dealt with what had gone on."

It led to a spell in a psychiatric unit and when he returned to Leeds the effects of suppressed childhood trauma continued to resurface. At one point he became involved in drugs which led to a six month spell in Armley jail.

"After serving my sentence I might have been out of jail but everything else about my life seemed hopeless... I was now an ex con, with no job and few prospects."

Richard began to write what was to become his bestselling first book, along with getting some much-needed counselling.

Having missed out on getting qualifications at school, he also enrolled as a mature student on a social work foundation degree at the University of Leeds, before deciding to shift to a broader social policy course.

After his book was published, there were invitations to talk to various professionals including social workers. This was a turning point, realising that he could help people make positive changes out of adversity just as he had done. He didn't complete his degree but has since given talks all over the world, set up his own iCan Academy and written a raft of books.

More recently he has stepped back from running a support group for families who have experienced the murder or violent death of loved ones. Having lost his troubled younger sister Angela to cancer in 2019 and his older sister Sonia who took her own life a decade earlier, he is mindful of the need to protect his own mental health. In his own words he is "still living with the wounds".

His focus now is on creating a memorial garden in Leeds for all the women and 23 children whose lives were affected by those terrible events over four decades ago. He wants it to be a peaceful area where people can go to reflect.

Considering what he has already achieved, this looks likely to happen and *Just a Boy* should still be essential reading for everyone involved in child protection.

For more details including Women's Memory Garden – www.richardmccann.co.uk/5108-2

ADAM'S ADVICE TO HIS FIVE-YEAR-OLD SELF:

"You have experienced one of the most painful things that anyone can, but you hang on in there. You will grow in ways you can't understand right now, and you will look back in years to come to understand that the death of your mother will help countless people along the way. And despite your future concerns that you do not deserve to have children, you will go on to have three wonderful (and ginger) children of your own and they will make you immensely proud."

As a child protection social worker I had experience of safeguarding practice within a number of different teams: early intervention, referral and assessment, child protection and court. I spent time seconded to Women's Refuge and community domestic violence and abuse services.

I worked closely with other professionals, particularly schools, and felt confident that I had established effective professional relationships and networks in my practice.

In spite of this, when referrals were received from schools, I was always left a little perplexed that they included concerns which stretched back months, if not years. I remember thinking 'why have these concerns about children living with neglect not been shared before?'

Was it because the worries were perceived as 'low level' neglect? What was low-level neglect? Maybe they were recorded as individual instances by the school. Perhaps it was to do with the different context, or wishing to avoid the potential fall-out with parents when making a referral to statutory services.

Carrying out research on the topic of 'child neglect and the role of schools' allowed me space away from the fast-paced demands of child protection practice to reflect and seek answers.

Interprofessional working

Working with others across services to safeguard children is not only a legal requirement, but one of our professional and ethical responsibilities.

However, despite wide agreement that interprofessional practice is beneficial and strongly embedded within numerous policy imperatives, findings from Serious Case Reviews persist in citing interprofessional working as a significant challenge of safeguarding practice.

The importance of schools

Schools are widely acknowledged as key partners in the safeguarding network. They hold a central location within the community which offer opportunities for children to be observed by a broad range of staff over an extended period of time and in a range of different settings. For this reason, school staff are crucial in the early identification of child neglect. They may possess invaluable expertise about the lived experiences of children and wider awareness and knowledge of family history and functioning.

Schools as key safeguarding partners

Although schools are central in our safeguarding practice, little is known about the manner in which they identify and respond to child neglect, nor the nature of their professional relationships with children's social care. My research investigates the level of involvement by school staff in the early identification of neglect, and their contributions to the child protection process.

Schools and safeguarding

Victoria Sharley's research highlights best practice between social workers and school staff

Messages for social work in children and families' teams

- ▶ Social workers should use the local authority's threshold guidance document as a shared tool for reflective discussion with schools to inform decision-making, and develop a 'shared language' to articulate concerns
- ▶ Social workers should routinely provide feedback to schools on the outcome of referrals made to child protection services and the rationale for decisions not to intervene
- ▶ Social workers should ensure that child protection conferences are not planned during school holidays, and that information is shared with new schools where children are transitioning to secondary education

Messages for interprofessional practice

- ▶ Senior staff should cultivate understanding around the barriers which impede successful inter-agency collaboration
- ▶ All practitioners should build trusting working relationships with individuals in partner agencies
- ▶ Informal and formal opportunities should be made available to all staff to support knowledge development of partner agencies' terms, roles, approaches and methods of working
- ▶ All staff should have the opportunity to spend time in partner agencies to develop expertise across services through informal day visits, or formal secondments/ co-location of services (with counterparts in statutory or universal services)
- ▶ Training on child neglect should be undertaken in a multi-disciplinary setting
- ▶ The role of the school social worker is to respond to interprofessional barriers in schools and child protection services and should be expanded to all local authorities
- ▶ The local authority's threshold guidance/matrix document should be used as a tool for reflective discussion with universal services, to inform decision-making and foster a 'shared language', so that partner agencies are supported to articulate their concerns

BASW webinar

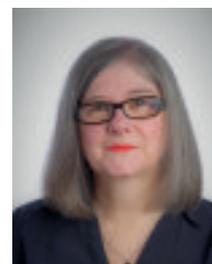
If you would like further information BASW is running a webinar titled 'Identifying and Responding to child neglect in schools: messages for inter-agency safeguarding practice' on the findings of the research study and recommendations for practice. The event is on 29 April 2021 at 12.30pm – go to www.basw.co.uk/events to book a place.

Victoria Sharley is a lecturer in Social Work with Children and Families at the University of Bristol



RUTH ALLEN

BASW's chief executive on significant developments for social work



A backdrop of legislation and policy in need of our attention

With elections across the UK in May – and a backlog of non-Covid issues that politicians and civil servants have been itching to get on with, there has been a surge in significant policy and legislative proposals over recent months.

Just as many of us are looking forward to some recovery time to relieve the fatigue and hard work of the pandemic, we see multiple pieces of policy and legislation coming forward needing our professional understanding, attention and strong response. BASW has a crucial role in that space, to consult and share members views with decision-makers.

Some initiatives are health and social care specific, directly impacting social work. Others are wider but also have potential to impact on social work and communities we work with.

The latter includes the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill which was due its third reading in the House of Lords as PSW went to press. It is a 'monster' of a Bill, as several commentators have noted, and immediately drew attention for having dealt more seriously with the threats to statues than threats of violence against women, in the week after the terrible murder of Sarah Everard.

Amongst other things it proposes stripping back rights of peaceful protest and undermines the rights of Gypsies, Roma and Travellers by redefining and criminalising 'trespass'.

We are also in the middle of the review of the UK Human Rights Act. BASW has been pleased to partner with the British Institute of Human Rights to ensure the voice of social workers is heard in the consultation – and to ensure we do all we can to preserve the principles, protections and compliance with international conventions that it contains – and which underpin so much social work policy, practice and law. This is an area of must-win for social work.

It's important also to note many of the biggest policy gaps that we desperately need to address – including adult social care in England, welfare benefits and universal credit across the UK – are largely untouched.

These are the reforms we urgently need after years of neglect and the societal catastrophe and inequality of Covid.

To be fair, some recent health and social care policy

is welcomed. The Feeley Review of adult social care in Scotland and the consultation on the implementation of the reforms to the Mental Health Act in England are rooted in credible consultation and inclusivity. They both address longstanding issues and the challenges of the pandemic and the post-Covid world. Our country teams are deeply involved in harnessing social workers' voices on these.

