

PROFESSIONAL Social Work

JULY / AUGUST 2023

Pets in practice

The importance of species-spanning relationships

BASW
The professional association for
social work and social workers



Creating brighter futures for Devon's children

Devon County Council is significantly investing in our Children's Services to support our vision to make Devon the best place to grow up. We are making permanent appointments across our leadership, from Director and Assistant Director through to Heads of Service and Service Managers, so we can support our staff in the next phase of our improvement journey.

We are implementing smaller, more manageable teams. This will help our social workers focus on strengthening the relationships they build with children and families in Devon, as part of our Restorative Practice model. We also retain a strong emphasis on the Advanced Social Worker role, as their role in supporting and leading our newly qualified staff remains fundamental to how we want our workforce to learn and evolve at all levels. That means we have confident and trained practitioners to work with our children and families throughout their social care journey.

We want our staff to see a clear pathway for their career with us. We are identifying and improving our development offer and how social workers can plan their next steps. We continue to listen to feedback and are improving our recruitment and retention packages, training offers, and wellbeing packages for staff at all levels. Our efforts to support our staff is illustrated by the decrease in our absence rate, which has dropped from 15.7% in 2022 to 1.9% in 2023.

In a recent questionnaire, our staff identified positive changes such as:

- Regular Supervision
- Confident in Practicing Restoratively
- Feeling supported in our role
- Senior Leader Visibility
- Moving in the right direction

Devon Children's Services is committed to working restoratively not only with our children and families, but also within our service and with partner agencies. It is the golden thread of everything we do. As part of this, we've recognised the need to do simple things well and focus on the basic principles of social work. These are our Seven Pillars of Practice that underpin our social work, which also aligns to our Five Rs of Restorative Practice. With another year of funding for the Restorative Devon project secured from the Department of Education (DfE), we remain confident in fully establishing Restorative Practice across Devon.

The children and young people of Devon have big dreams and want bright futures. As a council, we want to support them to achieve the best outcomes. You can discover more about working for Devon, including our latest vacancies, on our website: <https://www.devon.gov.uk/workingfordevon/work-in/childrens-social-care-team/>



We are committed to equal opportunities in employment and service delivery, and are only interested in your ability to do the job.



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From the Editor
SHAHID NAQVI



Relational social work means our furry friends too

I saw a video the other day of a woman playing with a baby elephant. It could have just as easily have been a puppy, apart from the fact that the animal was ten times bigger. The point it illustrated was the great connection we have to the rest of the animal kingdom and how there is much we have in common – not least a sense of playfulness!

Humans have lived with animals throughout history. During lockdown, many people responded to social isolation and inactivity by getting a dog (often at extortionately inflated prices!).

Animal relationships are part of human experience, and so it seems logical that it should be part of social work. And yet in the UK, unlike other countries such as the US, it is an under-developed area of practice.

In this month's cover feature Rebecca Stephens explains why this needs to change. Currently doing a post-graduate certificate in veterinary social work with the University of Tennessee, she believes animal relationships should feature more strongly in assessments and interventions.

The importance of relationship-based social work is often emphasised – and features strongly in this edition. So it makes perfect sense that this should also include our furry friends.

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

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BASW
The professional association for
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SEEKING MEMBERS WITH THE SKILLS, ENTHUSIASM AND COMMITMENT TO TAKE BASW FORWARD

BASW Council, the governing body of the Association, is currently seeking applications for the **Risk & Audit Committee**

The closing date for receipt of nominations for the vacancies is 5pm on the 11th August 2023.

Candidates should refer to the member role descriptor before submitting an application. A completed application form, together with a statement of no more than 300 words which outlines why you should be considered suitable for Committee membership should be submitted to governance@basw.co.uk. Application forms are available to download from our website or alternatively email a request for a form to governance@basw.co.uk

The purpose of the **Risk & Audit Committee** is to assist BASW Council in discharging its responsibility for adequate and effective governance; culture and behaviour; risk management and control, as well as the economy; efficiency and effectiveness of the Association's activities.

We are looking for Committee members, who may already have experience in finance, law and/or have Risk & Audit Committee experience but this is an excellent CPD opportunity for those who do not currently have this knowledge and would like to develop these skills, as full training and support will be provided. We are looking for Committee members who are effective communicators and who can communicate the work of the Risk & Audit Committee to Council.

The time commitment involves four 2.5 hour scheduled meetings per year plus time involved in reading papers in preparation for the meetings. Meetings will be held virtually wherever possible.

This is an unremunerated position although reasonable expenses for attendance will be paid in line with BASW's Members Expenses Policy.

The initial term of office for Committee members is two years.

A discussion on any of these roles can be arranged by emailing governance@basw.co.uk

**For further information visit
www.basw.co.uk/jobs/work-with-us**

BASW England National Standing Committee (2023-2025)

5 vacancies

(5 members including 1 Student and 1 NQSW post)

Are you:

- Passionate about social work and making a difference to the lives of vulnerable people?
- Committed to inclusivity, anti-racist, anti-discriminatory and oppressive practice, equal opportunities and embracing diversity?
- Committed to high standards of frontline practice and making relationships count?
- 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?
- Keen to be an advocate for the profession through campaigning activity?



If yes, we want to hear from you!

An exciting opportunity has arisen for five 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. The Committee meets five 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 18th August 2023** and nominations will be posted on the BASW England website with a closing date for electronic voting by **Friday 6th October 2023**. **Successful candidates will be invited to the committee meeting on Wednesday 22nd November.**

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 (where applicable).

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

NEWS



Time to turn the tide on 'individualised case work' says Colin Turbett

Working with communities is key to securing our future

Social work is “doomed as a profession” unless it rediscovers its community focus, a Scottish think tank warned delegates at BASW’s Annual Conference.

Colin Turbett, of the Common Weal Social Care Reform Working Group, criticised the profession’s direction of travel since the 1970s when community social work was at its zenith and underpinned by legislation.

Turbett claimed today’s crisis in social work is less to do with leadership and work cultures than the destruction of social work as a generic, community-focused profession.

He said: “I would argue the biggest problem in social work is what we actually do and the direction of travel we have taken into the fragmented, specialised, downstream styles of working that don’t just fail to deliver because the pool of people drowning is getting bigger and you can’t stop people from falling in, but leads to burnout and all the other attendant woes.”

Turbett blamed the political climate of the 1980s for taking social work down a more “individualised, case work route”.

He said: “By the 1990s, the notion of community social work had been more or less all but lost and replaced by defensive social work which came about because of criticism of what we were doing.

“As a result of that we were largely taken over in reorganisations, subsequently by integration with health and we became very fragmented as we defended ourselves by becoming more and more specialised.”

Turbett said specialism meant social workers have been driven into being “life savers down the

road trying to pull out people who are drowning but only those wearing the same hat”.

Preventative work has been largely farmed out to the third sector, often funded by government, and “done on the cheap” by people who are not qualified social workers, he maintained.

“We are broken and unless we fix it we are doomed. We are doomed as a profession to continued marginalisation and failure.”

Turbett said in places where community social work was being rediscovered it was not only making social work “a more rewarding profession” for those in it, but also improving outcomes for people using services.

An initiative at Fife Council in Scotland was highlighted. It has created hubs where social workers practice in a community-focused way, often based within existing services such as GP surgeries, food banks and schools. Community development approaches are also strong in Northern Ireland.

A special interest group has recently been created within BASW to promote community social work. Facilitator Vita Snowden said: “It is about working with groups of people who have been marginalised and supporting them through resources, skill and facilitation to decide how they want to improve things for their communities rather than statutory organisations using lots of bureaucracy and giving them little or nothing at the end of it. I think you could say it is a new grassroots movement which is growing in strength.”

The group meets online every three months. Next meeting: 12 October. Email: v.snowden@derby.ac.uk

Royal honour for advocate of families

The world of social work was recognised in the King’s Birthday Honours List.

Those honoured for making an exceptional contribution to community or public life through their work or voluntary services include:

- Angela Frazer-Wicks, chair of the Family Rights Group and recently appointed member of BASW Council, awarded a MBE for services to children and families
- Former BASW Northern Ireland chair, Marcella Leonard, awarded a MBE for services to social work in Northern Ireland and internationally

- Jennifer Cross, a social worker at London Borough of Greenwich for over 40 years, awarded an MBE for services to the administration of justice and to the community of Tunbridge Wells, Kent

However, social worker and Birmingham activist Eddie O’Hara returned his BEM awarded in 2021 in protest against child poverty. He criticised the “indifferent choices made by entitled politicians” and urged the King to speak out for a “kinder and more inclusive” society.

Hunger extent in UK revealed

One in seven people in the UK has gone hungry in the last year due to poverty, in what researchers at the Trussell Trust are describing as “the tip of the iceberg”.

A survey by the trust found 11.3 million people, or twice the population of Scotland, have gone without food.

NEWS

Invest in social work to help end hospital warehousing

Social workers need to be better embedded into the process of discharging people with learning disabilities from long stays in hospital, delegates at BASW's annual conference were told.

Professors Jon Glasby and Robin Miller from the University of Birmingham said there is currently a lack of support from the profession and understanding of the skills it has to offer.

Glasby said while everyone agrees that it's wrong and a waste of resources, the system seems powerless to prevent people with learning disabilities from staying in hospital for long periods. As a result, they can end up stuck in hospital for longer than necessary.

"Hospitals aren't designed for people to lead ordinary lives," said Glasby, professor of health and social care. "And it's very expensive – the more money we spend on keeping people in hospital, the less we've got to stop them going in in the first place."

While there's growing political awareness of this issue, progress is "painfully slow", Glasby said, partly because there is very little research engaging with people with disabilities in hospital, their families and staff.

In some of the existing studies, researchers put prolonged stays down to the patients themselves making it difficult to discharge them, he added.

"This is victim blaming – we wouldn't tolerate it in another setting, but here it seems perfectly okay."

Glasby and Miller's own research – *Why are we stuck in hospital?* – consisted of interviews with 27 people with a learning difficulty or autism and their families, frontline professionals, commissioners, advocates and community-based providers, with the aim of understanding the barriers to them leaving hospital.

They found that patients are falling between the cracks because of a lack of communication between health and social care professionals and criminal justice when making decisions regarding putting support in place for patients.

In addition, patients weren't clear on how they could demonstrate that they were ready to leave, said Miller. "This made people very passive and



Prof Robin Miller at BASW's annual conference

they felt they had to agree with everything because if they disagreed it might be a trigger to say they're not complying with treatment."

The researchers found that making steps towards getting a patient discharged from hospital often came down to one person within their network.

"The system should enable people to progress, but this wasn't the case," Miller said.

Other issues that arose during the interviews included a lack of knowledge among hospital staff regarding community support options in people's areas, and an inertia among staff regarding getting things in place so a patient could be discharged.

Ultimately, the patients were keen to move on, but the system in its current design isn't enabling them to do so, said Glasby.

"We've got a system that's crept us on us by accident. We're struggling to unpick it."

Concern over film's image of profession

A movie based on a true story about a family and their deaf daughter has sparked a complaint to Ofcom due to its "inaccurate" portrayal of social workers.

Listen, which is currently on Prime Video, depicts a Portuguese couple who have three children, including a deaf daughter, taken into care.

The Social Workers Union (SWU) and BASW have written to the broadcasting regulator and broadcasting union BECTU after being alerted to concerns via SWU's new rapid reporting mechanism for social workers worried about media coverage.

One social worker said the movie put children at risk by adding to fears about approaching social services for help. The worker added that the film "hinted at social workers getting financial reward for each child we remove".

Law may stop care homes banning visits

A government consultation on whether to make visiting people in health and care settings a legal requirement has been launched.

Concerns about visiting restrictions in care homes and hospitals were raised during the pandemic. The consultation is seeking views on making visiting a fundamental standard in CQC-registered settings.

Legislation would mean nobody is denied reasonable access to visitors while in a care home, hospital or hospice and would also include accompanying people to hospital appointments.

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

'Day to day, I wonder, do we genuinely care for our doctors, paramedics, firefighters, dentists, nurses, social workers and police officers with the same level of love and care they do for us?'

Kevin Bennett, in his new book *Who helps the helpline, when the helpline needs help?*

NEWS



Despite leaving school without reading and writing skills Chloe McRoberts has a degree in social work

Chloe's journey to becoming a social worker is an inspiration

A newly qualified practitioner has told how she went from being unable to read and write at 16 to gaining a first class honours degree in social work.

Chloe McRoberts, from Ayr, graduated from Glasgow Caledonian University in June after starting her education again “from scratch” when she left school with no qualifications.

Chloe, aged 26, struggled to concentrate in class, displaying “erratic behaviour” which was later diagnosed as ADHD.

She lost her dad to cancer when she was just eight and had one-to-one care at primary school.

Before she started secondary school she had an eating disorder and on her first day there she ran away. Her mother was so concerned she quit her job to homeschool her daughter.

Chloe told BBC Radio Scotland's *Good Morning Scotland* programme: “I realised I was dyslexic when I was around about primary three.

“And when I got to about primary six, my dad had passed away which only made things harder.

“I always had problems in the classroom, [and not just] reading and writing and numbers.

“My behaviour was quite erratic and I was later diagnosed with ADHD.”

Chloe found it hard to access learning support at secondary school and continued: “I wasn't able to sit and work in the classroom, but I wanted to be there so much.

“It was like things made sense inside my head but coming out and producing the work, it just didn't make sense.

“It built up so much frustration inside of me.”

Chloe left school without any qualifications. It was South Ayrshire Council's Learning Shop project – where retired teachers help children – which finally gave her the help she needed. By 15, she was their Learner of the Year winner.

“They took me right back to basics,” she said.

“Things like learning the alphabet, going over nouns and adjectives, even things you wouldn't consider – like building up the muscle strength in my arm to be able to write.”

Over five years she gained enough Standard Grades, then Highers – including an ‘A’ in English – to enrol for an NHC in social services and a course in sign language.

This led to Glasgow Caledonian University and an honours degree in social work.

Chloe says she was determined to catch up with her peers, despite her goal of university seeming at times unattainable. She said: “It took me over ten years to get there. I am proud of myself, most definitely.”

Chloe now works in a disability team helping children across several schools.

“I also learned British Sign Language and I hope to eradicate that barrier for people as well.

“I always knew I wanted an education; I just didn't get the support I needed. I was just written off as a bad kid. It doesn't matter when you get to the end of the race so long as you run it.”

Graduation day was a big moment for everyone who has supported Chloe: “My whole family was incredibly proud of me,” she added.

Standards to support staff from overseas

A new set of standards for supporting social workers arriving in the UK from abroad has been produced by BASW.

The standards – aimed at both workers and their employers – were developed by the BASW Diaspora Social Work Special Interest Group (SIG) and come at a time when recruitment of workers with overseas qualifications is increasing.

A spokesperson for the group said: “[There is] unprecedented demand for social workers in the UK as a result of intensifying recruitment and retention challenges and pressures on services.

“However, the experiences of overseas practitioners coming to the UK have often been challenging, with poor induction and management support.”

UK Bill of Rights plan scrapped

A controversial bid to create a Bill of Rights for the UK to replace the Human Rights Act 1998 has been scrapped.

Martin Sexton, chair of BASW's Policy, Ethics and Human Rights Committee, said: “This is a welcome move by the UK government to drop a bill which would have undermined universal protections for human rights.”

However, he warned other pieces of draft legislation, such as the Illegal Migration Bill, still threatened to undermine the human rights of specific groups. He added: “BASW will continue to advocate for the protection of human rights for all.”

ENGLAND NEWS

John Pearce



Profit-making out of children's services must end - ADCS chief

The president of ADCS has urged government to focus on tackling the “blatant profiteering” of agency social work teams and the “dysfunctional” placements market for children in care.

John Pearce also criticised the Home Office, who he said is increasing demand on local authority services with its hotels policy for migrants.

Speaking at the association's annual conference, Pearce said actual funding for reforms coming from recommendations in the Independent Review of Children's Social care had been replaced by “consultations, consultations, consultations”.

ADCS (the Association of Directors of Children's Services) has repeatedly called on government to act swiftly and decisively in the wake of the review. Reflecting on the Government response, *Stable Homes Built on Love*, Pearce noted the absence of a “big bang set of overnight reforms” and failure to deliver the review's recommended £2.6 billion.

Reforms on the use of agency workers and expensive project teams were particularly needed, Pearce stressed. “The proposals offer a sensible route away from unaffordable costs and blatant profiteering. I recognise these are not an easy set of reforms to deliver, but we must hold our collective nerve,” he said.

Speaking about the “critical plank” in children's social care reform – placements for children in care – he warned that the lack of sufficiency is “unprecedented”.

The review's proposed Regional Care Cooperatives “will not address the issues”, Pearce said. He pointed to the findings of the Competition and Markets

Authority, which concluded the placements market is dysfunctional, does not have enough of the right placements in the right place, and threatens the stability of children in care.

Pearce argued: “A set of national conditions for success needs to be in place before we can even think about trying to implement reforms. These include a workforce plan, a multi-year funding settlement, a more ambitious capital programme and possibly most critically a move to bring regulations up to date.”

