



My door is always open



As another year comes to an end, I would personally like to thank the engine of SWU which is the hard working, knowledgeable and skilful Advice & Representation Team who are by far the

reason a lot of members join SWU and BASW. No other organisation or union can guarantee that you will have someone with an in-depth knowledge of social work providing advice and, if needed, representation at the highest level. We are obviously doing something right as membership remains strong despite austerity and the impact this having on us all - please spread the word about the only specialist union for social workers.

It is also worth checking out the new guidance sheets for BASW/SWU members. The Advice & Representation team has developed guidance sheets to support members across a wide range of employment law matters and on fitness to practice processes. The team created these documents to help you to resolve a current issue and to manage the immediate situation. They also support you to understand the processes involved and what to expect. These guidance sheets are available to you from your first day of membership and can be accessed here after you log in:

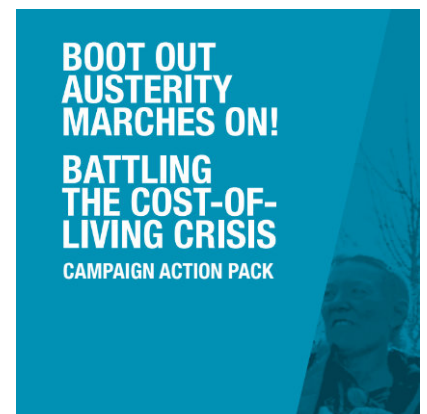
<https://new.basw.co.uk/support/advice-representation>

I was in London last month and I really enjoyed meeting potential and current members at the London COMPASS event and also delivering an update on our Supervision Good Practice Guide which hopefully should be ready for June 2024.

The highlight of the weekend was spending time with the energetic guys from The Social Worker & The Mentor Podcast - Robert Dyer and Nana Yabbey-Hagan. Ruth Allen (BASW CEO) and I recorded two episodes with them, and I really enjoyed their enthusiasm and activism for social work.

I was pleased that as part of the podcast we covered a range of issues affecting the social work profession across the UK today, from working conditions, striking, studio bursaries to representation in the media. The first episode is now available to watch on [The Social Worker & The Mentor YouTube channel](#) and [on Spotify](#), and a second episode will be released in January so watch out for it on SWU's social media.

I met with SWU Austerity Action Group recently and they have been working on a revamped 'AAG Campaign



Action Pack'. The draft copy looks impressive and hopefully I will be able to share the link for this in the next SWU newsletter.

I have also been active last month with the General Federation of Trade Unions and delighted to announce that SWU will be working closely with GFTU and the Association of Educational Psychologists to build a mass movement of trades unions, campaign groups, community activists to ensure our political leaders are held to account and deliver policies that make a difference to challenging the inequalities in our country and dealing with the

damage 13 years of austerity has delivered. It is also worth looking at the free courses as part of our affiliation to GFTU: [Updated Education Programme 2023-2024 \(gftu.org.uk\)](https://www.gftu.org.uk/education-programme-2023-2024)

Finally, have a great festive break and somewhere there will be Social Workers working hard over the festive period providing a side to Social Work that the public rarely sees or media reporting on the great work we do **24hr 7 days a week 365 days of the year.**

John McGowan
General Secretary
j.mcgowan@swu-union.org.uk



Social Media

If you have not done so then please follow us on Social Media - we post and tweet regular updates about the work and developments of the Social Workers Union.

Monthly Newsletter

Monthly newsletters are emailed to all SWU members. If you are not receiving this then please check what email address we have.

The newsletters are also published on the web site.

SWU can be found on the following:

Internet: <https://swu-union.org.uk>

Twitter: https://twitter.com/SWU_UK

Facebook: www.facebook.com/socialworkersunionuk/

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/@socialworkersunion>

Instagram: www.instagram.com/socialworkersunion

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/social-workers-union>

Social Workers Union and Thunderbird Partnership Foundation international knowledge exchange trip

Funded by the BASW International Development Fund, this SWU trip took place from 16th - 21st October 2023 in London, Ontario, Canada



SWU Social Workers Union

This knowledge exchange was a unique opportunity for UK social workers to learn about the Thunderbird Partnership Foundation's strength-based, holistic, trauma informed approach to social work practices that values culture, respect, community, and compassion. Thunderbird's "two-eyed seeing" approach of combining Indigenous knowledge and western knowledge has produced a wealth of frameworks, tools, and programs - many of which are highlighted in SWU's report.