Other initiatives feel opportunistic, even exploitative, taking advantage of the distracted and fatigued state of much of the public sector to push through sweeping changes without the scrutiny needed from the sector.

For instance, in England the health and social care white paper, like Feeley in Scotland, has a strong theme of integrated health and social care. But it offers nothing on the vital adult social care reform and new funding settlement we desperately need. It paints a picture of (largely) NHS-led integration but not of the resources urgently needed for local authorities and social care in their own right. After 12 white or green papers, four commissions and five select committee reports, this has been kicked back again to the long-awaited promise of comprehensive reform by this and previous governments.

The health and social care white paper also comes at a time when the NHS, local authorities and voluntary sector are still battling Covid-19 and must not be distraction from dealing with the crisis at hand.

In England we also have the Independent Review of Children's Social Care which is hugely controversial for many reasons. This includes its lack of true 'independence' from government, the inexperience of its non-social worker leadership, its short time frame (12 months) and wide scope for what has been announced as a "once in a generation" overhaul, its apparent lack of remit to make funding recommendations, its lack of children's rights and legal safeguards perspective and the prioritisation of business and financial expertise over social worker and other core professional advice in its governance.

Reform is undoubtedly needed, but probably not as much as new investment and political commitment to decent services, rights and an end to profit motives in children's social care.

The careers of black social workers matter

Joyce Richards* says she left frontline practice after growing disillusioned at seeing white managers promoting people who look like them



I trained to become a social worker as a mature student on England's Step Up to Social Work programme after a lengthy career in education.

The schools I chose to work in had what some might describe as challenging cohorts. They had higher than average free school meal pupils and higher than average pupils for whom English was an additional language.

It was these experiences that made me aware of the resilience of communities, the way different groups practice the same religion and the needs that they perceive they do and do not have as opposed to the ones attributed to them.

No surprise then when as my career developed, I became more involved with the pastoral aspect of education, hence my transition to social work.

I entered a profession that was unashamedly proud of its founding values and principles: social justice, anti-oppression and anti-discriminatory practice – right up my street! I obtained my Masters and worked with all the enthusiasm you would expect of someone in the infancy of a new career.

However, after three years I began to notice a worrying trend. Of those of us who began our ASYE together, some were being promoted and others actively encouraged to apply for level 2 status, securing a pay rise and recognition they had moved from novice to more experienced worker.

When my colleagues innocently asked me if I had gone for my level 2 yet, I was surprised to then learn that they had been approached and encouraged to apply and I had not despite meeting the criteria. I was further stunned to hear them describe the support they received during supervision to complete the paperwork.

I could not figure it out, we started at more or less the same time, went through the ASYE at the same time and worked in similar, and in some cases, the same roles. The glaring difference between me and those colleagues was that they are white and I am black.

So, I began discreetly asking my black colleagues if they had started the process of applying for the level 2. The response was unanimous: "What's that?"

I need you to understand what this means. The outcome

'The disparity between the stated values and how they are lived in practice was not something I could accept'

of this disparity meant that black workers are paid less, meaning black families have less disposable income. How is that for an example of systemic and structural racism?

At the risk of plagiarising, I want to make the following point very clear – the careers of black workers matter! We want to be rewarded and recognised for our work too!

During supervision with my line manager, I asked about the process of applying for the level 2 and she talked me through what I needed to do and the relevant timescales. I was expecting her to say that I was not ready which would have explained why it was not raised with me, but no, apparently, she just forgot to mention it.

I completed the paperwork, went through the panel process and was awarded level 2 pay and status without further ado. Once I was alerted to the differential experiences, I could not help but judge my profession by the values it espouses and it came up woefully short.

Needless to say, I watched as the careers of less experienced and less qualified colleagues accelerated while I seemed destined to stay where I was until my pension. Hence my decision to leave frontline practice – the disparity between the stated values and how they are lived out in practice was not something in all consciousness that I could accept.

In my experience, your success or not in social work does not reflect how effective you are at affecting change and positive outcomes for children and families. Instead, it is wholly dependent on how well your manager relates to you. If your manager identifies with you, you will be rewarded.

Sadly, ethnic differences often prevent people from seeing similarities as they struggle to get past physical differences. There have been many platitudes and pledges in the wake of George Floyd's murder and the subsequent Black Lives Matter movement, not least from a profession that is quick to refer to its ethical principles.

I would like to take this opportunity to implore social work agencies to practice what the profession preaches. As a wise sage once said: "Get your own house in order before attempting to fix someone else's."

* Name changed to protect identity

It is time to speak truth against the injustices

In the face of misogyny, racism and the erosion of rights, social work has an obligation to speak out, says **Kath Morris**



Intended to write about the need for a social work commentary on the Meghan and Harry interview, the Society of Editors' denial of racism, the tragic death of Sarah Everard and the police response to the vigil.

As a social work professional and educator with 40 years experience and a survivor of domestic abuse I should have been able to write about feminist issues, misogyny, the need to include male voices in discussions about power and the safety of women and girls.

Instead, I found myself struggling to focus and realised that I can't get away from the wider question of what kind of society we are or we have become and the desperate need for us to create a compassionate culture within which these tragedies and challenges are far less likely to happen. Where the automatic reaction when they do is to hear others' voices, not to deny them.

I have written before about my personal experience of abusive relationships, in particular about the terrible imprisonment of traumatic bonding and the sense of self-actualisation and reconnection with the self I had lost which finally allowed me to escape.

The same phenomenon can act just as powerfully at an organisational and societal level. Again I am losing myself, looking to leaders and politicians for some spark of hope and finding none, feeling I have little personal power and waiting for them to rescue me.

The challenge at a structural level is to find a collective voice, a sense of being able to change something destructive into a wise and compassionate debate, a movement even.

Politics has let us down in so many ways. Its inherent competitiveness and self-interest, even amongst those who wish to restore and renew, works against collaboration and inclusivity and weakens the chances of bringing about radical change.

Is this an issue for social work? In my view absolutely, the people we work with are disproportionately affected by all of the above and as a profession our very values are undermined; we have an obligation to speak out.

I want to share a personal experience, the elements of which may be familiar to you. A few months ago I went into a sandwich shop where the owner began to rail against

'We are witnessing the normalisation of bullying'

a traveller camp on the outskirts of town. His analysis was that this would now be sorted out as 'that terrible Human Rights Act' was finally gone as we have left the EU. There was no testing of the water to see if I was in agreement with his views, no engagement and no debate. I stood in silence and dismay, paid for my purchase and resolved never to go back. My voice remained unheard, my views unexpressed and my feelings invalidated.

Many times I have thought about that encounter and tried to imagine how I should have replied; how I would love to have told him that his facts were wrong, the HRA is UK legislation and it protects all of us. How I wished he would never be in a position to need it and that he could hear the traumatised voices of his fellow human beings who do.

Yet as on so many occasions in my life, I allowed myself to be defeated by the dominant voice of another. Back in the seductive arms of my trauma bond, I seemed still to imagine that I could have influenced the views of someone whose heart and mind was closed. When will I finally learn to walk in a different direction?

Whilst we may find ourselves traumatised and diminished by the enormity of what we face, as a profession wherever we can we must ensure that our separate and collective voices are heard up to the highest level. In the face of the insidious erosion of rights and protections we have seen in recent years I feel it is time to speak my truth, because I cannot any longer wait for someone else to say it for me.

We are witnessing the normalisation of bullying, the age of impunity where actions which would have attracted serious consequences in the past go unmarked and often unchallenged and freedoms hard won are systematically being undermined. The voices of young people who will inherit what we have created are seldom heard.