Speaking of the Home Office and its asylum policy, he said: “It's simply not acceptable that age disputed young people from Home Office commissioned hotels are treated as spontaneous arrivals to host local authorities. This is clearly not the case.

“They have been placed there by the Home Office and the disproportionate impact on host local authorities is becoming an increasing issue.”

There was praise for the Government's commitment to publish a kinship care strategy, which Pearce said feels like an “opportunity to make a real difference to a group of carers and children” who haven't previously had enough focus and attention. But he warned: “Any reforms would need to be met with adequate funding.”

Pearce voiced concerns over children's mental health services, saying: “Mental health is always the top issue children raise with us. We have a duty to respond when they tell us it's not good enough.”

Pearce also warned that the timing of the care review response could prove “tricky”, falling in the middle of a spending review period.

Council failed to respond to complaints

A backlog of 170 unanswered children's services and education complaints has been uncovered at Kent County Council.

The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman was asked to investigate after the authority failed to respond to a mother's complaint that her son had not been provided with speech and language therapy for more than 13 months.

When the Ombudsman asked the council for further evidence about its complaints process, it confirmed it had 141 overdue SEND stage one complaints and 29 overdue stage two complaints.

The council has agreed to improve complaints handling, apologise to the mother and her child and pay them £1,800 compensation plus £100 a month for every month the therapy was not set up.

Overspend in adult social care budgets

Almost two-thirds of councils in England overspent their adult social care budget in the last year,

Directors of services blame lack of capacity in community health services and rising need among citizens. Eight out of ten report an increase demand for mental health support, half a rise in rough sleepers needing help and 64 per cent a rise in domestic abuse among people with care and support needs. The findings come from ADASS spring survey published last month.

SCOTLAND NEWS



SASW professional officer Karin Heber (left) and Emily Galloway

MSPs hear from the frontline of social work in Scotland

Messages from social workers were taken to the Scottish Parliament as part of a drive to lobby for change in the profession.

Staff from the Scottish Association of Social Work (SASW) set up an exhibition stall outside Holyrood's debating chamber and spent three days highlighting issues to MSPs.

Before the event SASW members were asked what messages they wanted politicians to hear. These were put on display boards in a bid to get the country's decision-makers to understand the concerns of social workers and barriers to effective practice.

Issues highlighted included high levels of stress, difficulties with retention, student bursaries, unmanageable caseloads, lack of administrative support, poor public perception and the importance of early intervention and preventative work.

SASW national director Alison Bavidge said the event last month had provided "unprecedented engagement" with politicians, including seven ministers.

"We spoke to nearly 50 different MSPs and ministers. The whole purpose was to raise awareness of SASW, build relationships across the political parties and to highlight the issues for social work – things like the importance of doing relational rather than transactional work, about having a skilled profession, retaining workers in a healthy profession, having reasonable caseloads and the right kind of admin support. These are the messages coming from the frontline."

Bavidge added: "We worked hard to make sure this was a positive event celebrating what social work does but also saying what we need to do it well."

SASW's outgoing communications and policy officer Emily Galloway said: "Our aim was to give them [MSPs] an insight into what it's like to be a social worker and a service user and what the key issues are. We linked the issues to research so it was not only one person saying this."

Statistics highlighted included survey findings from the Social Workers Union showing that 82 per cent of social workers say they experience significant stress due to their work.

Also highlighted was Social Work Scotland's *Setting the Bar* report which found one in four social workers leave within the first six years of practice and admin support has decreased by a third in recent years.

Among messages displayed was one from Lindsey Young, a mental health officer, who said: "Social work is built on relationships and the skills to work with people before they reach crisis."

"We need time and investment in the profession so that we can provide earlier support and avoid compulsory measures of intervention."

Another, from Jude Currie – SASW chair and a social worker working with children and families – said: "I'd love to see a better understanding of the social work role and its pressures in parliamentary debate, decision-making, funding and governance as well as in the press and media."

Campaigners secure review of bursaries

The Scottish Government is reviewing bursaries for social work students in their final year of studies in response to a campaign demanding action.

In a letter, the new minister for further and higher education, Graeme Dey MSP, said a review is underway.

The move comes after it emerged final year social work students were doing unpaid placements.

A cross-party committee of MSPs agreed to take action after more than 2,000 people signed a petition calling for bursaries for all third and fourth year undergraduate social work students in Scotland – as well as reform of post-graduate bursary funding.

Social work students have been backed by SASW and the Social Workers Union.

The Promise on course to be broken

Scotland's ten-year plan for children and young people – The Promise – looks set to fall short in achieving its first phase targets, a monitoring body for the plan warned.

The worsening economic climate was blamed by The Promise Oversight Board, which said achieving the 2021-2024 plan by next year is not "realistic". But it stressed this "cannot be an excuse for failing to keep The Promise" and called for more "strategic investment".

The Promise set a series of targets in three phases until 2030 based on findings of Scotland's Care Review.



BASW.

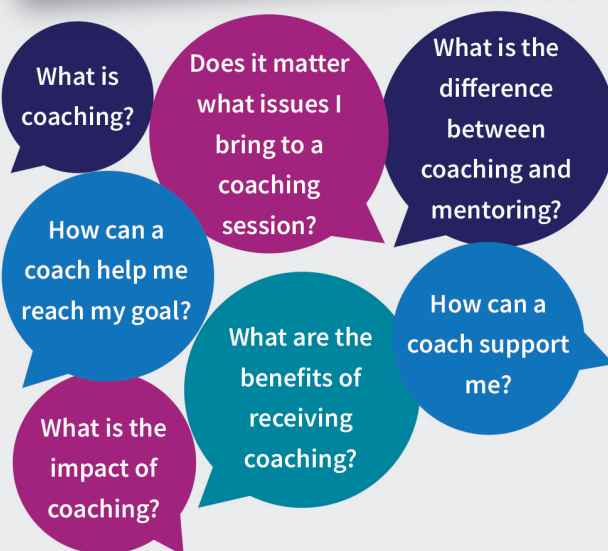
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WALES NEWS



Concern over worsening mental health during cost of living crisis is being highlighted

Survey showing mental health toll sparks call to get talking

More than eight out of ten adults in Wales say the cost of living crisis is affecting their mental health.

Nearly a quarter say they can't afford activities that help them stay mentally well and a fifth are having to work longer hours in the face of rising bills.

The findings come from the Time to Talk Day campaign aimed at encouraging people in Wales to talk about mental health.

The survey found a third of people never make time to talk about their mental health.

Nearly two-thirds (63 per cent) of those indicating a lack of time to talk about mental health expected their mental health to deteriorate as a result of the cost of living crisis.

Dominic, a 39-year-old in Cardiff who suffers from depression, anxiety and PTSD, said: "The cost of living crisis has massively impacted my ability to cope with my mental health conditions and has added to them.

"Money worries have led me to stop buying things like mental health books and subscribing to mental health podcasts as I am now more worried than ever about putting enough money aside to pay for my upcoming bills.

"I fear that if nothing changes or if help no longer exists that it'll ultimately push me further towards

becoming unwell."

Time to Talk Day 2023 was held in February across the UK. In Wales it is run by Time to Change Wales – a movement to end mental health discrimination – in partnership with the Co-op.

Programme manager Lowri Wyn Jones said: "Unfortunately, stigma is still an issue and there are worries that the cost of living crisis could make this worse.

"This is why we are urging everyone to use Time to Talk Day as an opportunity to break down barriers and have real and meaningful conversations about mental health."

Rebecca Birkbeck, director of community and member participation at the Co-op, added: "With the cost of living crisis, and the ongoing impacts from the pandemic, it's never been more important for us to be able to talk about how we're feeling – and making connections in our community can play a key part in this."

The Time to Talk Day survey found 40 per cent of people said more knowledge and understanding

around mental health would make it easier to talk about. A third would welcome tips on starting conversations and a quarter want someone in the community with the skills to support this.

- 20 per cent of Welsh adults in the most deprived areas report being treated for a mental health condition compared to eight per cent in the least deprived
- 11 per cent of NHS spend in Wales is on mental health
- The total cost of mental health problems in Wales is estimated at £7.2 billion a year
- 61 per cent of people in Wales say their current financial situation is damaging their mental health

WHO highlight wellbeing in Wales policies

The World Health Organisation has showcased how Wales is responding to the cost of living crisis, climate change and health inequalities.

Initiatives highlighted at a recent meeting in Copenhagen included:

- Proposals to limit takeaways near schools
- A Strategy for an Ageing Society
- The Wellbeing of Future Generations Act
- Wales being the first country to introduce a mandatory Health Impact Assessment for a wide range of public bodies

Minister for health and social services Eluned Morgan said: "Wales is leading the way in championing innovative policies and solutions to make continuous improvement in people's health and wellbeing."

Vacancies up in children's, down in adults

Overall vacancy rates among social workers in local authorities in Wales fell from 10.8 per cent to 7.9 per cent last year according to Social Care Wales.

But rates have risen in children's services over the same period, from 210 to 263 posts – meaning the improvements have largely been seen in adults services.

The use of agency social workers was also far lower in Wales compared to England – ten per cent as of summer 2022 compared to 17.6 per cent in England.



Registered Charity Number 313789

Social Workers' Educational Trust Grants and Scholarships

**Are you looking to improve your social work skills? Need funds?
We might be able to help you there!**

The Social Workers' Educational Trust (SWET) was established as an independent charity in 1972 on the initiative of the British Association of Social Workers. It is registered with the Charity Commission for England and Wales (Registered Charity number 313789) and operates throughout England, Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland. It remains independent of BASW, with its own Trustees.

SWET aims to assist qualified social workers to develop their knowledge and skills, encourage research into social work practice and education, and educate the public in the nature of social work.

Subject to criteria*, registered social workers who have completed at least two years post-qualifying practice and who are working or intending to work in the UK, can apply for funding from the Trust.

SWET provides grants of up to **£500** to individuals and up to **£1000** to assist team learning. SWET also awards three annual scholarships of **£3,000** each (usually in June). Applicants need to complete a simple application form if they wish to be considered for a grant or scholarship*

The Trustees consider grant applications at three meetings each year (usually February, June and October).

The next meeting to consider applications will be on 18th October 2023, with the deadline for submissions being 12 noon on Tuesday 10th October 2023.

* Full criteria, FAQs, guidance, and application forms can be found here:

<https://socialworkerseducationaltrust.org.uk>

BASW

The professional association for
social work and social workers

International Development Fund

Why just think about international exchange and development when you can do it?

At the 2014 BASW AGM, a motion was carried to create a fund whose aim would be, *"to put international exchange and development in a more accessible place than currently is possible and ensure support to BASW members in international exchanges of skills, knowledge, and expertise..."* (Ordinary Motion 1, AGM 2014).

The International Development Fund (IDF) is sustained with a £2 per annum, per member levy on the BASW membership, with a view to:

- Facilitate the international exchange of skills, knowledge, and expertise.
- Assist social workers and others to develop their knowledge and skills on international issues.
- Provide opportunities to network with international professionals.
- Examine research and models of practice outside of the UK.
- Build a database of international contacts.

The fund was temporarily repurposed in March 2020 to provide funding for overseas groups of social workers with support in their response to Covid-19. However, BASW is now accepting again, individual and partnership applications to the fund.

There are two ways you can apply:

Individual Applications*

Individual applicants may want to consider field trips, study visits, conferences, and other activities. Applicants must be a BASW member and can apply for funding **up to a maximum of £1000**

Partnership Projects*

To initiate and support international social work partnerships involving groups and agencies, with BASW members in key roles. Applications need to be made by partnerships, not individuals. The partnership must be initiated by a BASW member.

Partnerships may apply for grants of **up to a maximum of £10,000**

** Please note: Terms and conditions apply. Funding is not given retrospectively*

For more information, full criteria, t&cs, submission deadlines, etc. visit the BASW website:
www.basw.co.uk/what-we-do/international-work/international-development-fund-idf

or contact Helen Randle: policyadmin@basw.co.uk

NORTHERN IRELAND NEWS



Professor Ray Jones recommends children's services should be removed from integrated trusts

Review sets out plan to fix the crisis in children's social care

A new public body needs to be created to run children's services in Northern Ireland if a "systemic and endemic" crisis in the sector is to be tackled.

Social work teams should also consist of a greater skills mix, including more administrative support, and trainee social workers should be re-established to address recruitment problems.

These were among key recommendations in the final report of The Northern Ireland Review of Children's Social Care Services.

It comes as concern mounts over growing numbers of looked-after children, rising unmet need within families, and vacancy rates of up to 50 per cent in some social work teams.

There are currently a record 3,800 looked after children in Northern Ireland and more than 4,000 children who meet the threshold for statutory social care waiting for assessments.

The 16-month review was commissioned by the Department of Health and led by Professor Ray Jones.

He described a cycle of "help not being available to many families who are struggling, more children having child protection plans, and increasing numbers of children and young people being removed from their families and placed in care".

The review claims directors and other senior managers of children's services are currently "distracted and disempowered" by being integrated within Northern Ireland's five trusts.

It argues children's social care is "likely to be less prominent" compared to hospitals and other health services. For this reason, the review concludes,

statutory children's social care needs to be "located within an organisation where this is the primary focus..."

The review suggests creating an "arms-length body" (ALB) to do this, ending 50 years of integration alongside health within Northern Ireland's health and social care trusts.

It also recommends having larger teams consisting of a wider pool of staff, including family support workers, social work assistants and administrative assistants. There should be other staff in multi-agency teams skilled in working with people affected by mental health issues, drug and alcohol use and domestic violence.

The review says children's social care has become "skewed" towards child protection rather than family support work. To change this, it advocates community-based social work teams and more early support. The current 38 Sure Start centres in Northern Ireland should be expanded and extended to families with children aged up to ten instead of four.

The review says grading and banding of social workers should be reviewed and revised. Under the Agenda for Change NHS banding, many workers do not progress beyond Band 6 due to a limited number of Band 7 senior practitioner roles. It recommends social workers should progress to Band 7 after three years in practice and senior social workers should be renamed team managers and graded at Band 8.

Due to the collapse of power sharing, permanent secretary of health Peter May responded on behalf of the Government. He accepted "change was necessary" and pledged to consult on the recommendations.

Other reforms called for by Prof Jones

The review recommends:

- reintroducing the trainee social worker qualification. It says: "This 'grow your own' strategy is likely to help build a more stable and experienced workforce as these social workers of the future already have their local identities and are embedded with their families in the local communities where they are likely to remain." Part-time qualification routes should also be explored
- Foster carers should be paid
- Additional respite care for children with a disability should be provided
- Multi-agency teams and services should be further developed
- IT systems should be compared and the best performing adopted country-wide
- An independent parent-led advocacy organisation should be created for families engaged with children's social services
- A trusted named person should be identified for young people in care and those leaving the care system

The review was welcomed by BASW Northern Ireland.

Chair Orlaith McGibbon said: "Social workers are highly qualified and extremely skilled professionals but under current arrangements they spend too much of their time on tasks which could be undertaken by non-social work colleagues. This is a poor use of social workers' time and an inefficient way to allocate valuable resources.

"The overwhelming majority of social workers support an increase in non-social work staff to support their teams."

See PSW online for full report

Veterinary social work and the importance of animal-to-human relationships is well established in the US and Canada and emerging in Australia but virtually unheard of in the UK. **Rebecca Stephens** is on a mission to change that

The role that pets play in the lives of humans cannot be underestimated. And so it follows that there is also an important role for social work in incorporating these important relationships into practice.

Nearly two-thirds (62 per cent) of British households own a pet and they are often considered one of the family.

An animal wellbeing report from 2021 by pet charity PDSA revealed that 65 per cent of people who own a pet believed it improves their physical health, 84 per cent said that owning a pet improves their mental health and 84 per cent said that their pet makes them less lonely.

For humans, animals can have a unique relatability. Pets are often referred to as 'my best friend,' 'my other child,' or 'my guardian.'

An animal companion can enhance community connections for owners experiencing isolation or loneliness. The responsibility of caring for an animal can also give an owner a role and life purpose.

Animals are recognised as sentient beings in UK domestic law under the Animal Welfare [Sentience] Act 2022. They can experience feelings such as joy and fear, and show moral conduct such as emotional contagion and affective empathy. Surges in oxytocin have been observed in both dogs and humans during positive interactions.

All this has huge significance for professionals working in human and animal welfare fields.

Pets in practice

There are endless scenarios involving the human-animal relationship that highlight the importance of including pets in social work assessments.

It is not uncommon for pet carers to experience intense feelings of despair, anguish, guilt, and even suicidal ideation following separation from their animal companion due to death, rehoming, or their pet going missing or being stolen.

Abusers can use pets as a tactic to coerce and control. Sometimes survivors will delay leaving an abusive relationship or return in fear of what might happen to themselves, their children or their pets.

There are occasions when people with addiction challenges turn down a place in rehabilitation centres due to an inability to secure or afford alternative care arrangements for their animal companion.

During care proceedings, a child can experience

The role of pets in social work



Rebecca Stephens and her pet, Wesley

additional trauma if they are removed from the home where their pet lives and that relationship also ends. As domestic pets are legally considered property, navigating divorce and separation arrangements where there is joint pet ownership can present significant dilemmas for couples.