The Social Workers Union (SWU) delegation for this knowledge exchange trip to Canada included **John McGowan, Dave Callow, Dr Shawn Major, Anna Collins, Rebecca Austin, and Dominic Watters**. They were keen to share their reflections and learning with SWU.

John McGowan, SWU General Secretary

"I feel privileged to have been on the recent SWU trip hosted by the Thunderbird Partnership Foundation in London, Ontario which is home to one of highest population of Indigenous peoples in Ontario. It has such a diverse urban Indigenous community with people from all over Turtle Island, or what we call 'North America'.

Everyone we met at Thunderbird and a range of social work and community organisations was generous and proud to show off their life, their culture and their confidence and positivity in the future.

The trip was varied, insightful and a lot of knowledge was shared - from learning about Thunderbird's approach to social work practices to site visits in which we learned about Indigenous specific treatment, harm reduction at a youth centre and meeting with groups to share positive practice. In particular, the impressive foundational Indigenous Wellness Framework (IWF) was developed by First Nations Elders and Knowledge Keepers who shared their understanding of what wellness is from an Indigenous point of view."



Thunderbird and SWU

Rebecca Austin, SWU Executive UK Representative

"What really stuck with me from my time with the Thunderbird Partnership Foundation and the organisations we visited was the investment, belief and embedding of a framework where the agenda was so grounded in the people and communities they serve. Grounded in 'Hope, Belonging, Meaning and Purpose' and the belief that where there is hope there is healing.

The practitioners' passion and depth of knowledge shone through and there was a real focus on strengths, cultural connection, the idea of 'life promotion' and consciously moving away from a deficit-based approach. These create culturally safe encounters that shift away from shaming and move towards promoting wellness, with the start of the encounter asking the question what makes a whole and happy person and how can we also support this person in sustaining wellness beyond the service involvement, towards finding a love of living life again.

We saw how this shifted language in such beautiful ways, organically moving language away from 'what is wrong with you' towards 'what has happened to you' and with that such compassion, love and kindness. I was particularly struck by the men's programme at Atlohsa named Kiizhay Anishinabe Niin 'I am a kind man'. It no longer felt like an 'approach' we were seeing through organisations but rather a way of being with others."

Dave Callow, SWU Chair

"It was an absolute privilege to explore social work practice with Indigenous peoples during this SWU knowledge exchange. The visit was very well organised, and we were made to feel very welcome by our hosts.

Reflection has been a useful tool to fully appreciate and understand the key principles of 'Hope, Belonging, Meaning and Purpose' and how questions such as 'Where am I going?' and 'Who am I?' are the universal messages we all might need to be asked or ask of ourselves at various points in our lives. My time with Thunderbird encouraged me to reflect upon my own experiences within statutory social work practice and how we sometimes might feel that we could do more, something deeper that is not so bound by budget or the pressures of time.

For me, the work continues with how the messages from social work practice with Indigenous peoples is shared. It will be a pleasure to incorporate this into a global social work practice module at the University I lecture, to ensure this awareness continues with future social workers."

Dominic Watters - @SingleDadSW - Food is Care founder

"Each day we were welcomed with a communal smudge of sage medicine which set an agenda of not only community and hope but also a focus on our spiritual element. Then through a round of introductions the purpose of all we try to achieve as social workers was brought into sharp focus. I was struck by how my lived experience of council estate poverty in England reflected some of the inequalities experienced by First Nations Communities in Canada. The pain of not being heard, of not being included in curriculums, policy or professional frameworks was a feature in all the amazing work the Thunderbird Partnership Foundation do.

I would like to thank SWU for creating an opportunity that brought international experts by experience into the same space, and for the chance to share the Food is Care campaign internationally."

Anna Collins, SWU Executive Wales Representative

"All practice supported and developed by Thunderbird is based on strengths and meeting the person where they are at without judgement. These values underpin good social work and Thunderbird brings these principals to life in the design, delivery and evaluation of all the services they deliver.