I have broken my silence, though I'm not sure where to go next. So my question is, who speaks for social work in these matters and how can our voices be heard?

Kath Morris is a senior lecturer in social work at Staffordshire University. She is also the author (as Kath Twigg) of a memoir of toxic relationships *The Hall of Mirrors*, *How to Change Life Patterns and Avoid Toxic Relationships*

BASW Heritage Project 2021 April Update

1 WATCH AGAIN' - AN EVENING WITH MARGARET HUMPHREYS

A big thank you to everyone that joined us on March 18th for a wonderful evening with Margaret Humphreys and 'Oranges and Sunshine' film Director, Jim Loach.

We want to thank everyone that supported the event for your donations, questions, and comments and a massive thank you to Margaret and her team at the Child Migrants Trust for all their help and support.

- The event is available to watch again from the link below. (film is not included). www.basw.co.uk/evening-margaret-humphreys
- Donate to Margaret Humphreys's charity the Child Migrants Trust below: www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/basw-margaret-humphreys-event

2 'BASW' by Marie Roulston

I was delighted when Carolyn Ewart, BASW Northern Ireland, asked me to share some of my reflections on my social work career, as I approach retirement after almost 38 years. I am particularly pleased to do this as part of World Social Work month, and as part of the BASW heritage project.

My career started in 1984, (seems like yesterday! Frankie goes to Hollywood, Indiana Jones, and the Temple of Doom). When I started work in Antrim Fieldwork office, in 1984 Northern Ireland remained in conflict, so we were working in troubled times (captured in Voices of Social Work Through the Troubles), but, as a newly qualified social worker, in my first paid job, my focus was to make a difference in the lives of children and families.

- Read the full article www.basw.co.uk

4 The BASW Heritage Project 2020 eBook

Launching summer 2021. We want to thank everyone that has taken part UK wide for all your wonderful submissions. From January to December 2020, we received poetry, art, video, memoirs, stories, essays, photography, and music. Every piece telling a unique story about social work past and present, impact into the future.

Thank you to everyone for your work and support during these unprecedented times. We look forward to launching the BASW eBook very soon.

- Find out more about the eBook project at: www.basw.co.uk/call-essays-poems-and-visual-images-future-social-work
- For more information, please contact Gaby Zavoli: heritage2020@basw.co.uk

3 A WORD FROM GABY ZAVOLI AND NADA KANKOVA THE BASW RECORDED VOICES TEAM

Share your voice, help us create a fuller picture of social work past, present and into the future. Our goal is to collect a broad range of films to capture different views and experiences. We are currently looking for participants willing to share their stories. please

- To get involved please contact heritagevolunteer@basw.co.uk

5 COMING SOON FOR SPRING/SUMMER 2021:

- Launch of the new look BASW 50 web pages: find everything you need in one place.
- Launch of the BASW Future of Social Work eBook
- June heritage festival

For more information or to get involved with any of the projects mentioned above please contact Gaby Zavoli: heritage2020@basw.co.uk

REVIEWS

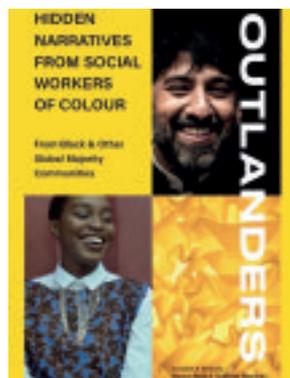
BOOKS

Important text is set to become part of UK social work narrative

Title: OUTLANDERS: Hidden Narratives from Social Workers of Colour From Black and other Global Majority Communities

Editors: Wayne Reid and Siobhan Maclean
Publisher: Kirwin Maclean Associates

ISBN: 9781912130566
Price: £13.00
www.siobhanmaclean.co.uk



This anthology is a stunning collection of stories and experiences lived by social workers of black and other global ethnic majority groups.

The book is presented in sections. 'Essays' includes experiences in academia for black academics and black students. "Let's get this out into the open," says Zoe Thomas. "In academia, being white is normal." This is reflected through the curricula, where the work of black writers is absent and where black academics are side-lined.

The raw emotion of 'Poetry' highlights the experience of social work practice from people of colour – of feeling and *being made to feel* different. 'Stories' offers absorbing fiction with feet planted firmly in reality while 'Reflections' explore a cross-section of autobiographies as writers retrace their personal path to the present. There are stories of marginalisation and silence, but also of hope

through achievements and the establishment of platforms for experiences to be understood.

The final section 'Ruminations', is a collection of papers by Wayne Reid, co-editor and BASW Anti-racism Visionary. Since the murder of George Floyd, Reid has used his BASW platform to galvanise social workers to recognise and respond to racism by taking a proactively anti-racist stance. These papers effectively trace his campaign.

These painful and precious stories describe an important part of UK social work and of what shapes our practice. They are a beautiful contribution to our understanding and ability to articulate how colour and culture impacts experience. This text is set to become an integral part of our UK social work narrative and we are lucky to have it.

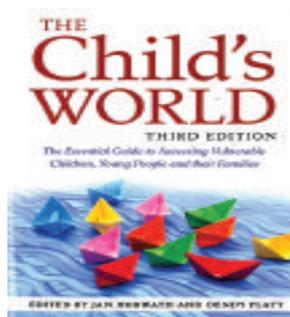
Dr Tanya Moore

Despite changing context, core principles are still relevant

Title: The Child's World. Third Edition. The Essential Guide to Assessing Vulnerable Children, Young People and their Families

Editors: Jan Horwath & Dendy Platt
Publisher: Jessica Kingsley Publishers

ISBN: 9781784503826
Price: £26.99
www.jkp.com



In the 20 years since this book was first published, the context to assessing vulnerable children and young people has changed significantly. Child trafficking and online abuse are very recent topics on the practice agenda. The political and public policy context has fast-evolved across the UK, as devolved administrations have developed their own policy agenda. That said, the core assessment principles of the book's first edition remain unchanged: practitioners should recognise the lived experience of the child; assessment involves the contributions of other disciplines to understand the child's world; a meaningful working relationship has to be established with the child and family to engage with the family in assessment; the importance of building on child and family strengths, and the need

for child assessment to be informed by professional expertise and rooted in research evidence.

The book's 30 chapters are divided into five parts: undertaking assessments; assessing parenting; assessing the child's developmental needs; assessing safety, care and support needs; and assessing the world of the child and family. Each chapter contains learning and teaching aids and is standalone, so the reader can consult the resources and information on the topic they need, when they need it.

The Child's World is a well-resourced, reasonably priced book for health and social care practitioners, managers, post-qualifying students and their teachers across the UK and beyond, whether in statutory or third sectors. Highly recommended.

Angie Ash

Title: Help! My Feelings Are Too Big! Making Sense of Yourself and the World After a Difficult Start in Life - for Children with Attachment Issues

Author: K.L. Aspden
Publisher: Jessica Kingsley Publishers
ISBN: 9781785925566
Price: £9.99 www.jkp.com

This little book packs a big punch. It's a succinct summary of how a child's 'babyhood' can go wrong through the stories of George and Asha. It describes a challenging concept with compassion. It was respectful to parents avoiding blame or judgement, stating "nearly every parent wants to be the best in the world but sometimes things go wrong". The clear and simple illustrations explained the information provided. The book is aimed at children aged nine and above, it uses gentle language and images that children could understand.