When there is a change in the connection with a companion animal or a threat of experiencing a change

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such as loss, the grief that can result has parallels with grief responses when a secure human connection changes.

Although the strength of the human-animal bond is generally supported and publicly recognised, a loss or change to that bond unfortunately is not, and pet carers can experience disenfranchised grief. Social workers, therefore, have an ethical responsibility to acknowledge and honour the relationship that clients have with their animal companion.

The role that pets play in the lives of humans matters. Family structures and relationship dynamics are diverse and ever-changing, and the inclusion of non-human family members in social work assessments, and in some interventions, is crucial.

Including pets in family genograms, for example, can offer insights into the human-animal family configuration. This can also acknowledge animal companions as legitimate family members, which can be validating for human family members.

A pet can function as a conduit between the social worker and the person they are working with to facilitate difficult conversations that may reveal significant information including risk and resiliency factors.

Noting a pet's physical condition and behaviour during home visits can provide clues to the human and animal's experience and daily functioning. This is particularly relevant due to the correlation between animal abuse and human violence, known as 'The Link'.

As The American Humane Society observes: "When animals are abused, people are at risk; when people are abused, animals are at risk."

Where there are animals living in the home, it is important that social workers ask questions to determine the welfare needs of both humans and animals. It is also important that social workers draw from a theoretical framework that extends to the inclusion of animal companions in assessments to help them better understand the complexities within all relationships.

Veterinary social work

Social workers are already adept in providing strengths and relationship-based practice, crisis intervention strategies, trauma-informed approaches, safeguarding, and bereavement support.

Increasingly, there is also the opportunity for social work to expand into interdisciplinary alliances within veterinary practice.

Veterinary social work is an established sub-speciality in the USA and Canada and is emerging in Australia. The International Association of Veterinary Social Work defines veterinary social work as "an area of social work practice that supports and strengthens interdisciplinary partnerships that attend to the intersection of humans and animals".

Veterinary social work comprises four core practice areas:

- **Intentional wellbeing**
- **The link between human and animal violence**
- **Animal-related grief and bereavement**
- **Animal-assisted interventions**

The role not only focuses on families and pets but includes support and training for veterinary staff on grief and trauma, emotional intelligence, de-escalation and client relations, conflict resolution and mediation, critical incident debriefing and support in mitigating compassion fatigue.

For veterinary practitioners, caring for and treating sick and injured animals is not always a positive experience. Animals can unexpectedly die during surgery, animals can be treated for 'non-accidental' injuries and human clients can refuse euthanasia even if it is in the animal's best interest.

There is currently a mental health crisis among veterinary professionals globally and the prevalence of moral distress, compassion fatigue and burnout is significantly high. In fact, veterinarians have a suicide rate three to four times higher than the national average in the UK, according to the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons' Mind Matters Initiative 2022.

Veterinary social workers provide animal-related bereavement support to pet carers, liaison between medical staff and clients to ensure clients understand treatment choices and facilitate difficult care decisions, including end-of-life decision making, and provide guidance to staff and clients regarding the connection between human and animal violence.

The reality of caring for an animal companion is that there will be visits to the vet and any one of those visits could be a life-altering experience, both for the animal and, potentially, their family.

I am currently undertaking a post-graduate certificate in veterinary social work with the University of Tennessee. As a pioneer in veterinary social work in the UK, it has been an exciting journey to influence its development and build networks with veterinary professionals who are keen to progress interdisciplinary collaborations.

I am a strong advocate for embedding the four core areas of veterinary social work, including human and animal welfare, within social work and veterinary education and training.

BASW's Code of Ethics acknowledges: "The subject matter of ethics is often said to be human welfare, the bigger picture also includes the flourishing of animals and the whole ecosystem."

This provides a valid opportunity for social workers to bridge the gap between professionals caring for those with hair, fur, scales, feathers, and shells.

Rebecca Stephens is a senior lecturer in social work at the University of Sussex



IN FOCUS



Luke Goldie-McSorley explains why and how social workers should rediscover their role and identity as 'difference makers' rather than referral makers

We are the INTERVENTION

Social work takes pride in its roots as an agent for change, a champion of community action, partnership working and empowering and supporting those most in need.

For many though, as mentioned in the BASW membership survey 2022, the biggest challenges are workload demand, administrative tasks and staffing levels.

It isn't news that social workers feel overwhelmed by bureaucracy and regularly report they lack time with service users. Has a consequence of this been the cost of our identity as a profession?

Has the intervention aspect of social work been pushed down the list, now sitting way below our statutory responsibilities?

It could be argued that this has coincided with the growth of therapies and specialisms, and how we increasingly seem to be making referrals to other agencies. Referrals will always be an essential part of social work and the profession's knowledge is key in advocating and supporting service users to access these.

But let's turn the spotlight, for a moment, on social workers themselves as the great interventionists, masters of language, agents of change, the difference makers.

The uniqueness of social work identity is that every single minute of interaction with any one client or group of clients is an intervening opportunity when used in a certain way, with a certain mindset and a certain set of skills.

From the initial referral call to the crisis phone call on duty, from assessment visits to review meetings, from planned sessions to short visits...

From frontline teams to secondary services, from disabilities to edge of care and older age adults, all involve time, and time can be an opportunity for structured

interaction used in just the right way for the client.

The impact itself sits on a continuum; from vast changes leading to mass shifts and behavioural change to tiny glimmers of hope and light in an otherwise hopeless situation. This can all be done within the realms of safety, safeguarding, and always maintaining the child or vulnerable adult at the centre.

I attended a mental health conference recently and there was a rebuttal of the idea of 'therapeutic social work'. What I felt was lost in the ensuing discussion, and perhaps in social work itself, is what 'therapeutic' really means.

Therapeutic

When I think of therapeutic social work, I see social workers talking with the people they are working with. That talking or time together is the thing that leads to change in their lives.

I don't see 'therapeutic' as directive or authoritarian. I see it as relational, interactional, thoughtful from both sides, and fluid. Above all I see it as an opportunity to co-construct conversations using our client's language and our own, which when combined can lead to change.

There are many well-used and exciting ways of bringing intervention approaches to the forefront of social work.

My particular blend of therapeutic or interventionist social work is something I call Brief Solution Focused Social work, which came out of my training alongside excellent solution focused practitioners, and working subsequently in a range of contexts.

Brief Solution Focused Social Work has a clear stance and assumption base which underpins the way I talk to and about, think about, write about, view and work with people.

**'Talking
time or time
together is
the thing
that leads to
change'**

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It involves clear intervention tools and techniques which create opportunity to have structured yet fluid conversations with people towards changes happening in their lives.

What I see in my practice and that of many colleagues in Essex is the further moulding of this excellent approach within the context of statutory social work and safeguarding.

Its brevity of impact fits wonderfully with social work, which seeks to be in people's lives no longer than necessary but just enough and at the right time. The work starts instantly, it's a brief intervention and outcomes aren't hindered by this brevity.

The questions it utilises work on the basis that each person's life experience and perspective is unique and therefore intervening must work with and acknowledge that. Questions provoke thought towards change and creating moments where clients hear themselves say and describe things about their life or situation they may have never heard before.

I might ask a person to think about an outcome, a future life with change present, or a past life through the lens of survival and success:

"What would be the very first small sign of that difference showing up in your life?"

"What would you notice about yourself, what would others notice about you?"

"Tell me, how did you manage to get through that time in a way that worked for you and your children to still be going now?"

"What does that say about you, that you were able to do all that, in spite of the circumstances?"

I have seen this approach align to the hopes and values I have in being a social worker. To name a few:

- Change is always happening and possible
- People are experts of their experience

'It's social work as the intervention, it's stepping into moments and being the agent of change, being the social worker'

- We respect people's right to their own choices and decisions, and recognise they may have had their own good reasons for those decisions
- Celebrating the strengths and resources within people is useful and right

Agent for change

I have also witnessed good outcomes and feedback: the difference it has made to lives, the change it has freed up, and the positive effect it has had on other professionals, practitioners, and myself.

So, what I term 'therapeutic' or 'interventionist' – from my work through a Brief Solution Focused lens – is how to utilise all the small and bigger moments of talking with the people we work with; igniting the possibility of change in the people we support; resurrecting capacity and ability; bringing to focus how life could be.

Helping people feel better, get on better, manage better. Using knowledge, ideas, or strategies in a way that's sustainable for clients and owned by them.

It's social work as the intervention, it's stepping into moments and being the agent of change, being the social worker.

Social work is complex and there will continue to be challenges. Brief Solution Focused Social Work is not a magic pill – all the other important facets of social work practice must remain, grow and strengthen.

And, of course, there will be times where we will continue to signpost, to refer on, to chase and advocate for those referrals, for our clients in getting those services.

With all that in mind this social worker still truly believes social work is in the interventionist category of service and it's so important for the people we work with.

So what can we do?

- Don't see yourself as an expert in every situation but as having expertise in being alongside people at that moment of their journey
 - Talk in useful, progressive, thought provoking, change creating, co-constructing and collaborative ways
 - Be purposeful with the ten minutes we get in a visit, or on the phone with a parent in crisis, or during a review meeting
 - Allow yourself to reconnect with core social work values, skills, and ethics
 - See every one of these moments as a chance to achieve positive change and develop human potential
- Our talking will assist in people's lives changing, differences happening, shifts in attention, narratives altering, tiny boosts to self-esteem or self-image or capacity. In feeling hopeful again, in seeing services and help as good, in trusting people and social workers, in believing in possibility and their future. All this and so much more is possible through how we use language and intervene in the best way we can in people's lives. Social workers are interventionists.

Luke Goldie-McSorley is practice supervisor with the DBIT Emotional Development Team at Essex County Council



Friendship isn't a word that features much in the language of social work. But could that be about to change?

Shahid Naqvi reports

Bringing friendship into practice



Bryan Lynch, director of social work at the Sussex Partnership NHS Trust, says he is thinking of creating a line of T-shirts with the slogan, 'Putting the social back into social work'.

It's a joke, but one that aptly sums up a key area of practice he and colleague Caroline Field are currently focusing on – the importance of friendships and social connections in practice.

"Someone in our focus group said friendship is a dirty word within professional language because we are told we are not there to be friends with people," says Caroline, a senior mental health practitioner in one of the trust's Early Intervention in Psychosis Service teams.

"But in the team I work in, we work with people for up to three years. We have a small caseload, so we really get to know them. I see most of the people on my caseload more than I see members of my own family.

"When you are seeing people every week you do almost become friends with people. Part of our role is to mirror to them what friendship is and how to connect with people."

The importance of friendship to wellbeing may seem a given. But when Caroline and Bryan looked into this, they struggled to find any social work models promoting it. Nor, to their knowledge, is friendship something that's emphasised on social work courses. The language is more often of 'peers' rather than 'friends'.

The shift in focus at the trust came after Caroline read an article in the *British Journal of Social Work* about promoting friendship among care experienced people.

Caroline presented the article to a 'Social Work Journal Club' set up by Bryan for colleagues to share interesting

'If we are serious about prevention it is about creating the environment and culture for people to make connections'

papers for discussion and reflection. The paper, by Autumn Roesch-Marsh and Ruth Emond, argued that friendship is an essential human need and should be centrally placed in social work assessments and interventions.

In wake of the enforced social isolation of the Covid pandemic, it's not difficult to understand why the paper struck a chord within the team.

Social isolation is regularly described as a pandemic in its own right. Earlier this year, research by Ipsos and *Sky News* showed more than one in three Britons feel lonely, rising to more than half of 18 to 24-year-olds.

The Government's Community Life Survey of adults aged over 16 in England found six per cent of the population feel lonely always, 19 per cent some of the time and 22 per cent occasionally.

The survey also highlighted that people with long-term illness or disability are more likely to feel lonely, as are people living in deprived areas.

Johann Hari, in his bestselling book *Lost Connections*, cites social disconnect as largely to blame for increased depression and anxiety. And researchers claim being regularly lonely is as bad as smoking 15 cigarettes a day. To tackle this, loneliness strategies have been launched in England, Scotland and Wales over the last five years.

"Everyone talks about prevention but how do you do that?" asks Bryan. "For me, if we are serious about prevention, it's about creating the right environment and

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culture for people to make connections.

"You can't be too prescriptive about it, you just have to try to create the conditions to help people find their own way to make connections.

"That is a fundamental part of what we should do rather than just prescribe. I have a [government] white paper from 1971 which recognises that mental illness is not just a major health problem but also a major social problem. It's 50 years later and we're still not thinking enough about the social aspects of it."

As social workers in a health setting, Bryan and Caroline believe they have a key role to play emphasising social models of recovery.

Caroline says: "One of the themes that came up in our focus groups was around the NICE guidelines for psychosis. While the evidence base for biological and psychological interventions is strong, there are fewer evidence based social interventions.

"What came across to me in our discussions is that people sometimes don't consider the barriers people with mental illness face in terms of the economic things, the stigma, the discrimination. People usually make friends by joining a club or a gym but that will cost money. And if you've lost your job and you're unable to work because you're having a psychosis episode it can be really, really difficult."



Caroline talks about the friendship "stages" that some people miss out on.

"Friendships mean different things at different stages. For younger people it's like your world, how many friends you have got. As you get older, you have fewer close friends or your family become more important.

"If you have difficulties with your mental health and you're not reaching those normal stages society expects of you, you can feel this real disconnect."

It is, perhaps, ironic that loneliness and poor mental health is on the rise at a time when people have more ways to connect than ever before thanks to the internet.

But social media platforms like Facebook can be alienating to some people, says Caroline.

"You could argue that quite a lot of poor mental health is about comparison, comparing ourselves to others similar to ourselves."

The team she works in finds ways to get people of all ages, backgrounds and genders together in safe real-world spaces where relationships can grow and flourish.

"A large part of what we do is create groups, so we have a walking group. An offshoot has formed from that and people now meet for coffee without the service, which is amazing. When people come to the end of their three years with us, we don't want to create a dependency on the

service. It gives a lot of hope to see someone transfer the skills they have learned to other areas of life and make more connections and more friendships."

The team recently launched a research project to capture service users' experiences of friendship and social connections. The data is being analysed and will be used to create a practice guide.

"The question is how well understood is the importance of friendship with those with lived experience of mental health conditions?" says Caroline.

"What is the impact of a lived experience of mental health on friendship and social connections? What are the barriers to finding and keeping friends and social connections? How can social workers or other social care professionals best support those with mental health conditions to make and keep friends?

"There are models on strength-based approaches and being person-centred but I don't know if there's anything that names friendship."

Bryan believes the work the team is doing demonstrates a key strength of social work which should be celebrated and valued.

"What is a mental health social worker in the NHS?" he says. "It's never been well defined before, but studies like this may help us move closer to describing it. We don't shout enough about what we do and describe it. You can't quantify it in [hospital] bed days, but it's probably more impactful than that. Our job is done when we are no longer needed."

MEMOIRS OF A SOCIAL WORKER

In a career spanning four decades, **Sam Waterhouse** has seen it all. Here he reflects on care and control within children's homes and the "obscene" profits being made by private companies out of some of society's most vulnerable citizens

Shortly after I qualified a vacancy came up in a child protection team.

It is incomprehensible now but 20 NQSWs from my course applied. Unfortunately I was unsuccessful. Given the lack of job opportunities, I decided to combine agency work with travelling. Again, inconceivably, the only work available at the time was residential. I was unprepared for the practice I encountered.

I started in a private unit profiled as offering therapeutic interventions for victims of sexual abuse. I looked forward to it as a learning opportunity. On arrival I was shocked to find a group of inexperienced, untrained staff hoping that given my three years experience of residential care I would guide them on what to do. Given the amount this business was charging I felt this was obscene. Even the basics were absent, let alone the promised cathartic packages.

Appallingly, even to this day I continue to hear of private provision charging upwards of £20,000 per week offering "specialist one-to-one" placements in what turn out to be ex-council flats with, again, poorly trained employees. It is scandalous that big business continues to make obscene profits due to the lack of coherent planning by local authorities to ensure sufficient in-house provision.

The next home I worked in had a notorious reputation, staffed mostly by men who had been laid off from the docks. I found the resident teacher chewing on his nails, ashen and fragile in a cold sweat. I heard later he had a breakdown after his ramshackle on-site Portacabin classroom was torched.

Tension

Entering the main living space, I saw a large wrestling mat had been thrown on the floor. The staff suggested the young people should grapple to establish who was the best sumo wrestler. I winced, thinking this was only going to end one way. The younger kids were having fun, however, I could sense the tension building as the two oldest entered the dojo.

Within seconds of them squaring up, Troy had executed a perfect roundhouse kick, cracking viciously against his adversary's skull. Safe to say all hell broke loose, the big lads grappling with the even bigger members of staff.