They say there is no such thing as a silly question and every day is a school day - I felt this very keenly when, in a conversation about practice, I asked Thunderbird's CEO Dr Carol Hopkins had she heard of Maslow. I would never have guessed her response which was that Abraham Maslow, an American psychologist, had spent



The Thunderbird Partnership Foundation and the Social Workers Union meet for the first day of our international knowledge exchange trip on 16th October 2023

resources for youth suicide prevention and life promotion, applied to social work practice, in discussions around equity, and at the heart of Thunderbird’s wellness frameworks. It is a strength-based approach to wellness that was developed from Indigenous knowledge and is a research-based answer to the question of what a person needs to be whole and healthy.

I think many aspects of Thunderbird’s work will resonate with social workers in the UK - including a holistic approach to wellness, cultural safety, anti-oppressive practice, trauma informed approach, life promotion, and harm reduction. I look forward to developing the learning from our trip further to share with the social work community and hope that it will add to the rich tapestry of practice.”

Thank you to our generous hosts at the Thunderbird Partnership Foundation who shared Indigenous knowledge and culture, social work practices, reflections, organised site visits, and provided us with nourishing food each day. We thank the Lenape (Delaware), Anishinabe, and Haudenosaunee Nations and the Southern First Nations Secretariat who host the Thunderbird Partnership Foundation where we spent much of our time learning. Thank you as well to the staff of the Nimkee NupiGawagan Healing Centre, Native Horizons Treatment Centre, and Atlohsa Family Healing Services for welcoming our visits and for the thoughtful and educational discussions.

time with the Blackfoot Nation in Alberta where he learned about their belief system of how people can be the best that they can be and used it in his work.

It is a great shame that credit is not given where it is due. I wonder if courses teaching psychology and sociology have considered the origins of what is one of the most helpful models to think about and refer to in day-to-day social work practice. There seems to be no end to the ways that Indigenous peoples have been exploited and disadvantaged by colonialism.”

Dr Shawn Major, SWU Communications, Policy, and Engagement Officer

“Hope, Belonging, Meaning, Purpose is a powerful concept encompassed in just four words. This was the golden thread that ran through our trip - it was written on a whiteboard at a treatment centre, in

SWU Social Workers Union

THUNDERBIRD PARTNERSHIP FOUNDATION

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The Social Workers Union (SWU) delegates for this knowledge exchange trip to Canada included John McGowan, Dave Colton, Dr. Shawn Major, Anna Collins, Rebecca Austin, and Dominic Watters.

Our host the Thunderbird Partnership Foundation is a not-profit organisation and a leading culturally centred voice across Canada on First Nations mental wellness, substance use, and addictions. It promotes a holistic approach to healing and wellness that values culture, respect, community, and compassion. Thunderbird strives to support culture based successes of Hope, Belonging, Meaning and Purpose for First Nations individuals, families, and communities and its top priority is developing a continuum of care that would be available to all Indigenous people in Canada.

This knowledge exchange trip was a unique opportunity for UK social workers to learn about the Thunderbird Partnership Foundation's strength based, holistic, trauma informed approach to social work, one that values culture, respect, community, and compassion. Thunderbird's "two eyed seeing" approach of combining Indigenous knowledge and western knowledge has produced a wealth of frameworks, tools, and programs - many of which will be highlighted in this report.

At the airport, ready to depart. From left to right: Dave Colton, Dominic Watters, John McGowan, Rebecca Austin, Anna Collins, and Shawn Major

Read the full trip report at:
<https://swu-union.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Canada-Trip-Report-200dpi.pdf>



Is your mortgage the right option for you?

The mortgage market is complex.

There are thousands of products to choose from and following changes to the way lenders assess loan applications the process can be time consuming and confusing.

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The General Federation of Trade Unions owned Emplaw, the market leading employment law information service.

The new law on sexual harassment has been passed

The new law on prevention of sexual harassment has received Royal Assent. What do employers need to know, and what should they be doing now?

The Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act) Act makes a significant change to the law on an employer's obligations to protect employees from sexual harassment. Although it has been watered down compared to the original proposals, the new law will still create an important new duty that employers will need to take seriously.

What is the new law?