The use of describing the development of two children's parallel experiences brings home the message about how children's behaviour is influenced by their early experience. George has 'good enough' early experience compared to Asha who has 'poor' early experience. Both have feelings that change as they grow and these are described in their behaviour as they develop. The author shows how this impacts on each child's school experience.

The book ends with a section with 'HOPE'. This uses current evidence about what is known to help children thrive following a difficult baby/childhood experience.

I'd recommend the book as a resource for busy adults who will appreciate having an easy-to-read resource to pick up and use with vulnerable children.

I wish I'd had this earlier in my career working with children.

Ms. R. Rayner

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BASW ENGLAND WORKSHOPS FOR SOCIAL WORKERS SEEKING EMPLOYMENT OR NEW EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

16, 23 & 30 APRIL / 7, 14, 21 & 28 MAY / 4, 18 & 25 JUNE / 6, 13, 20 & 27 AUGUST 2021
12.30-1.30PM • BASW MEMBERS: FREE / NON-MEMBERS: £10 + VAT • CPD: 1 HOUR



This mentor-run workshop invites you to join a small group of other social workers and is an opportunity to hear and share ideas on:

- Interview preparation and CVs
- Demonstrating best practice
- How to evidence the value you will bring to a job

The session will be of interest to NQSWs, social workers from abroad looking for their first job in England and more experienced social workers looking for new job opportunities.

Contact mentoring@basw.co.uk for further details.

www.basw.co.uk/events

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Campaign
Promoting relationship
based practice

BASW ENGLAND CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SOCIAL WORK WORKSHOPS: STRENGTHEN YOUR RELATIONSHIP-BASED PRACTICE

7, 22 APRIL / 12, 26 MAY / 23, 30 JUNE / 11, 25 AUGUST / 9, 23 SEPTEMBER 2021
BASW MEMBERS: FREE / NON-MEMBERS: £10 + VAT • CPD: 1 HOUR

This CPD workshop is for children and families social workers in practice looking to refresh and develop their direct work skills. By attending you and other attendees will have the opportunity to:

- Consider ways to improve relationships with children and families
- Share ideas
- Reflect on best practice

This 80-20 campaign run workshop will be of interest to students on placement, NQSWs as well as more experienced practitioners.

Contact england@basw.co.uk for further details.



www.basw.co.uk/events

LET'S TALK SOCIAL WORK



BASW's podcast series, **Let's Talk Social Work**, is a platform to explore contemporary issues affecting social workers, with a focus at both the local and global levels. Produced fortnightly, new episodes are available on Fridays.

Let's Talk Social Work continues to take a unique and thought provoking look at issues impacting the social work profession and the people we support.

In the coming weeks the series will explore how social workers can improve their knowledge, skills and practice when supporting Romani and Traveller communities and challenge the racism and discrimination the communities face. We will discuss the social work response to safeguarding children and young people involved in County Lines, examine how the Scottish Parliament, Welsh Assembly and English local government elections will impact social work, and explore campaigns across the UK aimed at preventing the restraint and seclusion of children and young people with additional needs in educational settings.

Find us wherever you get your podcasts
Just search for **Let's Talk Social Work**.

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SELF CARE

Managing return to the office as lockdown eases

Alasdair Kennedy shares some top tips for the months ahead

MASKED intentions

Check out your employer's response to safety for your return to work. I recently visited an employer and they asked me to wear one of their masks. I was wearing the same type of mask, but they were adamant I should take theirs. The worker handed me an envelope with masks in it. But I thought, "whose hands have been in there, what about infection control, where was this stored?" They had good intentions, but I refused, they were not pleased.

We should all be given the choice of working at home or a mix of both, we may be shielding, our partners may be ill or work in a frontline service. When lockdown restrictions ease it should not be assumed we can all just go straight back to office work. So please before your return to the office make sure you check out your employer's post-Covid-19 work environment and talk with HR. You are their greatest asset, and you should be treated as such.

EASY does it

Online and in the press, they state, we are expecting a "tsunami" of cases in all areas of social work. We need to ease ourselves back into working with others.

Being back in an office for me after 14 months isolation felt strange and awkward but oddly exciting. It was too easy to throw myself back into work and fall back into my isolationist home working mode with Teams or Zoom calls and few breaks. I needed to remind myself I had colleagues to talk to, to share ideas, to have a coffee with, to have a gab about TV shows and share funny lockdown stories.

Take the time to engage with people. Those waiting lists can wait.

ELECTRIC social work

Research in Practice (2020) recently outlined a "hybrid" relationship-based approach that is helping families and social workers develop and change. This move away from 90 per cent of our work being database entry, to a "check-in" approach, using WhatsApp, Zoom, and doorstep visits is encouraging.

Additionally, I have seen the return of "walking visits" (Ferguson 2016). Nothing new there – if you have been around a long time in social work, we all know children and young people often disclose information while in cars.

However, I hope we can ensure that this relationship-based approach continues long after lockdown. It can only be good for service users and for our work satisfaction.

SELF-CARE denial

Self-care resources for social workers are patchy. We need to continue to support each other post-lockdown as we have done digitally. I have seen some great Twitter, Insta and live video self-care groups (mostly by social work students) which need to expand. We are all missing that face-to-face support from colleagues, but this digital support is just as important as flexible working, reflective supervision or workplace risk assessments. So, take the initiative and go and set up that Teams group today.

Alasdair Kennedy is an interim social work manager and runs the popular *Sociable Social Worker* YouTube channel

LIVING IT

Reflections of a service user
by Jodie McLoughlin

Socio-economic issues at play in hoarding

The stereotypical trope of the single older 'cat lady' perhaps surrounded by various detritus such as antiques, ornaments, bric-a-brac, mounds of paperwork and so much dust everywhere, is a common one. All things which might come into your mind when you consider the words 'hoard' and 'hoarding'.

It may be considered to be having too much of what you don't need and akin to some bizarre or selfish eccentricity if you make the assumption that someone has chosen to live that way. People with OCD and hard-working, energetic perfectionists may see it as laziness or simply being dirty.

However in my personal experience of struggling with housework and having difficulty maintaining my home environment due to a combination of visual impairment, poor mental health, lack of transport and physical health problems, it is more often less of a personal lifestyle choice than a combination of adverse circumstances.

If you have various disabilities including poor mental health not only is tidying and cleaning a difficult thing to motivate yourself to do, you may be living in a household where other people have the same problem. You may not have a support network who are willing to help you and in the past I've been told that social services do not get involved with household management such as cleaning, rubbish removal, tidying and sorting.

Hoarding is not a singular issue, it is symptomatic of wider mental health, physical health and socio-economic factors such as not having a car.

Personally, housework and cleaning is difficult due to visual impairment anyway and it takes me such a long time and is exhausting as I have other health problems. I find dealing with paperwork, filing and admin to be particularly challenging. I have old letters probably going back a decade because I cannot read them, some of the content is upsetting and it is very time-consuming and downright boring to sit shredding and sorting. It all becomes totally overwhelming and you don't know where to start so you don't start at all.

I'm pleased to hear that social workers are starting to take this issue seriously and Birmingham City council is currently running a hoarding project. I think this needs to be nationwide and that social workers should try to empathise with people who hoard rather than just assuming that they are lazy, dirty and that the problem is purely psychological and a 'choice'. It is not simply behavioural, it relates to disability and is a socio-economic issue.

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REGIONAL EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION CHAMPIONS THROUGHOUT ENGLAND

We are looking for BASW members across England who are willing to commit time towards the development of regional approaches via local networks and branches.