This seemed to go on for an eternity - Richter scale ten as we used to say, until the cook, appearing like a vision

Sumo wrestling and roast dinners

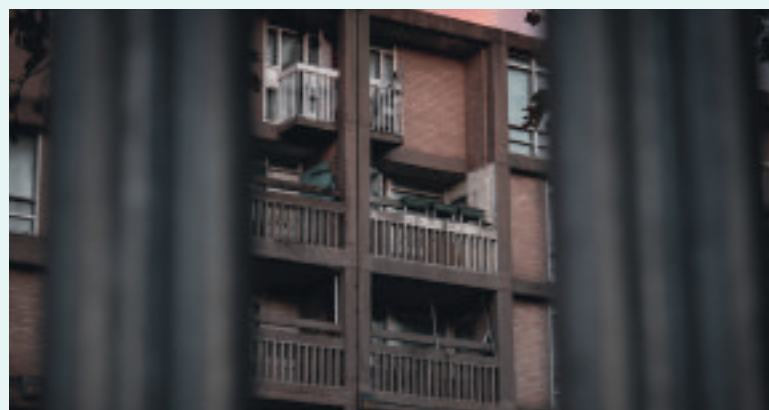


dancing across the floor, wheeled in the biggest Sunday dinner I have ever seen.

As if tranquillised, the aggression ceased and everyone sat down to tuck in. An entente cordial established without even a word being spoken.

Given it was only Tuesday, I wondered how big the feast would be on Sundays. In spite of persistent invitations via my agency, I never went back to find out.

My final placement was at an euphemistically titled 'care and control unit', the notion being that the most troubled youngsters could be "gaffered" (a local term meaning to show someone who the boss is) into behaving. The officer-in-charge was a Bumble-esque man who weighed around 18-stone. He also volunteered as a special constable. He'd hide behind clothes rails in shops planning to jump out on any unsuspecting shoplifters. Perplexed by how such a large man could conceal himself, the staff nicknamed him undercover elephant. He'd attempt to amuse the kids by throwing himself on the floor shouting, "Officer down".



MEMOIRS OF A SOCIAL WORKER



Notwithstanding the humour, there were much more concerning aspects of the home's ethos. The local authority had brought in an ex-military person to teach the staff how to restrain kids who were kicking off. This involved three members of staff pinning a young person face down, trussed in a way that was meant to stop them hurting themselves or others.

The idea was that this feeling of 'security' would help them regulate their emotions. As one young woman put it: "Try calming down when some bastard is pushing your face into the floor."

I am not arguing that no child should ever be restrained. There have been many occasions where I have seen young people present a risk of serious injury to either themselves or other people. However, over reliance on budget-minimising restraint as a means of control can never be justified. Cynically, this was employed in favour of professional therapy.

Bureaucratic mix-up

Three residents who mixed vulnerability with extreme aggression stand out.

Wayne was a rangy young man, whose cheeks frequently flashed blood-red with rage. He used the threat of violence to intimidate people. It was not long before we saw exactly who he got it from. He was a school refuser, as many young people were back then. In a bureaucratic mix-up his father received a letter threatening him with a fine due to his son's non-attendance. He reacted by bursting into the unit and barging past the staff to punch Wayne in the face, screaming that he would not get him "fucking fined" before promptly leaving, unconcerned about any

repercussions. I developed a relationship with Wayne, a love-hate one, it appeared from his point of view. We would sit together in his room and he'd show me photos of when he'd been adopted by an affluent yet austere couple. They dressed him in a shirt and bow tie clearly at odds with the culture of the estate he'd come from.

Wayne told me the adoption had broken down because they wanted a posh boy and he didn't fit the bill. We seemed to have developed a rapport. However, when challenged he would quickly boil up, pushing his face into mine. Although fearing I would be whacked, I was fairly good at standing my ground.

Often when I arrived at work he would jump me from behind and I would shrug him off. I joked with him he was like the Pink Panther's Kato. I tried to keep it as good humoured as I could but I could sense anger raging inside him. On one occasion I was on the phone in the office and he jumped me for the umpteenth time. I pushed him away while trying to continue my conversation. He plonked himself on the floor behind me, pausing before grasping my wrist with one hand while yanking my index finger back with the other, breaking it instantly.

Some time later I was visiting a young man, who I had fostered, in prison. I saw Wayne pensively sitting alone across the room and walked over to say hello. He told me he was doing seven years for trying to rob a post office with a shot gun. I asked him why he had broken my finger and his response was: "Cos you thought you were hard."

Taxi driver

The second resident was a young woman who was being openly sexually exploited by a taxi driver waiting outside the care home. A staff member who tried to stop her from leaving was shoved aside by the girl, and left with a broken arm.

We later found heavily soiled underwear in the girl's bedroom, indicative of the trauma she was experiencing. Some time later her father enquired about adopting a child, saying: "It would give the wife something to do."

The third young person who stood out once appeared before us, shirtless. High on solvents with glazed eyes, he began slashing up his forearms, blood pouring everywhere.

Each of these young people presented a risk to both themselves and others and restraint was unfortunately inevitable. However, I raised my concerns that restraint had become a means of control rather than a protective intervention, contrary to the Children Act guidance.

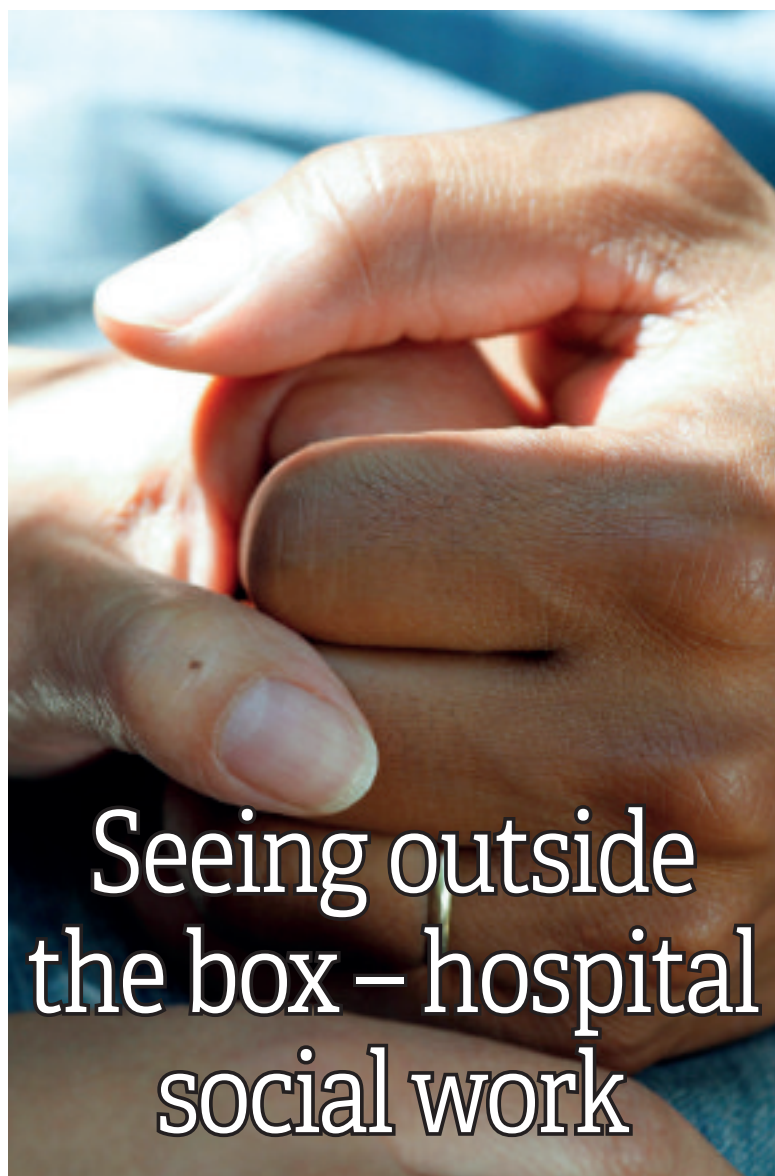
There are consistent themes running through the homes I worked in that endure today: capitalists seeking to make obscene profits, staff being poorly trained alongside a general lack of investment to ensure margins are maximised.

Of all the homes I have worked in the vast majority of staff clearly cared about the young people. However, in common with most of the poorly skilled parents these children were removed from, caring is not enough. Neither group has the capacity to adequately parent them and from the top down there seems to be sparse interest in resourcing anything to change this.

'I joked with him he was like the Pink Panther's Kato with his frequently random surprise attacks'

Sam Waterhouse is a newly retired social worker who has spent most of his career working in the south of England. Names and some details have been changed where appropriate to protect identities

IN FOCUS



Relationship-based practice

Strong themes in my 15 interviews with social work teams in hospitals are already apparent. Social work practitioners continue to perceive social work as a different, and undoubtedly valuable, profession in acute NHS settings.

All of the social workers we spoke to talked at length about their relationships with colleagues, with service users and families, and the importance of service users' relationships with family, friends and carers. They highlighted how relationships were a central part of their decision-making process, and how they felt health colleagues were sometimes too focused on the individual rather than their context.

One social worker we interviewed said: "No disrespect to therapists and health colleagues, but sometimes they're a bit blinkered, can't always see outside of a box with someone. If the ward says that somebody's not mobilising very well but you know prior to this hospital admission they were, and the ward are saying they need a 24-hour care placement, then I say well, why can we not think of rehab first?"

Social workers want to be hopeful about the recovery and quality of life of those they work with, but many talked about their frustrations due to a lack of resources.

They praised services such as reablement, but most felt that there were simply not enough rehabilitative and long-term domiciliary care services to go round.

This was felt by some to have a particular impact on older people with cognitive impairment.

Staff shortages were attributed by most interviewees as being due to the poorly funded and undervalued role of the care sector in general, particularly the low pay and low status of care workers.

Ethics of care

Ethics of Care would say this is due to a UK society that prioritises science, justice and rationality (against a backdrop of neoliberal ideals of individual responsibility). This leaves the care sector undervalued as a subjective, relationship-based and emotional service.

Explicitly underpinning social work with Ethics of Care – and positioning this approach as a counterpoint to a more logical and 'scientific' approach in medical care – can help hospital social work stand with, but separate from, the vital work of the NHS.

Unfortunately lack of funding and political will continue to be significant barriers to realising the hopeful future hospital social workers want to envisage for their service users.

In the final part of my research I am planning to reach more hospital social workers across the UK, and would invite anyone with an interest to get in touch.

Further information is available by visiting the UK Hospital Social Work Survey at tinyurl.com/HospitalSW

Carrie Phillips is a senior lecturer and PhD student being supported in her research by her supervision team Dr Lesley Deacon, Professor Jonathan Ling and Dr Daniel Burrows

Carrie Phillips is currently completing a PhD on hospital social work, having spent 12 years as a social worker supporting adults with physical disabilities and long-term health needs. She reports on her initial findings

Who are the social workers in acute hospitals and how do they get on in a predominantly NHS environment?

In the UK, most hospital social workers (and colleagues such as social care assessors) are employed by a local authority to support the work of their local NHS hospitals. There are around 2,500 local authority social workers and 1,800 social care assessors supporting hospital discharge. The NHS employs far fewer – just over 400 social workers and about 150 social care assessors. Almost half of the social workers are employed in Northern Ireland where integrated health and social care trusts are responsible for adult social care rather than local authorities.

Despite social workers directly supporting the work of the NHS, research consistently finds that social workers feel misunderstood and undervalued in the hospital setting.

'Many talked about their frustrations due to a lack of resources'



Social workers don't feel like they deserve to take care of themselves, research reveals

PSW reports from the BASW Annual Conference and AGM held in Birmingham in June

Social workers are ethically obliged to take time out for self-care, according to a literature review.

Pearse McCusker, senior lecturer in social work at the University of Edinburgh, said: "Some social workers feel undeserving of self-care. But some people in the literature are framing it as an ethical consideration – it's not selfish."

McCusker, who has carried out research and a literature review into the effects of implementing self-care programmes for social workers, said social workers need to care for themselves better.

"We have a tendency to put other people first, it's part of our professional commitment, but we need to recognise that caring for ourselves is important in order to care for other people," he said.

He argued that there needs to be a holistic response to embedding self-care into social work, as well as a multi-factorial consensus on the definition of self-care, including philosophical and spiritual elements that tackle social workers' sense of identity.

Among the current support available for social workers is the Social Work Professional Support Service (SWPSS) confidential peer coaching service.

SWPSS, which offers three free sessions, was formed by BASW in 2020. It has around 30 coaches who, as of April 2023, have delivered 600 coaching sessions.

"We have seen an unmet need among professional peers for a safe place to talk about how Covid exacerbated the stress social workers were already experiencing from high caseloads, workplace bullying and a lack of management

support," said Monalesia Earle, SWPSS coach support supervisor.

A lot of calls to the service are from social workers wanting to leave the profession – but by the end of three calls, they decide to stay, Earle said.

"They change their minds because we're helping them recognise they're valued and have value to give to the profession."

Over the last year, she added, data has shown that social workers using the service have been seeking to talk about considering a career change, fitness to practice referrals, lack of regular supervision, job insecurity, self-doubt and burnout.

Annie Ho, independent social worker and volunteer coach, said her experience reflects this.

"However social workers support social workers, together we are stronger and we can talk to people who can really understand us," she said.

More Conference and AGM coverage on Pages 24, 25 and 26

CONFERENCE AND AGM

'A form of state violence and cultural genocide' against GRT community

The social work workforce must understand the differences between Gypsy, Romani and Traveller (GRT) children, urged Dan Allen, senior social work lecturer at Edge Hill University.

Despite huge differences in the language, culture and histories of GRT children, these families are mostly united by a cult of discrimination because social workers often don't – or can't – distinguish between them, Allen told delegates.

Allen found during his own research that serious case reviews involving GRT children often referred to the children as coming from 'Gypsy, Romani and Traveller heritage' – despite the many cultural differences between the three groups.

"People authoring these serious case reviews don't understand the nuance either – often because reports written by social work teams don't understand the differences between Gypsy, Romani and Traveller people."

This lack of understanding is underpinned by an environment of institutional racism, recognised by the Council of Europe as anti-Gypsyism, Allen added. He found that some social workers have negative feelings about GRT families, who are overrepresented in child welfare services.

"Our thresholds are lower than they would be for any other ethnic groups to justify the removal of children into state care.

"Very little effort is placed on kinship care or family restoration as those children then go to live in trans racial settings or are adopted.

"They lose their name that associates them to the Gypsy, Romani and Traveller heritage, their language and identity. That's a true form of state violence and cultural genocide."

In addition, the social work system is not well designed to work with GRT families, Allen added.

"It's very difficult for social workers to work with families that are nomadic. We need to think about how our systems work to accommodate and promote the protected characteristics, rather than expect communities to adapt to our systems."

The audience also heard from Jackie Bolton, social worker and co-founder of Romani Traveller Social Work CIC.

"We know people view us negatively," she said. "We're expecting judgments to go against us from everyone and that assessments can be unfair and overestimate risk."

There is a need for peer support within social services to make sure the voices of GRT families inform practice.

Allen's paper was informed by dissertation research by Victoria Hamnett, social worker at Rochdale Council who was the winner of the Kay McDougall British Journal of Social Work prize.



'It's very difficult for social workers to work with families that are nomadic'

Researcher calls for a clear definition of social care prevention

Our definition of social care prevention work with older people is unsatisfactory, a public health expert warned.

Simon Read, public health research fellow at Swansea University, said it is "somewhat rooted in the business mindset that has taken hold in social care over last 20 years or so".

Read is currently looking at how prevention work is commissioned, understood and enacted within social care for

older people to determine best practice. Among key themes emerging in his research so far are community development, resilience and resourcefulness. This, Read has found, is done in variable ways.

"The importance of unpaid carers to the prevention agenda can't be underestimated," he said.

Read has also found the potential for several issues to emerge, including tensions

around hospital admissions. He stressed it is important to recognise the inter-connectivity between health, social care and community.

One way to help older people become more visible is through inclusive research, said Reshma Patel, an expert by experience and member of the Social Work with Older People Research Project.

The two-year project exists to hold researchers to account

and ensure their research is co-produced with older people.

"We're a critical friend to the research, making sure the language is right and challenging the research team to make sure they're not just cherry picking social workers," said Patel.

The group was created because there is a lack of understanding about the value social work can add to older people's lives, Patel said.

CONFERENCE AND AGM



Shifting power away from professionals

Family Group Conferencing was hailed as a way of putting service users at the heart of decision-making.

The model, imported from New Zealand where it has been a key part of working with families since the 80s, aims to shift power away from professionals.

Some three-quarters of local authorities in England and Wales now claim to offer family group conferencing (FGC) in children's services.

Mthoko Ngobese, senior lecturer in social work at the University of West London, stressed its importance in finding strengths within families rather than services.

"A system cannot provide a child with a sense of belonging. We need to protect children but we need to preserve families.

"Just because there is a problem in the family home doesn't mean that we cannot call upon that family to make plans for that child.

"If we invest in preserving families and making it safe for children to live in their families, then we are giving them a better chance of life."

Ngobese said families have an emotional commitment that "strangers, no matter how well-meaning" can ever give them.

She added: "Even if your social worker loves you so much they will do whatever for the family, they are not there at 10pm on Friday evening."

A study of family group conferencing by the

What Works for Children's Social Care found evidence for the effectiveness of the model to be "inconclusive".