KEY DUTIES INCLUDE:

- WORKING WITH LOCAL BRANCHES AND NETWORKS TO CHALLENGE RACISM AND OTHER FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION.
- SUPPORT BRANCHES TO ENGRAIN INCLUSION AND ANTIDISCRIMINATION IN EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES.
- PROVIDING REGIONAL INFORMATION TO THE CENTRE OF BASW ENGLAND.
- SUPPORT BRANCHES TO DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES FOCUSING ON ANTI-RACISM AND ANTI-OPPRESSIVE PRACTICE.

The role is not remunerated, however any work you do can contribute towards your CPD and career progression. We welcome applications from black and ethnic minority practitioners and other under-represented groups including students, care leavers, people with disabilities and practitioners from the LGBT+ community.



For further information please contact gavin.moorghen@basw.co.uk

www.basw.co.uk/england

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Mentor Service

The BASW England mentor service is your resource as a BASW England member. We run online workshop-forums and offer one to one support via our country wide mentors.

This BASW benefit is aimed at:

1. Newly qualified social workers looking for their first job in England.
2. Social workers from abroad looking for their first job in England.
3. Social workers in employment looking to change jobs.

If you are interested in accessing the service book onto one of our workshop forums via www.basw.co.uk/events or contact mentoring@basw.co.uk for a one to one mentor.



Social Workers' Benevolent Trust

Caring for those who care
Please make a donation

Charity No. 262889

We are currently seeking people to join our Board of Trustees

The Social Workers' Benevolent Trust is governed by a Board of Trustees who are all volunteers. The trustees provide leadership to the charity and are responsible for its financial and legal governance.

At present our board has a balance of women and men; however, it largely reflects white, European culture. We are keen to develop the board in order that it can more fully reflect the UK social work community. Therefore we are particularly keen to hear from social workers from the breadth of communities, including the BAME communities, that come together in our social work family.

About us

SWBT was established to provide support to social workers facing hardship. We do this by providing grants to qualified social workers who are facing hardship themselves or for their dependents. We also aim to educate the public on the hardships faced by social workers in their own lives.

Meetings are held 6 times a year online to allocate grants, plus 2 face to face business meetings in Birmingham when possible. Trustees have online access to the grant applications prior to the meetings and are expected to make comments on them to ease the decision making at the meeting. Travel expenses are paid for face to face meetings.

About you

Do you have compassion for your fellow social workers? Do you want to understand better the personal challenges faced by social workers across the UK as they also try to do their jobs?

Being a trustee can provide you with new opportunities to develop your own knowledge and skills, which can enhance your career, while also helping your colleagues in the profession.

Do you think you can support and reflect the values and aims of the Trust?

About being a trustee

Being a trustee carries legal responsibilities which you should understand taking up the position. Trustees are not expected to be experts in every area, even across the whole board, but they are expected to take due care in their decision making.

The Reach Volunteering website has a guide, "Become a Trustee", which is a good place to start. You may also want to read the guidance given by The Charity Commission for more information.

Interested?

For more information, please contact one of our co-chairs: Susan.Roxburgh@swbt.org and Bridget.Robb@swbt.org

An application form can be obtained from our website at www.swbt.org

Deadline for applications: 6 June 2021

A SOCIAL WORKER'S **DIARY**

April, 2021

Well, where to start since my last entry? We are all very much hands on deck and pulling together as a team to support each other. My team are in the office more which is lovely as we can discuss cases, and check in with each other and have the odd rant. My cases are pushing me to the limit and I've had sleepless nights but the knowledge that I have annual leave coming is keeping a spring in my step.

It's great doing the practice educator award and having a student social worker. It gives me time to pull out theories, models and approaches and apply this to my practice as well as the students.

I'm also running reflection sessions with my team and it's making a big difference. I find reflection so important and it's been interesting reflecting on reflection. Some say they can't reflect or don't and looking at why that is so is really interesting. I think it's because it can make us feel vulnerable, especially when we are newly qualified and want people to think we are capable. It can leave us feeling that it might open us up to criticism. Personally, I love reflection, being open and being provided with challenge and receiving other practitioners' input or guidance.

There is so much that can happen in a phone call let alone in the course of a day and we rarely have

time to reflect back on what happens in our work.

This can be as a professional and also on a personal level. I am enjoying the benefits of time to think and learn and share this with my team and it's nice to see others benefiting from this as well.

I won't go on another rant about some of the fast-track social work courses that skip so much of the academia in the full degree qualifications but I will say that I think having done a Masters has provided me with a solid base for my practice today and to springboard into my career.

It is weird thinking about academic writing whilst in practice, which is part of the practice educator award. My writing now is all practice-based – visits, court reports and assessments – so switching to an academic perspective whilst practicing feels slightly odd. It feels disjointed oddly, even though I very much pull on research and academic books to further my practice.

I think a lot about other social workers and how they are coping during this Covid time and if they are managing. I look forward to our teams all being back together in the offices where we can feel more connected and supported. I also look forward to meetings being back in person with families and agencies. It will be interesting to see if this will return or if the powers that be are going to retain some of this virtual world we practice in now. Whichever or however it is, I hope everyone is practicing self-care and finding that work-life balance...

STUDENT NOTES



Jenny Hudson is a student doing a Masters in social work

When I tell people what area I am working in for my second placement, there have been some widening of eyes and careful responses. "That's going to be challenging" and "watch how it all might affect you", have been common reactions. In truth, when the university first emailed me to check what I thought about the placement, I replied yes within seconds. It was exactly the kind of placement I'd been hoping for.

I am working with an Exploitation, Missing and Trafficking Team. Starting initially with a focus on child sexual exploitation, the team also now work to support children and young people at risk of, or being criminally exploited, along with victims of trafficking. It is a multi-disciplinary team of social workers, police and Missing Practitioners, who specialise in return home interviews with young people who have been reported missing. These interviews can provide a vital insight into young people's vulnerabilities and needs.

One of my early influences drawing me towards social work was the BBC drama *Three Girls*, based on the real-life experiences of the victims of child sexual exploitation in Rochdale. It stayed with me; the harrowing abuse itself of course, but not primarily that – what stayed with me more than anything else was the absence of professionals in the lives of these vulnerable girls. Social workers,

police, teachers were around but at a distance, on the outside of the girls' lives. It was too easy for the abusers.

I am only four weeks into my placement so at an early stage of practice learning, but I sometimes think of *Three Girls* when I frame my thinking about the work. This work is the opposite of what happened in Rochdale and all over the country; it is about being inside vulnerable young people's lives, watching, listening as closely as possible so we can understand, identify and disrupt exploitation. It is exactly where social work needs to be.

It is also the kind of social work I am drawn to. Already, I have seen practitioners within the team do peer mapping, drawing on an immense level of detail and precision built up through multiple contacts, conversations and different sources of information. I have observed direct work where a young person discusses with the practitioner how she uses social media and how she manages friendships and contacts online. There was a huge amount of trust and information sharing between the young person and social worker. This is relationship-based social work writ large: social workers need to be truly on the inside of these vulnerable young people's lives in order to understand what is going on and protect them.

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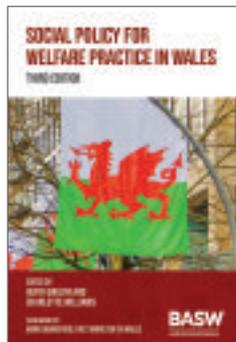
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In this third edition leading academics in the field outline and review the policy framework, political philosophy and values underpinning core areas of welfare practice. They reflect on over two decades of Welsh social policy and address key themes such as governance, poverty, health, equality, housing, social justice, language sensitive practice, climate change and human rights.