The design of the study, however, was criticised by advocates of FGC as flawed.

Some local authorities are now using the model in adult services.

Danielle Valente, assistant team manager of the FGC team in adults services at the Birmingham Children's Trust, said: "We facilitate families to come up with their own practical plans. They turn the traditional and hierarchical models of social care on their head and it is a bottom up approach.

"We know citizens are the experts in their own lives so we promote empowerment and giving families more control to make their own decisions."

The team has six FCG coordinators whose role is to get to know the person and identify who is important in their life before the 'conference day' when they all get together.

"On the day of the conference the network is supported to develop a practical plan themselves, to meet a need, achieve a goal, reduce a risk or plan for the future.

"Often we find people have fantastic support networks around them and it just takes time and effort to get them working in a coordinated way.

"FGC aims to help people find their own answers to their problems."

Motions carried at the Annual General Meeting

BASW will:

1. Honour Professor June Thoburn's long and distinguished career in social work and her fierce commitment to the profession with a lifetime achievement award.
2. State its abhorrence of apartheid wherever it is practiced; review claims by human rights organisations of apartheid by the Israeli government and produce a position paper of the facts and ethical issues; ensure BASW does not hamper members expressing critical views of the Israeli government; state its solidarity with the Palestinian people and work with the International Federation of Social Workers on these positions.
3. Speak out against authoritarianism and anti-democratic governments and champion the role of social workers in fostering inclusivity, democracy and social and human rights.
4. Challenge the UK government's current policies for supporting asylum seeking children while collecting data on the impact of the Illegal Migration Bill. Call on children's commissioners to ensure asylum-seeking children should have the same rights as all children in the UK. Campaign to ensure social workers doing work for the Home Office National Age Assessment Board are not employed by the Home Office.
5. Examine current categorisations of Jewish people in consultation with Jewish members along with all current categorisations of ethnoreligious identities.
6. Call on employers to adopt recruitment and induction standards for overseas social workers created by BASW and to recognise the contribution of overseas recruited social workers.

CONFERENCE AND AGM

'True voice' of social work and BASW 'mover and shaker' honoured

Two longstanding and respected BASW members were recognised for their lifelong commitment to social work.

Professor June Thoburn and David Jones were given outstanding achievement to social work awards during the association's Annual General Meeting.

Thoburn was praised for her "fierce commitment to the social work profession" and to education in the sector.

Presenting the award, BASW chair Julia Ross said: "June has been for me and many others the true voice of social work –



From left, June Thoburn, Julia Ross and David Jones

always determined, insightful and inspiring. Her thoughts, beliefs and values have driven generations of social workers over the years.

"BASW applauds her dedication and passionate support for the social work community and profession."

June, who is in her 80s, is emeritus professor of social work at the University of East Anglia. An AGM motion proposing her recognition said she "continues to push steadfastly, with erudition, humanity, and wisdom, for better systems of support for

children and families".

David Jones received his award in recognition of his work across BASW and the social work profession more widely, including academia, practice and voluntary roles in the UK and internationally.

A past president of the International Federation of Social Work, Jones helped launch the annual World Social Work Day celebration.

He has been a member of BASW since a student and has been influential in shaping the association's direction.

Ross said: "David Jones has been a mover and a shaker for social work all his life. And there is no indication that he's slowing down. Please don't David... your leadership in and for BASW over many years richly deserves our gratitude and celebration."

Stop the press – BASW honours great journalism about social work

Journalists from across the UK attended the first ever award to recognise high quality reporting of social work.

The BASW Social Work Journalism Awards was launched to celebrate creative, informed and sensitive reporting that demonstrates an outstanding understanding of the profession.

The new award is part of a wider campaign by BASW and the Social Workers Union to improve the public's perception of social work.

Journalists from print, broadcast and trade travelled to Birmingham to attend the event held at the end of BASW's UK Annual Conference.

Among those recognised was the BBC's social affairs editor Alison Holt, who received an outstanding contribution award. She said: "I'm thrilled to have received this award. The stories I report on are about the way we live and the impact of changing policies on people. Often this is the territory where social workers spend their lives trying to make a difference. Hopefully the new awards will encourage more understanding of and reporting about these really important issues."

Also recognised for outstanding achievement was *Community Care*'s editor Mithran Samuel, who said:

"It's an honour to be recognised alongside these talented journalists and by BASW. The awards are an excellent initiative and I have no doubt they will go from strength to strength and promote much more high-quality journalism about social work in the future."

Journalists were recognised across six further categories covering a range of topics including a 'day in the life of a social worker' and the recruitment crisis in the sector.

Terri White's in-depth broadcast on Radio 5 Live called 'Finding Britain's Ghost Children' won the in-depth broadcast category.

Producer Dan Maudsley said: "We tackled many difficult issues but one that became abundantly clear during the making of the series was just how unfairly social work has been portrayed across the media."

BASW chief executive Ruth Allen paid tribute to the winners. She said: "Being part of the judging panel makes you realise that there really is some great journalism out there and some fantastic journalists reporting on our sector.

"They deserve our recognition because we know social work is not an easy sector to report on. We hope other journalists will follow their lead – and we look forward to recognising more great journalists in the future."

'They deserve our recognition because we know social work is not an easy sector to report on'

The full list of winners and their work can be seen on BASW's website

OBITUARY

Stalwart of profession who cared passionately about social work and social justice

Kate Pryde was the first Scottish UK chair of BASW, a post she held between 1991 and 1992 and also a former chair of the editorial board for PSW magazine.

Born in Glasgow in 1948, Kate graduated into the profession through Glasgow University before taking her first social work role with Clackmannanshire Council in 1973.

It was at a time when the world's first social work act was just being implemented following the Kilbrandon report, which led to the Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968. The legislation focused on the duty of local authorities to promote social wellbeing and introduced Children's Hearings to Scotland.

This vision of promoting social health was central to Kate's values and principles. She was chair of BASW when the association hosted the IFSW European Conference in Glasgow, the first time it was held after the fall of the Berlin Wall. Titled *Love, Law and the Child*, it took place on the 20th anniversary of the birth of the Children's Hearing system. Those who attended still remember Kate's warmth and humour.

In 1986 Kate became head of adult services in Motherwell, part of the Lanarkshire division of the Strathclyde Region, until local government reorganisation in 1996.

She was a formidable practice teacher who focused on making sure people coming into the profession were well supported. She sat on a number of Practice Teaching Panels, including Jordanhill in Glasgow, which helped raise the standards of social work training for practice.

In later life, Kate's career in management took her into adult services where, in 2002, she headed the service for Falkirk Council. She became a board member of the Scottish Social Services Council and was involved in the annual judging of their social work awards.

In 2011 she was appointed to the Children's Panel, helping many families find positive ways forward in their lives.

But it is perhaps for her contributions to conferences and AGMs that many outside Scotland will best remember Kate. She would speak up passionately for social justice

Tributes have been paid to **Kate Pryde**, a longstanding BASW member and leading light of Scottish social work who has passed away aged 74

and the role of social work in promoting social health – but was also always ready for a party and some songs.

Those who knew her describe a warm, kind, generous person with a love of life and recall her sense of humour and "loud infectious laugh".

Ruth Stark, former manager of the Scottish Association of Social Work (SASW), said: "Kate's commitment to high standards, the care in nurturing people to give of their best and her realisation that this could only be done with a good work-life balance was inspirational to her students and her colleagues. She also knew how to party - as many will remember - a glass of wine in her hand and a song. She is a great loss to us all, but her legacy will go on."

Former BASW chair Graham Thompson, said: "Her irrepressibly warm and welcoming personality always left me feeling very much at ease with the Scottish contingent.

"As a professional champion for social work, particularly ensuring that Scotland's voice was always heard, she was second to none, and her career record, together with her time as our chair, very much reflects that."

Brian Fearon, a former colleague and friend of 50 years, said: "Kate was so much a key player in building the Scottish identity for BASW.

"She was committed to service users, women in the profession and professional social work standards. A true leader in Scottish social work."

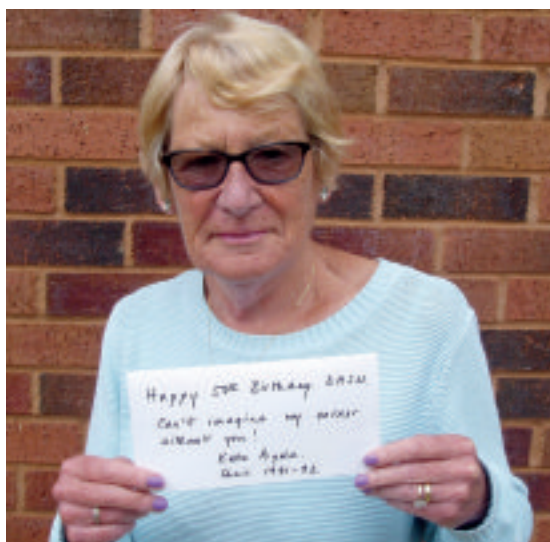
Former BASW chief executive Ian Johnston said: "Looking back on the ups and downs of my 50-year career in social work, I doubt if I would have survived without the friendship and professional support I received from people like Kate through our membership of BASW."

Johan Grant, former national administrator for SASW, said: "She was always kind, never forgot important events in your life, was very committed to social work and to the people she came into contact with."

Former SASW professional officer Tim Parkinson said Kate almost single-handedly kept SASW's Forth Valley branch going and "punching above its weight" for many years.

He added: "Though the branch eventually folded, Kate's enthusiasm for social work, and her drive and concern for others in society around her, never did.

***With thanks to Ruth Stark and Rena Phillips**



Kate Pryde

'I didn't really understand racism until I became a social worker'

BASW's outgoing anti-racism lead Shantel Thomas tells **Shahid Naqvi** about her personal journey to activism

As a child, Shantel Thomas says she did not knowingly experience racism.

"I grew up in South London, in what I call my Jamaican bubble. My grandparents were invited to England in the 1950s as part of the Windrush generation, so of course I had some idea from their perspective but not personally.

"The school I went to was predominantly Black, the area I grew up in was predominantly Black. My family and social network were predominantly Black.

"I went to Saturday school and learned about my history and heritage so I was always very proud of who I was."

Somewhat ironically, given the profession's values and ethics, it was only when Shantel started a career in social work that her bubble was burst.

"I didn't really understand racism until I became a social worker," she says. "That's when I really started to notice things – how come Jenny is getting that promotion before me but I helped her get where she was?"

"I was always told I am such a good worker and was given all these complex cases but I wasn't getting the promotion.

"I worked through an agency for a long time, travelling around different local authorities because I thought it was this local authority's problem or that local authority's problem. It wasn't until about the ninth role that I thought, hold on a minute, this is a systemic problem."

As a social worker Shantel was most likely to be allocated the Black families to work with by managers who assumed she could work better with them.

Through this, she became increasingly aware of the structural oppressions that impacted as much on herself as it did on the families she was working with.



"Because of systemic pressures there were a lot of intersectional factors to deal with and a lot of them were not dissimilar to mine. I didn't grow up in a posh wealthy background, there were things where if a social worker was around when I was a child I may have been in care.

"I am not saying my family were abusive but the UK system sees parenting from a white Eurocentric perspective and there is a particular view about how things should be done. We went against all of that. So I was reliving those traumas through others."

Despite this, Shantel kept on going, burying the trauma

IN FOCUS

she was experiencing deep within to protect herself.

"You bury it for survival. If you are thinking about that every day, how do you do anything else? So you have to learn to park it so you can get on in life, show up at work, show up at your kids' school, deal with everything that is going on, then you go in your house and close your door and breathe."

There came a point, however, when she could no longer deny what she was experiencing and feeling.

"I undertook the Practice Supervisor Development Programme in 2018, which encourages you to sit and think and reflect. It was a five-day residential and as part of that you undergo two therapy sessions with a qualified psychotherapist.

"That was when it all came out. That was when I knew I had to leave practice and do something different. I didn't know what but I knew that practice was toxic, it wasn't good for me.

"I didn't know the term racial trauma until recently but we are talking about hyper-vigilance, second guessing yourself – that was me. I realised this job is going to kill me so I left it with nowhere to go and three months later I was in my first full time higher education role – and the journey continues."

Privilege

That journey led to Shantel becoming BASW's first UK-wide anti-racism lead two years ago, delivering anti-racism training and consultations within the association and externally.

"My thing was about systems and structures, but I always say we have to first look at individuals because individuals make up systems. So I push for people to look at their own internal workings.

"I am direct with my speech but also gentle to get people to really think about what whiteness means because whiteness is the thing that created racism. Without the social construction of whiteness we wouldn't have this disease called racism."

Part of the work involved visiting local authorities and universities across the country, creating safe spaces for people to reflect and look at themselves.

"Some people would get really defensive and say, 'I'm not racist, I'm not privileged'; but I explained what I meant by privilege – it's not monetary privilege, it's not any material gain, but it is the privilege that when you walk into a room, the first thing people see is not the colour of your skin and if you are white you will get advantaged and recognition without even having to open your mouth. Whereas for me, they see my Black skin first and foremost then all the negative stereotypes come to the fore."

Shantel's post within BASW has now ended. A key learning she has taken from it is that tackling systemic

racism means focusing on the top of organisations.

"I came in looking at students and newly qualified and quite early on I realised that, yes, you can help them understand anti-racist practice but if you are talking about systemic and institutional change you have to tackle the leaders because they are the ones that are not coming to the training, they are the ones that are able to sidestep and not engage with the materials."

It also means leaders confronting biases that can mean they favour people in their image, says Shantel.

"It is a natural tendency for people to promote those who look like them, think like them, are in their social networks," says Shantel.

"If most leaders are middle class and white, they are going to tap those colleagues on the shoulder and promote them. It is not just social work, it is across the board."

Shantel stresses 'anti-racism' is a verb which means it must be linked to action. She refers to the American author and anti-racist activist Professor Ibram Xolani Kendi.

"What he talks about is there is no such thing as being non-racist. If you want to be anti-racist you have to do something. You have to actively try to rewire your racist brain. Black and white people are socialised in a particular way and in a particular system.

"That system supports and perpetuates white supremacy and sees white as right and everything that deviates from that is bad and deficient.

"So it is a white person's responsibility to challenge that narrative and how they have been socialised. The key to anti-racism is self-reflection: you have to look at yourself and your own biases then do something to challenge that.

"So the next time someone Black walks past you, you won't grab your handbag or cross the street. Or if you do, you know that is what you are doing and you actively try to change how you are thinking about it."

In challenging racism - within structures, institutions and individuals - Shantel feels she has found her calling. She has resumed a PhD on anti-racism leadership at the University of Sussex and continues her course lead role at London's Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust.

Recently promoted to clinical professional lead for social work at the Trust, Shantel continues to promote anti-racism. But despite the fresh impetus anti-racism has been given in the wake of the murder of George Floyd in the US, how hopeful is she for lasting change?

"I have to be hopeful," she says. "That is what keeps me alive. Of course, I get colleagues saying we were doing this in the 70s and 80s and nothing has changed, but I can't do nothing. I would go crazy if I did nothing."

She adds: "I am not saying I can change the world but I can do my little bit. Desmond Tutu says that everyone can do their little bit and those little bits put together make the bigger impression."



'I always say we have to first look at individuals because individuals make up systems. So I push for people to look at their own internal workings'

How should social workers respond to technology-assisted child sexual abuse?

Victoria Styan explains what practitioners need to know based on her ongoing research

The Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse recognised the abuse of children using technology as an explosion in its 2020 report.

This form of abuse can have a devastating impact on children and their families. It is a form of harm, and for many children significant harm. The Internet Watch Foundation received 375,230 reports of suspected online child sexual abuse material in 2022 and reported a 1,058 per cent rise in the number of webpages showing sexual abuse images and videos of children aged just seven to ten since the UK went into lockdown.

Despite this, I have observed what often seems to be a reactive scramble in response to technology-assisted child abuse, pulling on loose threads from legislation, policies, and frameworks that remotely connect (at best) to safeguarding children online.

My research so far clearly indicates that the harm experienced by many children and families is a child protection one. The impact on mental health, sexual and physical development, the rippling harm to parents and wider networks can be all consuming and long lasting.

Alexis Jay called for language to be more explicit in describing what children are actually experiencing when we talk about technology-assisted child sexual abuse. Whether

we consider it online, digital, technology-assisted, indecent images or material, we must be clear that this harm can include children being filmed while being raped, groomed and exploited, forced to take part in sexual acts that are recorded and made to watch adult pornography amongst many other deplorable abuses and crimes. As social workers we need to be able to understand this form of harm and confront that this is not something only happening in other parts of the world.

Victims

When a child is the victim of abuse online, that harm significantly impacts on their emotional and physical safety. This is not something left at the door when a child comes home from school. Images online are a permanent reminder and repeated violation of a child. For child sexual abuse images to be created, a child is likely to have been harmed sexually in the physical world. Seeing abuse as only 'online' fails to represent the gravity of the abuse because 'online' can trick people into believing the abuse is not real, or as serious.

The National Police Chiefs' Council reports 900 arrests per month, many of whom may be parents or carers. Research estimates 35 per cent of alleged perpetrators have children in their care. Social workers have an important role in assessing the safety of those children.

The intrusion into the family home, the questions children are asked about their experiences, and the restrictions put on their daily life to try and help them can be debilitating. Let us not forget the non-offending parent left to grapple with

IN FOCUS

what researchers have described as disenfranchised grief, in addition to the trauma of a child's often severed relationship with an offending parent.

Shame and stigma

We also have a crucial safeguarding role when a child displays technology-assisted harmful sexual behaviour. This is when children access and even produce child sexual abuse material. It can include sexting, sharing sexual abuse images of children and accessing pornography.

The shame and stigma that children may experience, the impact on their school and home life and their own sexual development can mark an end to their childhood. Children sometimes go through all this with little concern for the abuse and trauma that may have led them to this behaviour.

Responses

Parents tell us that removing access to technology from their children is near impossible. But is this always a proportionate, fair, or realistic response to a child who has been affected by technology assisted child sexual abuse anyway? We live in a digital age when often we cannot access education, social contact, or entertainment without it.

Another response could be to send the child on an online safety course. But when a child is the subject of physical abuse, the advice should not be for a child to adhere to a safety plan or go on a course to learn how not to be a victim of physical abuse.

The question I continue to ponder is why it is acceptable for these approaches to be the ones put in place for victims of online sexual abuse. Why must they change their behaviour, to become cut off from social spaces online, adhere to a safety plan controlled by their caregiver under the threat of child protection procedures?

Such approaches alone fail to recognise the extent of the harm that may have been experienced, the impact on relationships, on identity and sexual development. Children and families require a trauma-informed approach from their safeguarding professionals.

There is also a danger of demonising the use of the internet if the first response is to remove it, with the risk of further polarising children and adults and diminishing opportunities for effective safeguarding.

Understanding the lived experience of children and capturing the child's voice are essential to all social work assessments. Social workers need to understand how technology is used in a child's and their family's life, identify areas of strength and concern in their technology use. They should consider boundaries and privacy, wider social and environmental factors too, as should be done in all assessments. Key skills including curiosity, partnership working, triangulation, alongside social work values, are all essential here.

Social workers are becoming more comfortable with the importance of understanding context, places, spaces, and how harm outside of the home may fit (or not) with our existing child protection practices, such as through the work completed by the Contextual Safeguarding Network.

The online world cannot be attributed to a single place or space, it is everywhere: in our pockets, next to us while

RESOURCES AND SUPPORT

These are some of the resources I have personally found effective in navigating the complexities discussed:

- The Internet Watch Foundation provides information about how to report images and seek their removal, they also have the TALK resources to promote conversations between carers and children www.iwf.org.uk
- CEOP: resources for professionals, parents and children from the National Crime Agency www.thinkuknow.co.uk
- The Lucy Faithfull foundation includes the Stop it Now Helpline and Parents Protect website www.lucyfaithfull.org.uk
- Marie Collins Foundation has a range of resources (including one for children with autism), information, training, supervision. www.mariecollinsfoundation.org.uk
- AIM project; assessment models for children who have displayed harmful sexual behaviour. www.aimproject.org.uk
- NSPCC also have some helpful resources for professionals, children and families. www.nspcc.org.uk
- Talking Forward is a charity for families affected by the arrest of an adult family member for an online sexual offence. www.talkingforward.co.uk



we sleep, in our schools and throughout our houses. It is not a concrete entity with a set of clear risk and protective factors; it is ever changing, often shrouded in mystery and secrecy.

This potentially creates a picture of worry and fear. However, we also know it can be an exciting place of learning, of opportunity and to make connections. It can be where long-lasting relationships are formed, homework is completed, music is discussed, support is found. For our assessments it means a new ecological dimension in balancing the dangers and opportunities children face.

These are complex issues, and as professionals promoting social justice we must work through them. With the development of the metaverse and more and more ways for children to be harmed online, it is an evolving area.

The Online Safety Bill is still not enshrined in law and children continue to be harmed online. We need to do more than keep up - we need to get one step ahead, and work with victims, survivors, parents and other disciplines to ensure our responses are compassionate yet robust. Victoria Styan is a lecturer in social work at the University of Huddersfield who previously managed a sexual abuse service for a national charity. She is currently doing a PhD exploring the statutory social work response to technology-assisted child sexual abuse

'With the development of the metaverse and more and more ways for children to be harmed online, it is an evolving area'

Doing the right thing

Complaints by people using services are being upheld by the Ombudsman due to errors in applying the Care Act 2014, says **Pete Feldon**. He explains how social workers can avoid some common pitfalls

Most reports and comments on complaints investigated by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (for England) concentrate on the indefensible decisions made by local authorities.

And rightly so, because it is important to highlight what has gone wrong when this is to the detriment of individuals with social care needs and their carers.

But there are also cases where the complaint is upheld because procedures have not been followed to the letter.

There are some common errors made by social workers in applying the Care Act 2014, often in response to pressure to cut corners. Set out below are references to information and guidance on how to respond to these pressures.

Unmet needs

People mostly complain because they are not happy with how their needs are being met. Successful complaints about assessment of need per se are relatively rare, but the failure to undertake a carer's assessment is still featuring regularly.

For example, in case 22005428 this year a local authority was criticised for a delay of eight months in offering a carer's assessment, despite respite care being provided at the outset.

Complaints about the application of eligibility criteria are also not common, although there have been a number of complaints that demonstrate the mistaken belief that some eligible needs can be discounted, for example where an individual is in receipt of disability benefits.

It is sometimes wrongly thought that where a need could be met through the use of benefits, for example to pay for purchasing housework, then the need would not be considered as eligible. The Ombudsman stated in case 1901306 that there is nothing in the legislation that allows a council to "require a person to use their benefits in this way".

Care plans

There are a lot of complaints about care plans, and these are often quite complex. The Ombudsman states that such cases "focus on restoring services that have been denied and taking practical steps to put things right".



Where this is not possible, a 'symbolic' payment as a remedy is being increasingly proposed. This is not compensation or a fine, and it is often a modest amount. Last year 12 per cent of upheld cases in the Ombudsman category of Assessment and Care Planning included this, whereas in the period from 2015 to 2021 it was only 4.5 per cent.

Often these payments are because there have been delays, but they can be as a result of misapplication of the Care Act and/or the statutory guidance.

Sometimes this can be in relation to a single issue as in case 21010191, where there was a symbolic payment of £250 to reflect the distress caused by the initial failure of staff to undertake a carer's assessment. Another authority was meeting the needs of the cared-for person under section 117 of the Mental Health Act, and it was wrongly believed that the carer's assessment was their responsibility.

In more complex cases a symbolic payment can be one of a number of measures. Part of complaint 22000071 was about the removal of care at night to turn and reposition an individual. The local authority concluded that this was no longer necessary because of the provision of a specialist mattress, however this was not supported by the relevant health professionals.

The Ombudsman was critical of the local authority, saying that it appeared to have focused on costs and not the individual's wellbeing by stating that it would not "fund 24 hour care in a person's home" and would only do so in a residential setting. The Ombudsman was clear that such "blanket" policies are unlawful.

The following extract from the statutory guidance was cited by the Ombudsman (and is regularly used in other

in adult social care



similar cases): “The local authority should not set arbitrary upper limits on the costs it is willing to pay to meet needs through certain routes – doing so would not deliver an approach that is person-centred or compatible with public law principles”.

As well as taking steps to rectify these issues, the local authority paid £750 to the individual to acknowledge the distress and uncertainty, and also the time and trouble spent pursuing the complaint.

Sometimes the complainant channels their disappointment with the care plan by asking for a change of social worker. However, I can find no cases where the Ombudsman has upheld such a complaint.

An example is in case 19018312 where it was alleged that the social worker failed to ensure the individual had the support he needed, didn't communicate properly and acted inappropriately.

The Ombudsman concluded “there was no evidence the social worker had mishandled his case and there would therefore not be sufficient grounds to change the social worker”. Mostly where a change of social worker would help resolve a complaint, this decision has already been taken before it goes to the Ombudsman.

Systemic issues

Many complaints are as a result of local practices and systemic issues. These can result in things going badly wrong, such as in case 19014556 where a failure to meet eligible needs resulted in hospitalisation. In response, the local authority agreed to “undertake an independent review

of its adult social care processes and pathways”.

The reason for some of these failures is made explicit in the most recent Ombudsman's Annual Review of Adult Social Care Complaints 2021-22 where the head of the service Michael King says: “I am frustrated to once again be reporting my view of an under-resourced system unable to consistently meet the needs of those it is designed to serve... (and) councils failing to provide care, or limiting care, while using cost as the justification.”

Guidebook

You can find out more about Ombudsman cases in the second edition of my book *The Social Worker's Guide to the Care Act 2014*. Each of the main chapters gives examples and also includes relevant judicial reviews.

My book also outlines guidance that is available to help social workers respond to the more challenging systemic issues in their local authority, including publications by NICE (National Institute of Health and Care Excellence) and BASW England.

The BASW guidance is set out in *An Ethical Approach to Meeting Needs*, and its focus is on where the Care Act “is sometimes applied in ways... (whereby) the way the controlling of expenditure is being achieved gives rise to ethical concerns because of unjust policies and practices and constraints on social workers professional judgements”.

It goes on to recommend “social workers should be expected as a matter of ethical practice to clearly state their professional judgements when contributing to the local authority decision about how individual needs will be met, and to identify where there is under-met need and potential unmet need”.

This approach is reinforced by the NICE recommendation in NG216 that social workers should ensure that care plans “record any eligible needs which are unlikely to be met or only partially met, the reasons they cannot be met or only partially met and any potential actions that would allow them to be met in future”.

In the seven years since the Act came into force there have been nearly 1,000 complaints upheld by the Ombudsman in the Assessment and Care Plan category. There is a wide variation, with some local authorities having had as many as 40 upheld and others as little as three.

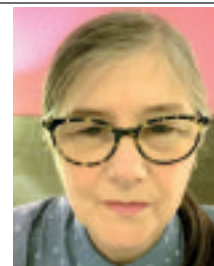
Funding has recently been made available “to evaluate the effectiveness, implementation, and impact of social care needs assessment”. Hopefully this funding by the Health and Social Care Delivery Research programme will produce research that will help social workers to develop a more coherent and consistent approach to applying the Care Act.

Pete Feldon is a writer and trainer specialising in the Care Act 2014. He is also a member of the BASW England Adults Thematic Group

“There is a wide variation, with some local authorities having had as many as 40 upheld and others as little as three”

RUTH ALLEN

BASW's chief executive on key developments within your association



We are stronger together in our creative co-production mission

In the last few months BASW has taken significant steps forward in putting our actions where our words have been when it comes to authentic partnerships with people who have experienced 'the other side' of social work practice – that is, been on the 'receiving end' of social work.

Of course, it shouldn't ever feel like a 'receiving end', but we know too often it does. As ethical social workers, one of our responsibilities is to work towards social work that is more inclusive, relational and welcomed.

Since my earliest days in social work, trained as I was in relational practices and interpersonal dynamics, I have held to the notion that we can only understand the value of our own practice when we understand how it is experienced. And we can only know what is helpful if we are led by the expertise and the wishes of the people we work with.

These are fundamentals of relationship-based co-production. Whether at the level of the individual, the family or community, for me the principle of co-production is precious and it means creating relationships between a social worker and the person they work on a footing of respect, equality (complex though that concept is) such that working relationships can be a crucible for creativity, trust and change.

Real life is much more complex than my simple platitudes here, but I am delighted that within BASW we are creating more spaces and modelling more approaches within the association that enable social workers and people who have expertise from their experience of using services to work together in ways that are becoming embedded in our culture.

We experienced this embedding of creative coproduction in our annual BASW conference in June. It was a wonderful day of rich and exciting presentations, talks and workshops. My thanks to all who helped create and celebrate our community of social work and the impact we can make for good in society. This included the formal launch of the British Journal of Social Work (BJSW) Special Issue 53(3) on The Voice and Influence of People with Lived Experience – free to download from the BJSW website and a real treat to read, combining

As ethical social workers, one of our responsibilities is to work towards social work that is more inclusive, relational and welcomed'

formal academic papers by people with lived experience, reflective pieces and creative content.

The conference's overall success lay in the diversity of contributions and this included the vital contribution of partners with lived experience presenting, facilitating, challenging and being integral to the day. We will learn from this experience and ensure that next year - when we will be in Scotland for a two-day conference (details to be announced soon) – we will do even more to ensure the event is creatively co-produced and delivered.

Other steps forward in the last period include welcoming our first four experts by experience onto Council - not as directors (our constitution won't allow that yet) but as full Council members in every other respect. Omar Mohammed, Reshma Patel, Mark Lynes and Angela Frazer-Wicks have immediately brought such a breadth of knowledge, wisdom and grounded experience – and frankly remind us of why we exist, and why it is so important that we get it right as a profession and association.

Omar is also a social worker and this brings home there really is no hard boundary between being a 'professional' and being a 'user of services', only different nuances of experience that bring our respective life courses closer together or further apart at points in time.

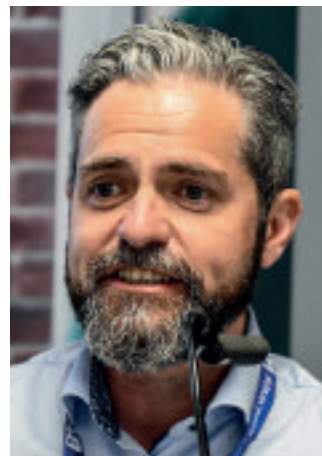
Omar and Reshma have also recently taken up roles as co-chairs of our UK Experts by Experience Forum which meets quarterly and advises Council, committees and staff on priorities. We will further develop and support this group with an employed coordinator.

One of our key aims is to ensure we have representation from across all the nations of the UK. Each of BASW's country teams has moved forward involving and co-producing activities with Experts by Experience and have adapted models and approaches to suit different contexts. So if you, or someone you know, might be interested to get involved with the BASW UK Forum, particularly if you are in Northern Ireland, Scotland or Wales, do get in touch via governance@basw.co.uk. We have a creative co-production mission to fulfil together!

VIEWPOINT TRADE UNIONISM

Why we need trade union activism now

Calum Gallacher, assistant general secretary of the Social Workers Union, says collective campaigning is key to fixing the crisis in social work – and challenging growing social injustice



Growing up on a Glasgow council estate in the 1980s I fondly remember the freedom we had before saturation with technology. Born in 1979, I am what was then termed one of Thatcher's children.

My greatest role models were my grandparents who survived the Blitz in Glasgow. I was fascinated with their starkly different experiences because of contrasting family structures, and religion. They instilled in me to be kind to others and share, even when not instinctive, and never gossip about others – a most fervent message.

From an early age I learned about the fragility of life and circumstances, and the spirit of altruism. These are foundational experiences I carry with me in social work practice, and everyday life.

Prior to becoming assistant general secretary of the Social Workers Union (SWU), I was a social work team leader in a generic team for adults and children. Being both frontline and on the lower tiers of management challenged my ability to maintain my core values, which coalesce with social work codes of practice.

I found myself tirelessly conflicted due to the juxtaposition of maintaining standards of practice and ethics with contending organisational norms and culture. It was a difficult tightrope to walk.

I would be advocating for people with legal and policy frameworks, compassionately and procedurally supporting staff, but simultaneously gatekeeping utilising the same systems with a different lens.

It was impossible to complete bureaucratic processes for leadership and casework without accruing unpaid overtime.

Some workers have workplace agreements whereby flexi is converted to paid overtime if it cannot be taken. It is more common that social work staff lose flexi hours every month. If establishments paid actual hours worked there would be greater recognition of inadequate staffing levels, and excessive workloads.

Over my 24-year career I have witnessed many revolving door reforms to health and social care delivery, often after devastating events or fatal inquiries. A manager reflecting on her 40-year career once advised that government service reviews more frequently try to reinvent the wheel

'If we were paid actual hours worked there would be greater recognition of inadequate staffing levels, and excessive workloads'

– a broken wheel that needs to be rebuilt, not glued and reshaped.

Governments perpetually propose radical short-term solutions, rooted in cost-cutting, while overlooking inordinately poor working conditions. The theme is constant: less but more. Less resources such as funding, staff, time for people, protected time for vocational learning with support and supervision, but more paperwork, more rhetoric about responsibility for self-care and personal resilience, and deflection of employer and government duty of care for staff health and safety.

Social Work England report social work vacancies are at record levels – 19 per cent in children and families and 11.6 per cent in adult services.

The Social Worker Wellbeing and Working Conditions surveys co-produced by SWU, BASW and Bath Spa University between 2017 and 2022 identify the biggest challenges affecting recruitment and retention are working conditions; reduced job satisfaction; lack of support; unpaid overtime; wellbeing; workload.

Unison produced similar findings in 2022, citing recruitment challenges due to workers fearing public and media persecution, and wages not relative to cost of living.

Jermaine Ravalier, professor of organisational psychology and social justice at Bath Spa University who wrote the wellbeing survey, recently reiterated working conditions for social workers are 90 to 95 per cent worse than other professions. But this is the first year that pay and cost of living have factored as a deterrent to the workforce.