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11 MAY 2021 | 10:00-15:00

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The AMHP Research Group are pleased to share details of a forthcoming event with a specific focus on Approved Mental Health Professional (AMHP) practice.

A follow-up to the previous successful Research-Informed Practice/Practice Informed Research Day, key speakers will be again presenting their research. There will be opportunities to share and discuss areas of good practice and build on our AMHP knowledge and evidence base as we join together and share our mutual interests and practice aspirations. Feedback from last year's event highlighted a "fascinating and thought provoking" day.

The event is developed and led by: Jill Hemmington (University of Central Lancashire), Kevin Stone (University of Plymouth), Sarah Vicary (Open University) and Caroline Leah (Manchester Metropolitan University) and delivered in collaboration with practitioners and researchers who will present their work in the area. We aim for an atmosphere of mutual support and hope to explore future opportunities for research activity at any level. Please join us as we explore and celebrate our future Research-Informed Practice and Practice-Informed Research.

Attendees will be provided with a certificate which will include the CPD hours achieved.



For further details about the conference please email:
amhpresearch@gmail.com

Tickets can be booked via www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/2021-amhp-research-informed-practice-practice-informed-research-tickets-141128004661

SPRING

forward to recovery

Let's take a moment to recognise the work our volunteer peer coaches have done in supporting social workers over the last 9 months during the pandemic.



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ENGLAND VIEWS

There is nothing minor about the microaggressions women face



A month which began with International Women's Day has been marked by untold sadness. Sarah Everard's death, allegedly at the hands of a Metropolitan police officer, has united the country in a grief words cannot express.

The news brought much-needed focus to black and minoritised women whose stories had been overlooked in the media, including Blessings Olusegun, Nicole Smallman, and Bibaa Henry. Their loved ones still lack justice.

Just days later, across the Atlantic, the Atlanta shootings occurred. Most of the victims were Asian women. One Police captain defended the shooter, saying he had a "bad day". It was an indefensible comment – one which spoke volumes of the readiness of some, even those in authority, to protect perpetrators over victims.

None of the horrific crimes against these much-loved women were isolated incidents; misogyny and violence against women and girls is systemic. They merely held up a mirror to an already deeply broken and unjust society.

It may be 2021, but gender inequality is prevalent

in every area of life, without exception – in families, communities, in media and politics, in sport, in science, technology, engineering and maths – so much so that we are desensitised to it.

Last month, the UN reported that 97 per cent of young women in the UK have been sexually harassed. The statistic was difficult to hear, but not at all difficult to assimilate. I speak for many women when I say that being cat-called, harassed, and followed in broad daylight is part of life. And it has been since I was 11.

I almost described these incidents as 'sexist microaggressions', before I stopped myself. For there is nothing minor about these acts; they leave women terrified and powerless.

Social workers are in a unique position to be agents of change. United in our commitment to human rights and social justice, we must use all the tools in our power – including the upcoming move to record misogyny as a hate crime in England and Wales – to champion the rights of women and girls of all intersectionalities.

Rebekah Pierre, professional officer

'Being cat-called, harassed, and followed in broad daylight is part of life'

NORTHERN IRELAND VIEWS

A year like no other - and a year that you have done your profession proud



Well, it's been a year since all our lives have been disrupted by Covid, and I can't decide whether it's been a really quick year or a long, slow burn.

In some ways it feels like yesterday yet when I think of specific events it feels like a long, long time. I think in reality it's been both.

So, what has this past year taught us? Well for one it shows us that we can do things differently. All the change that has happened is incredible! Working from home, the move to digital platforms, coming together to radically change how we do things, has been truly transformative.

And we should not hasten back to the bad old ways. Yet there are other things that we will be glad to see the back off – home schooling is one thing I will not miss! Seeing loved ones again, meeting friends and going on holiday, I can barely wait.

Yet when I look back over this past year, I am immensely proud – proud of all of you who have kept our most vulnerable people safe and well. Proud of you all for finding new ways to work in the most trying of circumstances, for

maintaining the link, for being there, for always turning up! I am also proud of my team, who I have not seen in person since last March. I am so proud of all of them for adjusting how we work, to moving to online with such skill and for supporting you all throughout this pandemic with tremendous care and compassion.

As we look to the future what will it hold? We are finalising our programme of CPD seminars for the remainder of 2021, these will all be online events because we have learned that you like this format.

These will incorporate a range of presenters and topics, designed to meet the needs of our members in all areas of practice.

This month members will also be invited to complete a short BASW NI survey, which will help us shape our Communities of Practice to support professional development. It is important that we identify issues or aspects of practice that are important to our members, so your support is greatly appreciated.

Until we make it through to the other side, keep safe.

Carolyn Ewart, national director

'All the change that has happened is incredible'

SCOTLAND VIEWS

Change in societal attitudes is how we end violence against women



International Women's Day, celebrated annually, on 8 March, celebrated women's achievements, and made the call for a gender equal world.

Yet men's violence against women continues to be the leading cause of premature death for women globally. In the UK, a woman is killed by her partner or ex-partner every four days.

To mark the day, we co-hosted a webinar with Scottish Women's Aid and heard from professor Jane Monckton-Smith. Powerfully drawing on real stories to illustrate each of the eight stages which she has identified, she outlined a theoretical framework for assessing homicide risk in cases of domestic abuse and stalking. I urge you to read her book *In control: dangerous relationships and how they end in murder*.

In the same week, the disappearance of Sarah Everard in London led local police to warn women not to go out alone at night. In response, women organised a vigil to highlight that women are not to blame for male violence. Why, when women disappear or are harmed, is the response that women need to change? Don't go out alone, carry an alarm,

wear trainers in case you need to run.

The solution to ending violence against women does not lie in an appraisal of their behaviour. It is for society to change attitudes towards women and to the minority of men who commit crimes against them. Media reporting needs to become more responsible; sentencing needs to be stricter, and government funding to address gender inequality needs to be a priority.

As social workers how do we approach situations where women are harmed? Do we hold male perpetrators to account? Or do we still look to women to ensure their safety and that of their children?

SASW offer training in the Safe and Together Model to help social workers explore, expose, and challenge the social assumptions still perpetuated across our health and social care, justice and other systems that should be supporting and protecting victims of violence. It's available for block booking by employers wanting to work differently and individuals committed to their own development. We are taking reservations for May 2021 – book on-line.

Sarah McMillan, professional officer

'Why, when women disappear or are harmed, is the response that women need to change?'

SOCIAL WORKERS' UNION VIEWS

Dyslexia is a disability and you have a right to support from employer



Too often in the Advice and Representation Service we receive calls from members who have dyslexia and are being penalised by their employer for their standard of written work or the speed at which they conduct their work.

This often leads to the member being placed on capability plans or their probation being terminated if they are an ASYE; sadly, something we see far too frequently.

Many people associate dyslexia with a person having difficulty with reading or poor spelling. However, for the person with dyslexia there can be a whole range of hidden difficulties that they face.

Dyslexia varies from person to person and no two people will have the same set of strengths or weaknesses but some of the common issues that people with dyslexia face are: 1) managing diaries as they often can miss or confuse appointment times 2) structuring work schedules 3) retaining information 4) listening and maintaining focus 5) understanding multiple instructions 6) forgetting conversations and information 7) a low opinion of their capabilities and poor self-

esteem, particularly when they are continually criticised and critiqued rather than supported. This can lead to the person with dyslexia 'shutting down'.

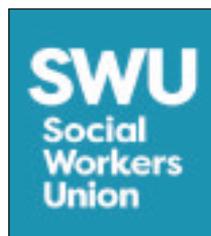
It is important for a person who has dyslexia (or thinks that they may have dyslexia) to get the correct support to enable them to fully discharge their role.

Dyslexia is recognised as a disability under the Equality Act 2010 and therefore the employer must make reasonable adjustments to support the employee.

Measures can include supporting the employee to make an Access to Work Referral (www.gov.uk/access-to-work) to ensure that a proper assessment of their needs, and diagnosis is made, so that they are provided with the right equipment and support. This can even include training for the staff team and managers.

If you have dyslexia, or think you may have dyslexia, and want advice and information on how to ensure that you get the correct support and reasonable adjustments at work, please contact the Advice and Representation Team.

Laura Sheridan, advice and representation officer



WALES VIEWS

Let Wales lead the way in equality and putting end to gender disparity



It has been a joy and privilege to have spent the week beginning the 8 March celebrating World Social Work Month with our members in Cymru.

This decision was made by BASW as a UK-wide association, to give us all the opportunity and gift of highlighting social work in our respective nations.

Our week was filled with diverse content including – equality, poverty, working conditions and anti-racist social work.

Messages of thanks and support from cross-party Members of Senedd and key stakeholders including the children's and older people's commissioners were played throughout the week. These messages are one important way of acknowledging the essential service of our social workers.

We started the week on International Women's Day looking at what social work employers and governments need to do to support, enable and enhance a workforce comprised, in the main, of women.

The value of women and girls in society and the right to be safe in personal and public spaces has taken on

heightened public awareness with the kidnap and murder of a Sarah Everard, taken from the streets on her walk home.

Our co-panelists on the Universal Basic Income event which we attended – the Future Generations Commissioner Sophie Howe and the director of the Women's Equality Network Catherine Fookes – have both spoken out against violence towards women and girls and link this to the United Nations sustainable development goals.

This is a key priority for the Future Generation's Commissioner as the aims of the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act are closely aligned with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The UN has said "what Wales does today, the world will do tomorrow".

Wouldn't it be amazing if Wales led the way for gender equality, to act as global leaders in the face of gender disparity and became the first nation to eradicate violence against women and girls.

Allison Hulmes, national director

'What Wales does today, the world will do tomorrow'

CYMRU VIEWS

Gadewch i Gymru arwain y ffordd efo cydraddoldeb a dod a gwahaniaethu rhyw a thrais yn erbyn menywod i ben

Mae wedi bod yn bleser ac yn fraint i fod wedi gallu gwario'r wythnos yn dechrau 8 Mawrth yn dathlu Mis Gwaith Cymdeithasol y Byd gyda'n haelodau yng Nghymru.

Fe wnaed y penderfyniad hwn gan BASW fel mudiad ledled y DU, i roi cyfle ar ddawn i bob un ohonom i amlygu gwaith cymdeithasol ym mhob un o'n gwledydd.

Llenwyd ein hwythnos gyda chynnwys amrywiol yn cynnwys - cydraddoldeb, tlodi, amodau gwaith a gwaith cymdeithasol yn ymwneud a gwrth hiliaeth.

Trwy gydol yr wythnos, derbyniwyd negeseuon o ddiolch a chefnogaeth oddi wrth Aelodau traws pleidiol o'r Senedd a rhandeiliaid allweddol, yn cynnwys y comisiynwyr plant a henoed. Roedd y negeseuon hyn yn un ffordd bwysig o gydnabod gwasanaeth hanfodol ein gweithwyr cymdeithasol. Dechreuwyd yr wythnos gennym ar Ddiwrnod Rhyngwladol y Merched gan edrych ar yr hyn rhaid i gyflogwyr gwaith cymdeithasol a llywodraethau wneud i gefnogi, galluogi a gwella amodau gweithlu, y rhan fwyaf ohonynt yn fenywod.

Mae gwir werth menywod a genethod yn ein cymdeithas ar hawl i fod yn ddiogel mewn mannau personol a chyhoeddus

wedi dwysáu ymwybyddiaeth gyhoeddus yn dilyn herwgiad a llofruddiaeth geneth ieuanc, a gipiwyd oddi ar y stryd wrth iddi gerdded adref.

Mae Sophie Howe, comisiynydd cenhedloedd y dyfodol a Catherine Fookes, cyfarwyddwraig Rhwydwaith Cydraddoldeb i Fenywod - y ddwy ohonynt yn rhannu panel a ni yn nigwyddiad 'Universal; Basic Income', lle cawsom y cyfle i siarad, wedi siarad yn erbyn trais tuag at fenywod a genethod ac wedi cysylltu hyn a chyrchnodau datblygiadau cynaliadwy'r Cenhedloedd Unedig.

Mae hyn yn flaenoriaeth allweddol i gomisiynydd cenhedloedd y dyfodol am fod nodau Deddf Llesiant Cenhedloedd y Dyfodol yn ymylu'n agos iawn at Agenda 2030 ar gyfer Datblygiadau Cynaliadwy.

Mae'r Cenhedloedd Unedig wedi datgan mai "yr hyn a wneir gan Gymru heddiw, fe wneir gan y byd yfory".

Oni fyddai'n anhygoel pe bai Cymru'n arwain y ffordd at gydraddoldeb rhyw, i weithredu fel arweinwyr y byd yn wyneb gwahaniaethu rhyw ac i fod y genedl gyntaf i ddileu trais yn erbyn menywod a genethod.

Allison Hulmes, Cyfarwyddwraig genedlaethol

'Bydd yr hyn a wneir gan Gymru heddiw, fe wneir gan y byd yfory'

NORTH YORKSHIRE NETWORK MEETING

27 APRIL 2021 / 6.30-7.30PM

BASW members are invited to join us for the first North Yorkshire Network meeting to help shape the future of a new branch.

Reasons for building a branch

By helping build a branch in North Yorkshire, you will be a part of the social work movement in your area.

CAREER: Get involved in career building activities.

INFLUENCE: Influence local and national Social Work policy.

NETWORK: Meet like-minded practitioners.

DEVELOP: Design CPD opportunities based on your needs.

Agenda

6:30-6:45pm	Welcome and introductions
6:45-7:30pm	General discussions about developing a North Yorkshire branch

Contact liz.howard@basw.co.uk if you have any questions. Joining details will be provided when you book and this event will be held online using MS Teams.

Book online at: www.basw.co.uk/events

BASW ENGLAND SOCIAL WORK WITH ADULTS GROUP

BUILD YOUR CAREER BY CONTRIBUTING TO YOUR PROFESSION

The BASW England Adults Group are currently working on a number of areas impacting upon social work and social workers supporting adults including the Future of Adult Social Care, The Care Act and Hospital Discharge Policy.

The Group are looking for social work practitioners across England who are willing to contribute their knowledge, skills and time towards the development of adult social work.

The group welcomes and actively encourages applications from black and ethnic minority practitioners and other under-represented groups including people with disabilities and practitioners from the LGBTQ+ community.

Members are concerned with a range of issues including the impact of the pandemic on human rights, the inequalities and disproportionate impact on people with learning disabilities and autistic people, older adults and carers.