All UK governments acknowledge the need for service reform and have begun processes of change via regulatory consultations, specialist working groups and drafting of bills. Concerningly, frontline staff are reporting that they do not have time to engage with processes for co-design of reforms.

All working people of any grade should join a trade union. In this climate of austerity, the crisis in recruitment and retention of staff and governmental reforms excluding co-production with frontline staff because of workplace resource issues need to be challenged through collective campaigning of all trade unions as one social movement.

FORMAL NOTICE
SWU 2023 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
FRIDAY 29TH SEPTEMBER 2023

The 2023 Annual General Meeting of the Social Workers Union will be held online and joining instructions can be found at www.swu-union.org.uk

As per SWU rules, the SWU Executive shall have power to make and provide a provision for an AGM meetings to be held using electronic means, and to provide for electronic communication for members, including facilitating provision for members to vote and speak by appropriate electronic means.

THE TIMETABLE IS AS FOLLOWS:

3-8-2023	Deadline for receipt of motions
7-9-2023	Notice of any proposed amendment to rules given in writing to members
14-9-2023	Deadline for amendments to motions

Motions must be signed by 10 members and submitted to the Executive Committee by the above date.

Amendments to motions must also be signed by 10 members.

Please visit www.swu-union.org.uk to register your attendance.
Entry to this event is FREE for SWU Members.

We are always willing to assist union members with the drafting of motions. Please send an email to joanne.marciano@swu-union.org.uk for such assistance. Motions should be submitted by email to joanne.marciano@swu-union.org.uk

Membership numbers must be stated and will be checked.

The Social Workers Union, Wellesley House,
37 Waterloo Road, Birmingham B2 5PP

www.swu-union.org.uk

SWU Social Workers Union

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ANNIVERSARY OF THE SOCIAL WORKERS' EDUCATIONAL TRUST
1972-2022

EDITED BY **DAVID PITCHER AND BEVERLEY BURKE**
FOREWORD BY **MARK DRAKEFORD, MINISTER OF STATE FOR WALES**

These essays, by recent award winners from The Social Workers' Educational Trust, illustrate the variety of ways in which social work is practiced in the 2020s.

Fifty years after the founding of the Trust, social work practitioners continue to work out the principles of social work as a profession, responding to new developments within society and developing new knowledge whilst remaining true to its core values.

This collection will be of interest to everyone involved in social work practice and education, from those considering it as a profession to students, experienced workers, academics and everyone seeking to know what contemporary social work is about.



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VIEWPOINT CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE

My review must not sit on a shelf getting dusty

Professor Ray Jones, whose review of children's social care in Northern Ireland was published last month, warns against a loss of momentum from government



It has been an absolute joy and privilege to have had the opportunity to undertake the Independent Review of Northern Ireland's Children's Social Care Services. What a lovely country. What lovely people.

I have benefited from the advice and wisdom of children and young people, parents and family carers, and those working within and alongside children's social care across the region. Their experiences and expertise have substantially shaped the review's recommendations.

But here's the rub. Preparing and publishing a review report is often seen as the end of the journey with the consequence that the reviewer disappears from view and the report lies on a shelf gathering dust.

Northern Ireland and elsewhere has too many examples where this has been the outcome of reviews. What a waste of all the commitment and contribution of those who have given so much. What a waste of time and also money – the Northern Ireland children's social care review cost more than £750,000, plus all the costs of the time given by the many hundreds of people who participated.

Just think about recent children's services reviews within the UK. The much lauded Scottish review of the children's care system landed just before the Scottish Government threw a grenade into the works by conjuring up the proposal of a national care system – distracting and disrupting the focus away from the constructive proposals within the review. And the first minister in Scotland, a friend and ally of the review, is not now in post. A major political champion is no longer on the pitch.

The English children's social care review landed on the infertile ground of a government which has shown little interest in children and families who are in difficulty and little respect for those who seek to assist struggling children and families. The seeds it sought to sow of increased funding to reverse 13 years of cumulative cuts have already been defined as sterile by an unsympathetic and unempathetic government.

But what of Northern Ireland? Hardly the most promising of scenarios with no functioning political devolved government. The life span of the children's social care review I led started with the standing down of the

'Publishing a review report is often seen as the end of the journey'

Northern Ireland political Assembly and within six months the demise of its political Executive. The political vacuum continues.

Hopeless? Not so. In the absence so far of political processes and decision-makers to take forward the recommendations from the Northern Ireland review, the senior civil servants in the Department of Health are creditably, creatively, and constructively keeping the momentum going by initiating a public consultation on the Review's proposals. What this means is that when, hopefully, there is a functioning political Assembly and Executive in Northern Ireland time will not have been lost in giving consideration to what is sought by the review.

The returning politicians will not only have the review report and its recommendations but also the outcome of the public and professional response. The ground will have been set for them to give the political leadership, alongside the policy, managerial and practice leadership, to move forward (at the necessary pace) to make the step change necessary to help children and families across Northern Ireland.

But to keep the momentum going when there are BIG immediate issues to be tackled in Northern Ireland across all services and sectors will require a collective and coordinated will and commitment.

Just as preparing and publishing a review report should not be seen as the end of the task and job done, neither is it the moment for those across Northern Ireland who have given so much of their time and so much of their commitment to the review to lose impetus and momentum.

In some significant ways the baton is now in their hands, and as the independent reviewer I may no longer be on the track within Northern Ireland. But along with colleagues in Northern Ireland we are still within the same relay team, progressing towards implementation of the review's recommendations.

Ray Jones is emeritus professor of social work at Kingston University and St. George's, University of London

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Sandra Golding, BASW member.

A WORD OF ADVICE

Stop poor case note recording with these tips

Top tips from Alasdair Kennedy

On an omission

Don't write the magna carta! You need to use the data you collect (reasons for the visit) add it to your assessment (how clients are or any positive changes) and then plan your next move aka the 'DAP model'. Although this is mostly used by psychologists, it's useful for social workers. But if your notes are not accurate and detailed you won't be able to complete it. If you're new to social work, write every detail you can. Once you're an experienced note taker, you will be able to recall the key points after a 60-minute visit from memory just using key words. Use memorable key words and phrases that mean only something to you. Then it's bulletproof confidential. You can record visits, but this is intrusive and doesn't really build rapport or trust.

Genealogy genius

Ensure your chronologies are updated regularly and are contemporaneous. Too many dip checks show they are the last to be completed. Ofsted says this should be a 'map' to a person's life. They are key for other professionals to check histories, for you to check what you've been doing, adding incidents, and positives. Crucially, if you leave, someone can pick up where you left off without scrabbling around for details. It also makes court work and child protection easier if these are contemporaneous and is crucial for the child when they look at their records.

Walk the walk

To really understand the client's experience, your summaries need to show professional analysis and evaluation.

The case record is not just a receptacle for information, but should assist all in

planning and making the best decisions. I still see experienced social workers who are very busy after a visit write "settled" or "saw X & Y and all was fine". This type of writing without analysis makes it so hard to understand how, why, what and when any decisions have been made.

Thinking about the nuances of each section of case notes is key. For example, it's not just about your overall assessment, but should outline how the client was, their feelings, their understanding, not just yours.

Visibility of the client is key to good case notes. If clients can't or don't want to talk, then use physical cues and your observations to outline your thoughts or their feelings (without postulating).

Analysis paralysis

Having your own views is key to social work. But some practitioners write very subjectively. In my own adoption notes, my birth mother was described as a "pretty blond who is now starting to go back to the dancing". We all need to stop using subjective or judgmental language. For instance, cleanliness of houses is always a subjective topic, especially in child protection. I advise teams to have a threshold the whole team buy into.

Gobbledygook book

We are all guilty, using Section this, or COG form that, with CIN and IRO involvement added for good measure. Time passes, and jargon changes. Remember the care experienced person who goes back and checks their records in 20 years time.

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

Disability benefit reforms inhumane

The Government has finally published the Disability White Paper.

They're going to scrap the dreaded Work Capacity Assessment, which may actually save money and resources, and shows rare common sense and even mild compassion.

Sadly, there is always a sting in the tail...

The Government also intends to combine Personal Independence Payment (PIP) and the 'work capacity assessment' for the legacy benefit Employment Support Allowance – this is specifically within the 'limited capacity for work related activity' element of Universal Credit (UC).

I've had a horrendous time trying to claim PIP. The person who assessed me was a gym instructor. The privately outsourced company repeatedly lied about me, ignored medical evidence, and forced me to go to tribunal.

My experience mirrors that of hundreds of thousands of disabled people who are treated as liars for daring to be unable to work.

I honestly believe that disabled people in Britain are seen as subhuman, unworthy of any support that is not purely charitable or family based.

No use to capitalism if we cannot work, we are totally expendable.

The new combined system means that if you do not pass a PIP assessment - remember, PIP relates to the additional costs you incur as a result of your disabilities whereas ESA is about capacity for work - you will also not get ESA in the support group or the 'limited capability' element of UC.

So, a person who cannot pass the PIP assessment won't get any disability benefits at all! They will, in effect, be declared fit for work.

This, in turn, will affect eligibility for carers allowance, direct payments, and access to care assessments and care itself.

The reforms will damage disabled people and increase the caseload of social workers. Job centre coaches are not the right people to be assessing functional needs at home. Plus, foodbanks are already struggling to cope with demand.

People could become homeless or at risk of suicide during the arduous and emotionally devastating appeals process. And let's not forget the backlogs and administrative nightmare this is going to create in the social security courts division and the DWP itself.

It is inhumane, monstrous and uncivilised. It is eugenic.



Social Workers' Benevolent Trust

Many social workers are facing hardship from the rising cost of living, alongside many of those they seek to support. They may face debts from increased heating costs, through disability to themselves or their children or because of coercive or controlling relationships.

The Trust is the only charity dedicated to offering grants to qualified social workers and their dependants. We try to support our professional colleagues in their financial difficulties, family crises or sudden emergencies.

We consider applications bi-monthly and make small grants, sometimes with advice about other sources of support. Applicants need to complete a form available online at www.swbt.org

Our funds are limited and we would greatly appreciate any donations, however small, so we can help more of our fellow professionals. Details of how to do this are given below.

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JUSTGIVING

Donations can be made at:
www.justgiving.com/socialworkers-benevolent-trust

PAYPAL

Donate to: Social Workers' Benevolent Trust

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www.swbt.org/how-to-donate/how-to-leave-a-legacy

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Account No: 50358304

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Download the form SWBT-Gift Aid and send to:

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SWBT c/o BASW,
Wellesley House,
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Birmingham
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SWBT c/o BASW,
Wellesley House,
37 Waterloo Street,
Birmingham
B2 5PP

More details are available on the website:

swbt.org

Charity No. 262889

SOCIAL POLICY FOR WELFARE PRACTICE IN WALES

THIRD EDITION

EDITED BY

HEFIN GWILYM AND CHARLOTTE WILLIAMS

FOREWORD BY **MARK DRAKEFORD, FIRST MINISTER OF WALES**

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.

"This much-needed new edition brings together and analyses the wide-ranging changes that together have built a distinct Welsh approach to our social welfare landscape." Professor Sally Holland, Children's Commissioner for Wales



ISBN: 978-1-86178-090-4
FORMAT: PAPERBACK

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FROM FEAR TO FREEDOM

MASCULINITY, CONTROL AND CHANGE

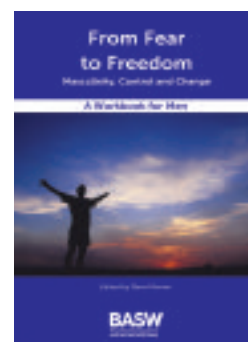
A WORKBOOK FOR MEN

EDITOR: **DAVE MORRAN**

The aim of this book is to speak directly to men who, through their controlling beliefs and behaviour, are causing worry and harm to their families, partners and children, and not least, to themselves.

The title 'From Fear to Freedom' suggests that while some men's behaviour is often frightening and damaging for others, it can also be frightening and confusing for men themselves. Once men begin to examine, comprehend and choose to work at ceasing their abusive and controlling behaviour, this can be a liberating process for them as well as others.

From Fear to Freedom is also intended as a resource for professionals such as counsellors, health practitioners, alcohol and drug workers, social workers, probation officers and others whose practice brings them into contact with troubled and troubling men.



ISBN: 9781861780829
FORMAT: A4 WIRO BOUND

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A SOCIAL WORKER'S **DIARY**

July, 2023

It is lovely to write this on my first day of annual leave. I have learnt waiting half a year to take a week's leave was not great planning. After working as a social worker almost six years this should have occurred to me by now. Oh well. Future planning is: every two to three months take a week off, and get some long weekends in there.

It's funny how I want to follow that up with 'depending on what I need to do at work'.

I still love the local authority I work for. It is honestly the nicest place I have worked since I first started out. The people in general are kind, thoughtful, approachable, understanding and supportive. If you've read my articles before you'll expect something is about to come. And yes it is! Until now, I haven't had much interaction with agency project teams in local authorities. I understand these are private companies who provide full social work teams inclusive of team managers. They are bought in to tackle caseloads, and for a fixed period of time, to remove pressure and improve performance. My first experience of being handed a case from a project team has not been positive.

My work is a privilege to me. This hasn't changed since I started out. This job is a vocation, and doing my best to empower and enable families and achieve the best outcomes for the children and young people is my goal. To me this is not rhetoric – I do it much to my own deficit sometimes with sleepless nights and 13 hours days. However, it's so important working and being involved in people's lives at times of distress, confusion, trauma

and upset when they are vulnerable. It's crucial I feel I am doing everything I can. But I come across workers from the project team who appear to be playing a numbers game – just focused on achieving positive performance data and turnover to justify their having been bought in. They often seem to lack an ability to work with others on teams within the local authority. They have an attitude of disdain, arrogance and of being dismissive. Sadly, this can be observed toward the families and children we work with too. It makes me angry. But after years of practice I have learned to put my energy into doing my best for the families. I am now able to let things like this go, or raise it with management and keep away from the politics.

The HMRC debacle over my tax is ongoing. I understand the umbrella I used will be investigated for tax avoidance. They are still operating and the agency is still enabling social workers to use them despite me sharing information about them. Fortunately, through commissioning a company and then working with me and HMRC, I am unlikely to be held responsible for the unpaid tax down the line. I pray that any social workers using this umbrella leaves it and likewise seek advice and representation now to protect themselves.

Overall I'm a happy social worker at the moment. The courts are doing some frustrating things such as not concluding cases for apparent fear of appeals. The system is not perfect, I have not come across any that is. However, on the whole we're lucky to have the one we have and I hope that one day the media, the government and the public will come to realise this and us lowly social workers will be provided some breathing room. All the best to social workers out there and please book yourselves some leave...

PSW EDITORIAL ADVISORY BOARD VACANCY (SCOTLAND REP)

Your chance to help shape this magazine!

Are you a SASW member who would like to play a more active role in Professional Social Work magazine?



We're looking for a SASW members to join PSW's editorial board. You don't need to have knowledge of publishing – the role of the board is to advise and support the editor on the content and direction of the magazine and monitor its quality.

As a board member, you'll take part in three meetings a year (MS Teams) where you will get a chance to review editions, contribute ideas and share social work expertise.

Joining the board not only provides an opportunity to input into the production of PSW, it's also a great way to increase your skills and experience.

The board aims to reflect the geographic and professional diversity of social workers.

Successful applicants are expected to complete a three-year term, with an option to stay for a further three years, and commit to attend our three annual editorial board meetings.

● Further information, terms of reference and applications forms are downloadable at www.basw.co.uk/jobs/work-with-us

● Completed application forms should be emailed to sue.hatton@basw.co.uk

You must be an existing SASW member to join the board. We welcome all applications irrespective of nationality, religion, colour, race, gender, disability and sexuality.



ASK DEREK

(He's been a social worker for considerably longer than eight years)

A technique I like to use with people I work with is asking them what their biggest fear is. The idea is that we then explore this and find solutions to ease or eradicate it. Imagine my shock when a young man I am currently working with said his greatest fear is a visit from me! Where do I go from here?

Meredith, Qwent

Derek says: Anywhere but near the young man in question it seems to me.

I have recently decided to go into semi-retirement and am eager to find something worthwhile to do to fill the gap. I have plenty of life experience to offer and believe I could be a real asset to the social work profession. How do I apply?

Elton, Windsor

Derek says: Well, Elton, I think it's going to be a long long time, but you sound like a

true survivor and I'm sure you'll reach your goal beyond the yellow brick road eventually.

I'm interested in the concept of poor decision-making in social work, both by professionals and those that they work with. As part of my research I'm asking social workers for their examples of poor decision-making. Do you have any you can share, Derek?

Susanne, Barnard Castle

Derek says: Yes, agreeing to write this column, I sometimes think.

My wife and I have always enjoyed a healthy sex life but since turning 55 I have found myself unable to keep up with her wants and desires in the bedroom and am now worried she might leave me. Do you have any advice?

Trevor, Lower Slaughter

Derek says: Er, I think you might have sent this to the wrong agony uncle, Trevor.