2021 MEETINGS (MS TEAMS ONLY)

07.4.21: 6.30-8PM

16.6.21: 1-4PM

18.8.21: 6.30-8PM

20.10.21: 6.30-8PM

08.12.21: 1-4PM

For further information contact Liz.Howard@basw.co.uk
www.basw.co.uk/england

DIARY DATES

- | | |
|---|--|
| 7 April
<i>BASW England Childrens and Families Social Work Workshop</i> | 27 April
<i>Moving into Leadership & Management Training with Siobhan Maclean</i>
See advert page 4 |
| 7 April
<i>BASW England Social Work with Adults Group</i>
See advert on this page | 29 April
<i>BASW England Children & Families Group: Social work with children and families at risk of experiencing poverty consultation event</i> |
| 8 April
<i>BASW Cymru Community of Practice for Social Workers in Child and Family Services</i> | 29 April
<i>Identifying and responding to child neglect in schools: messages for inter-agency safeguarding practice</i> |
| 14 April
<i>BASW England Theory to Practice: Children and Families</i> | 4 May-1 June
<i>The Creative Trainer (6 sessions)</i>
See advert page 4 |
| 14 April
<i>SASW Community of Practice: Justice Services</i> | 4 May-7 June
<i>Safe & Together™ Model CORE Training by SASW</i> |
| 14 April
<i>SASW Community of Practice: Adult Services</i> | 5 May
<i>Effective assessment and evidence informed decision making in adult social care</i>
See advert page 4 |
| 15 April
<i>Current Issues in Drug Use and Treatment</i> | 5 May
<i>BASW England Theory to Practice: Anti-racist practice in children and families social work</i> |
| 16 April
<i>BASW England - Workshop for social workers seeking employment or new employment opportunities</i> | 5 May
<i>BASW England Mental Health Group meeting</i> |
| 19 April
<i>Assessing the quality of evidence and addressing concerns</i> | 6 May
<i>SASW Student & NQSW support and mentoring group</i> |
| 20 April
<i>Effective assessment and evidence informed decision making in children & families social care</i>
See advert page 4 | 10 May
<i>BASW England Webinar: Homes not Hospitals campaign - launch of key documents</i> |
| 22 April
<i>Writing in professional social work practice: from key research findings to usable resources</i> | 12 May
<i>In memory of Terry Bamford</i> |
| 23 April
<i>BASW England Workshop for social workers seeking employment or new employment opportunities</i> | 13 May
<i>Cultural competency, diversity, and inclusion</i>
See advert page 4 |

Upcoming BASW Branch events

- | | |
|---|---|
| 13 April Ipswich and Suffolk
<i>Anti-racism in social work - do we practice (or teach) what we preach?</i> | 22 April Derbyshire & Nottinghamshire
<i>Branch Meeting</i> |
| 15 April West Yorkshire
<i>Network Meeting</i> | 27 April North Yorkshire
<i>Network Meeting</i> |
| 19 April Black Country
<i>Seminar: Professional leadership - lighting the way in social work</i> | 28 April Birmingham & Solihull
<i>Virtual Branch Meeting</i> |
| | 25 May Birmingham & Solihull |

Information is correct at time of going to press.

Visit www.basw.co.uk/events for full details



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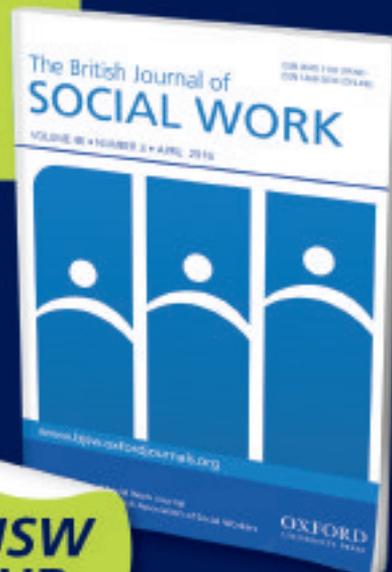
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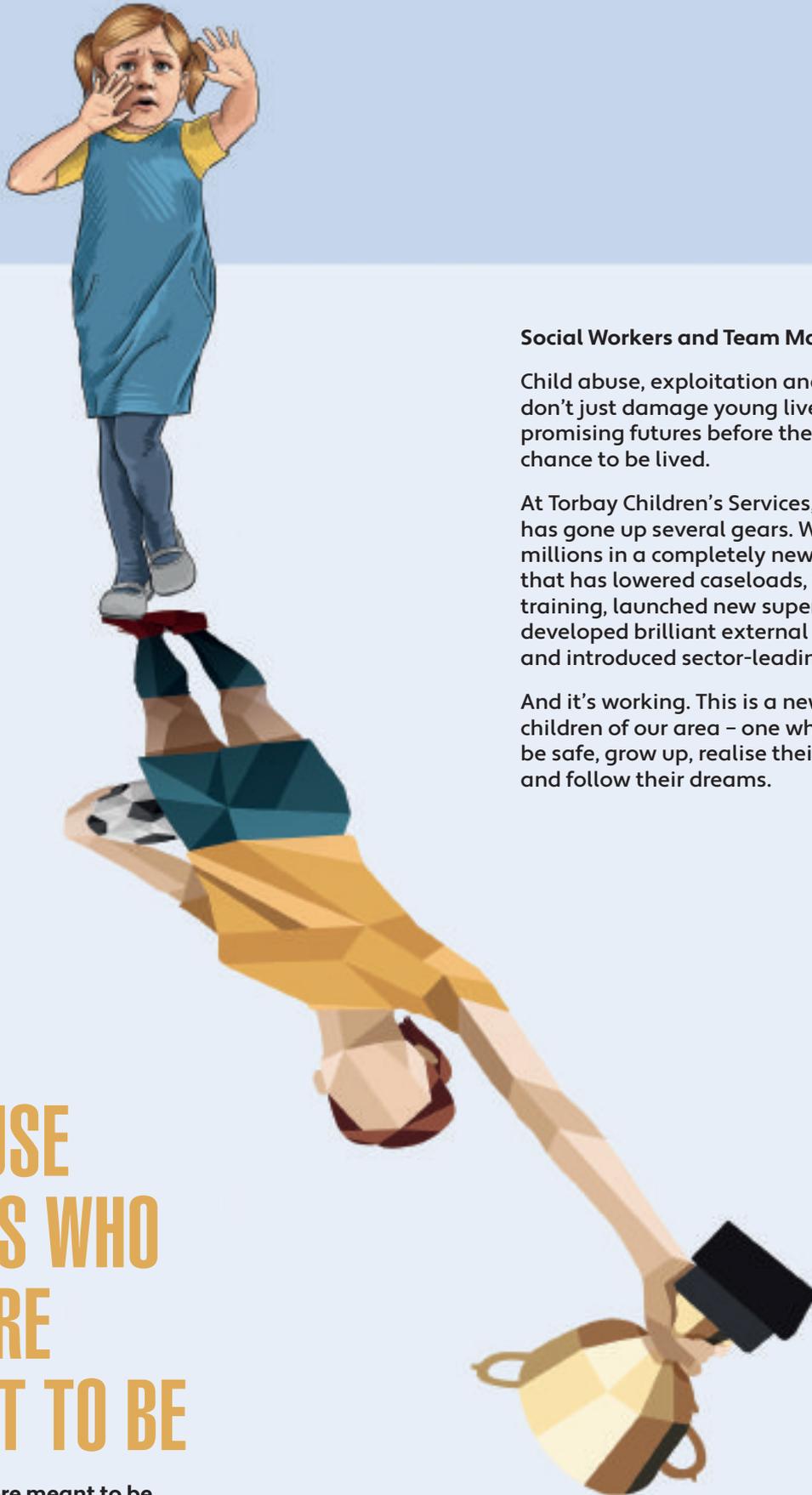
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