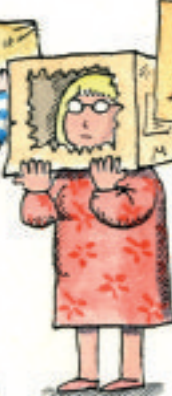
As social workers we are not good at celebrating our successes so I thought I would share mine. Recently I was promoted to team manager in competition with several of my colleagues for the role. I think what gave me the edge over them was my natural leadership skills, diligence, attention to detail and ability to get on with people. I would be grateful if you could share my success story as widely as possible in the hope that it might inspire others.

Jilly, Cambridge

Derek says: I wish you best of luck in your new role, Jilly. I have a feeling you are going to need it...

Email derek@basw.co.uk

To be honest, I think I was expecting something a bit more sophisticated.



Good grief, Megan! How can you work at your desk when it's so untidy?

Easily, it turns out.

A messy desk is actually a very efficient filing system. One's subconscious automatically prioritises important papers by keeping them close at hand, pushing less essential documents further away. I just read an article about it.

What did I do with the ***** thing!

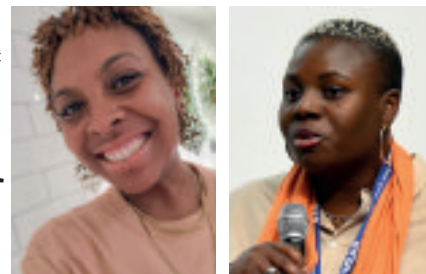


Clare Classics

From Harry Venning's back catalogue of cartoons for *The Guardian* spanning a quarter of a century. *The Clare in the Community Collection* is available at www.clareinthecommunity.co.uk

ENGLAND VIEWS

Decision on Shamima Begum 'contradictory and unethical'



In 2015, we heard the shocking story of a 15-year-old girl who had left her family, her friends and life as she knew it.

Legally, Shamima Begum was a child under UK law who was a victim of trafficking and sexual exploitation. On arrival in Syria, she married an ISIS fighter and gave birth to three children who all died as infants.

The trauma of this reality for anyone, let alone a child, cannot be fully comprehended. This story unfolds into a matter of national security, weighing up the right of a child to be protected and safeguarded where the evidence of experienced and future risk of significant harm has been ignored.

The UK stripped Shamima of her British Citizenship, making her stateless and unable to return home to her family. In February 2023, the Special Immigration Appeals Commission rejected her appeal against the government's decision, despite finding there was "credible suspicion" that she was groomed and trafficked to Syria for sexual exploitation as a minor.

That Shamima's actions raises national security concerns

is not questionable. However, safeguarding laws and policies protect "all" children where there is evidence of, or risk of, significant harm according to the law set out in S47 of the Children Act 1989.

Should the law be selective in how it is executed and to whom it is applicable? The conditionality of Shamima's British Citizenship coming into question following being trafficked to Syria is contradictory and unethical. It demonstrates that effective child protection laws and policies are only in place for those who are deserving - and who might that be in reality?

Unlike the legal challenges, safeguarding can encompass strategies to manage the risk to national security. In this case, proving one's 'Britishness' should not be the criteria for support and protection.

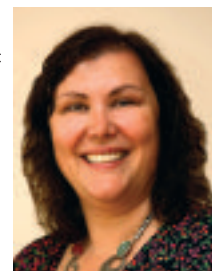
This again opens up the debate on how systemic racism impacts ethnic minority communities. Does Shamima being of Bangladeshi descent make her any less deserving of the same rights and privileges than if she was white British?

Patriche Bentick and Pam Shodeinde, members of the Black & Ethnic Minority Professionals Symposium

'safeguarding laws protect "all" children'

NORTHERN IRELAND VIEWS

'A refresh of children's social work' - the BASW NI response to review



On 21 June, the final report of the Independent Review of Children's Social Care Services was published. Led by Professor Ray Jones, the Review aims to improve outcomes for the children and families who use services, and the social workers who provide them.

The report arrives as the profession is experiencing a workforce crisis and amid ever-increasing demand for services. We are also hampered by a lack of political leadership due to the continued absence of a Northern Ireland Assembly and Executive.

There is no question that change is needed and the Review has not held back in proposing solutions. It outlines an ambitious blueprint aimed at improving the manner in which services are planned, governed and delivered.

In short, Professor Jones has proposed removing responsibility for children's services from the five Health and Social Care Trusts, with services placed in a new social work led arms-length body of the Department of Health. He has also recommended the creation of a new post of Minister for Children and Families to act as a champion

across government.

I was pleased to have the opportunity to explore Professor Jones's recommendations in an episode of BASW's *Let's Talk Social Work* podcast made with Ray and Josephine Dowell, a care experienced young person who has contributed to the Review.

Getting in early, engaging with families and supporting people to prevent problems becoming crises is central to the Review. This will require a refresh of children's social work. It will need us to reorientate ourselves around the Children Order's focus on prevention, recognising our ability to deliver change is not limited to our vital work in child protection.

Change is never easy, but we cannot stand still. As a first step, BASW NI will engage with members to plan our response to the review.

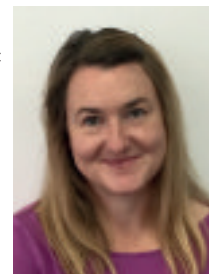
The Association will continue to engage with members to ensure your views are reflected in the Department of Health's forthcoming consultation on the Review's recommendations for change.

Carolyn Ewart, national director

'our ability to deliver change is not limited to child protection'

SCOTLAND VIEWS

Sharing pride in practice can boost perception of social work



It has been a busy time at the SASW office. We recently held Scotland's Newly Qualified Social Worker's (NQS) conference on the theme of 'Hope through (Re)Connection' - fitting for the first in-person NQS conference since 2019.

SASW was part of the organising team and provided input on anti-racism activities and progress in Scotland over the last year.

We also resumed SASW stalls - stopped during the pandemic - at several events and it was fantastic speaking to so many students and social workers directly. Getting out and about has been missed by everyone tremendously. Events give us a great opportunity to talk about the work we do and hear from others about their burning issues. Moreover, it was obvious that everybody was enjoying being together, networking, exchanging ideas and getting inspired. Turns out hope really is gained through (re) connection!

We've also been working with students to co-create a survey on the 'Social Work Placement Experience'.

Current placement provisions can leave some students

without sufficient opportunities to gain essential skills and knowledge. Not everybody is getting exposure to social work tasks in their placements. Therefore, meeting required standards in social work education and gaining confidence can be a challenge.

Consequently, some newly qualified social workers find it difficult to find a job despite the pressing recruitment and retention crisis as they struggle to evidence relevant experience. So it's worth taking a closer look into the issue. We had a very good response rate and will analyse the results over the summer - so watch this space!

We also celebrated good social work practice examples at the Pride in Practice event, a grassroots organised gathering of Children Services social workers supported by SASW. We were inspired by the wonderful and creative work happening all over Scotland.

It is so important to share the good examples as too often the bad ones get the spotlight. This fits nicely with BASW's wider campaign to improve public perception of social work.

Karin Heber, professional officer

'it was fantastic speaking to so many people directly'

SOCIAL WORKERS UNION VIEWS

CPD: how it's all too easy to miss the chance for wider reflection



It is often the case that we consider our ongoing learning in terms of CPD. We participate in seminars, courses, training days and so forth and duly add our material to the portal as required by Social Work England.

But when we really think about it, how often do we actually properly consider the wider context of our learning? How many times can you say you have taken the time to incorporate that wider context into your portal records and truly understand how important subtle learning is to us as professionals?

To give you all an example, discussions within our team often centre on current trends we are seeing. We might have handled a case that has brought up some complex issues to be resolved. The wider context would be: how we used support to bring about resolution; the changing structures to our working environment; and, importantly, how we have adapted or taken these experiences into our practice.

All of these learning opportunities are important. They remind us that we are individuals, as well as

professionals who work within a framework. Our own individual values and experiences shape how we deliver the services we provide to others. They give us confidence in our decision making.

The sharing of our experiences with colleagues or managers allows us to deepen our reflection, regardless of the demands of the job. Reflection forms part of how we do things and is part of who we are.

It is often said that reflection has been lost in supervisions, but I would urge you all to raise it if it is not there, remind colleagues how good it was to share experiences and what you took from it, but also to give to colleagues your own experiences or ask for support when you find yourself in a place where you do not feel objective or confident.

When completing your CPD, be generous with your recording. You have done the work, you have had the learning - include it. It has been part of your practice so be confident in recording your journey.

Christina Ramage, BASW/SWU representative

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Workers
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WALES VIEWS

The 'Welsh Way': a collectivist approach to disadvantage



Publication of a new book *Social Work in Wales* offers a timely opportunity to explore the 'Welsh view'.

Social work across the border operates under a distinct legal framework to that in England. Understanding this is a key component of social work education in Wales, and a requirement of students and practitioners. It is supported by the Social Services and Well-Being Act [Wales] 2014, that saw Welsh social work depart from the separation in English law of children and adult care practice.

It brought together children, family and adult social work under one framework, plus a number of other well established key Welsh social aspirations, most notably those of voice and control, prevention, early intervention, well-being and co-production.

The book, published by Bristol University Press, is jointly edited by Wulf Livingstone, Jo Redcliffe and me and looks at how social work is specifically practiced in Wales. It has contributions from academics, people with lived experience, practitioners, students and an ex-regulator.

Three of the key messages contained in the 'Welsh Way'

'It is important to take a whole systems approach'

are highlighted. The first is the aspiration for a rights-based approach that acknowledges and addresses social justice issues, based on Wales's radical political tradition. The emphasis here is on social issues and tackling economic disadvantages and inequalities, which encourage a collectivist approach to poverty and disadvantage.

The second message concerns the emphasis on inclusion – working with rather than unto others, emphasising partnership, collaboration and sustainability. Practice in Wales continues to readdress the balance of power more towards citizens who use services. Finally, we adopt approaches that utilise strengths rather than deficit-based considerations. These come from a belief that it is important to take a whole systems approach to individuals, families, communities and services.

The 'Welsh Way' provides the opportunity to create empowering, engaging and effective public service. This begins with shared ideologies, notably around rights and social justice. It looks for transformation involving strengths-based rather than deficits-based approaches, where social work is working with rather than unto people.

Abyd Quinn-Aziz, BASW Cymru committee member

CYMRU VIEWS

Y 'Ffordd Gymreig': dull cyfunol tuag at anfantais

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DIARY DATES

25 JULY
Neurodivergent Social Workers
Special Interest Group (NSW SIG)

27 JULY
"Ask an AMPH" Forums:
Learn more about the role of an
AMPH and how it interfaces with
other roles and services

8 AUGUST
Neurodivergent student, NQ and
ASYE social workers in the UK

14 AUGUST
BASW England Peer Support
Forums for Social Workers in
Health

16 AUGUST
Top tips on how to use attachment
theory and trauma

31 AUGUST
SASW Community of Practice:
Mental Health Officer

1 SEPTEMBER
Wellbeing in the workplace and
professional leadership

5 SEPTEMBER
SASW Community of Practice

13 SEPTEMBER
Stepping Stones Moving into
Leadership and Management

19 SEPTEMBER
Social Work Policy Panel - The
future for social work: planning for
a strong workforce identity

20 SEPTEMBER
How to survive (and thrive) in
child protection

27 SEPTEMBER
BASW Cymru Community of
Practice - relationship centred
care with Nick Andrews

29 SEPTEMBER
SWU Annual General Meeting 2023

12 OCTOBER
Neurodiversity: Why do we care? -
a collaborative Community of
Practice with SASW & BASW Cymru

17 OCTOBER
Trauma Informed Interventions -
Advanced Level Training

1 NOVEMBER
BASW Cymru Community of
Practice: Narrative vs Process with
Carys James

1 NOVEMBER
Safeguarding Adults Level 4:
Role of the provider service lead
training

2 NOVEMBER
Identifying and Responding to
Child Sexual Abuse

7 NOVEMBER
Developing creativity as a practice
assessor/supervisor/practice
educator

14 NOVEMBER
Skills and Principles for Cultivating
a Relational Approach to Addiction
in Child Protection

29 NOVEMBER
SASW Conference 2023

1 DECEMBER
Principles of Legal Literacy for
PE's, NWSW Assessors, PEPS
Assessors/Mentors and
Coordinators

4 DECEMBER
BIA & DOLs Legal Update
Training

BASW BRANCH EVENTS

WORCESTERSHIRE BRANCH:

20 July: Supporting the Mental
Health of Autistic Young Women
& Girls and those with ADHD

NORFOLK BRANCH:

21 July: Annual Summer Get
Together

BLACK COUNTRY AND COVENTRY & WARWICKSHIRE BRANCHES:

25 July: Joint Event - A discussion
with the West Midlands Police and
Crime Commissioner

NORTH AND WEST YORKSHIRE BRANCH:

1 Aug: Implementing a rights-
based approach to social work

INFORMATION IS CORRECT AT TIME OF GOING TO PRESS. VISIT WWW.BASW.CO.UK/EVENTS FOR FULL DETAILS

The British Journal of SOCIAL WORK

VISIT

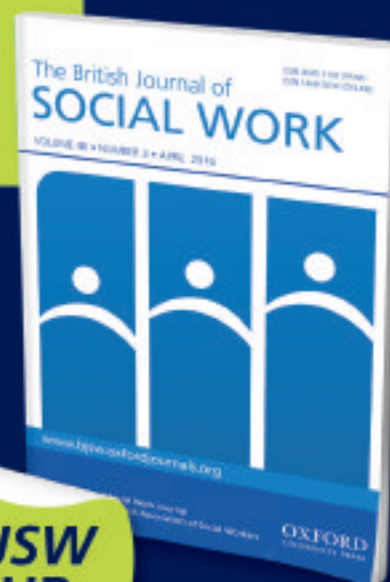
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- Modern attachment theory: highlighting the strengths, limitations and contemporary uses in direct work and practice
- A care experienced perspective on language in case records
- Menopause in the social care workforce
- Anti-racist practice: how to showcase and share best practice nationally
- Wellbeing and relaxation sessions

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*Fees apply to all legal learning sessions

**Price increases to £30 + VAT per session from 19th August 2023.

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BASW'S TAUGHT SKILLS - GENERAL



ONLINE TRAINING

- 13.09.23 STEPPING STONES: MOVING INTO LEADERSHIP & MANAGEMENT**
MEMBERS £29 + VAT | NON MEMBERS £59 + VAT | CPD: 3 HOURS
- 17.10.23 TRAUMA INFORMED INTERVENTIONS - ADVANCED LEVEL TRAINING**
MEMBERS £99 + VAT | NON MEMBERS £149 + VAT | CPD: 6 HOURS
- 01.11.23 SAFEGUARDING ADULTS LEVEL 4: ROLE OF THE PROVIDER SERVICE LEAD TRAINING**
MEMBERS £99 + VAT | NON MEMBERS £149 + VAT | CPD: 6 HOURS
- 04.12.23 BIA & DOLS LEGAL UPDATE TRAINING**
MEMBERS £99 + VAT | NON MEMBERS £175 + VAT | CPD: 6 HOURS

BASW'S TAUGHT SKILLS PROGRAMME FOR PRACTICE EDUCATORS & ASSESSORS



MEMBERS £29 + VAT | NON MEMBERS £59 + VAT | CPD: 3 HOURS PER SESSION

- 01.09.23 WELLBEING IN THE WORKPLACE AND PROFESSIONAL LEADERSHIP**
- 07.11.23 DEVELOPING CREATIVITY AS A PRACTICE ASSESSOR/SUPERVISOR/PRACTICE EDUCATOR**
- 01.12.23 PRINCIPLES OF LEGAL LITERACY FOR PE'S, NQSW ASSESSORS, PEPS ASSESSORS/MENTORS AND COORDINATORS**

**NEW
FOR
2023!**

BASW CHILD PROTECTION SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE MASTERCLASS SERIES

MEMBERS £16.50 + VAT | NON MEMBERS £25 + VAT | CPD: 1.5 HOURS PER SESSION

Get inspired with highly practical, research-based training that will equip you with ideas to implement in your social work practice. These focused sessions will be jam-packed with knowledge, practical ideas, and research. Delivered by Richard Devine, who draws on his wealth of experience and expertise, you will leave feeling more confident and re-energised in the work you do with children and families.

- 16.08.23 TOP TIPS ON HOW TO USE ATTACHMENT THEORY & TRAUMA**
Improve your observation skills, direct work and intervention with children and families in child protection
- 20.09.23 HOW TO SURVIVE (AND THRIVE!) IN CHILD PROTECTION**
Skills and techniques to procrastinate less, do more and build resilience so you can realise your potential and maximise your impact as a social worker
- 14.11.23 SKILLS AND PRINCIPLES FOR CULTIVATING A RELATIONAL APPROACH TO ADDICTION IN CHILD PROTECTION**
Bringing together personal and professional experience to shift our understanding of parents who misuse drugs and alcohol
- 12.12.23 MORAL DISTRESS, IMPOSSIBLE DECISIONS AND REMOVING CHILDREN**
Examining ethical challenges and developing skills, ideas, and tools to make defensible, evidenced-based, life-changing decisions about children

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