There is a new duty to take "*reasonable steps*" to prevent sexual harassment of your employees in the course of their employment. This applies to sexual harassment as defined in the Equality Act, which means unwanted conduct of a "*sexual nature*". Although the law has primarily been introduced to protect women, it applies equally to people of all genders.

The law already provides a defence to a harassment claim if the employer can show they had taken all reasonable steps to prevent it from happening. This meant it was advisable to take such steps, but there was no actual requirement to do so. The new law goes further by placing a separate legal obligation on all employers to take proactive measures to prevent sexual harassment.

What hasn't changed?

The new duty only applies to sexual harassment. It does not apply to harassment based on other protected characteristics such as race, age, sexual orientation or belief. It also does not apply to harassment which is related to sex but is not conduct of a sexual nature.

The initial draft of this law included a proposal to re-introduce protection against harassment of employees by third parties, such as customers and clients.

What are "*reasonable steps*"

There is no guidance on this in the new law. The employer's defence in the Equality Act uses similar wording - that the employer took "*all reasonable steps*" to prevent the discrimination or harassment. The word "*all*" was removed from the new duty during the parliamentary process, meaning this is a somewhat lower threshold. Nevertheless, it seems likely that Employment Tribunals will interpret this in a similar way to the existing employer's defence.

A recent Employment Tribunal decision on workplace discrimination against a trans person (*Fischer v London United Busways*) considered in some detail what

would be expected of an employer to make out the “*all reasonable steps*” defence. Although the employer in this case had appropriate policies in place, they had failed to take other steps such as keeping the policies up to date, making them available to all staff, and implementing regular training.

How will it be enforced?

A claim for breach of the new duty can be made in the Employment Tribunal but it must be ‘attached’ to a claim for sexual harassment. It is not a free-standing claim. If an employee succeeds in a claim for sexual harassment, and the employer is found to have breached its duty to take reasonable steps to avoid the sexual harassment, the Employment Tribunal will be able to uplift compensation by up to 25%. Although this is only triggered if there has been sexual harassment, the uplift itself will apply to all of the compensation that has been awarded for any type of harassment. This could be expensive if an employee has succeeded in a claim for multiple incidents of harassment.

The duty can also be enforced by the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC), using its existing powers of enforcement which include investigations. To date, the EHRC has used its enforcement powers sparingly, but that may be set to change.

When does the new law come into effect?

The new law received Royal Assent on 26th October 2023 and comes into force one year after this.

Will there be any more guidance?

The EHRC has indicated that it will update its technical guidance on sexual harassment and harassment at work, which it published in January 2020, to reflect the new duty.

Do I need to address harassment of staff by third parties?

Although this is not prohibited by the new law,

you cannot simply ignore this issue. Under the current law, an employer still risks being liable for discrimination or harassment itself if it ignores complaints about harassment by third parties and continues to put vulnerable employees at risk. And irrespective of legal risks, it simply is not good practice (and reputationally damaging) to fail to prevent staff from being harassed at work.

Will things change under a Labour government?

Although Labour Peers supported the amendments to the new law, Baroness Thornton said she could not promise that a Labour government would not return to the issue. Since then, Angela Raynor (the deputy leader of the party) has said that they would re-introduce specific liability for third party harassment. They would also make it a duty to take “*all*” reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment. If Labour wins the next election, it looks likely that more change will be coming soon.

What should I be doing now?

Although the law does not change until October 2024, you should take steps now to ensure that you are well placed to show you are taking reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment. This will also help you to show that you have taken all reasonable steps to prevent harassment of any kind, which is a valuable part of DE&I initiatives as well as helping to defend claims.

Some key steps include:

- Creating or updating central reporting registers for complaints about all forms of harassment.
- Updating and re-circulating anti-harassment and speak up policies and ensuring that policies focus on inclusion as well as equality.
- Carrying out up to date, tailored and situational training to help staff members avoid the threat of harassment, and to give those who witness harassment (bystanders) the means to safely

intervene or support victims. As written about in the above article, training which is 'stale' or simply a tick-box exercise is unlikely to be seen as a reasonable step to prevent harassment.

- Conducting targeted risk assessments to identify risk factors and what action can be taken.
- Ensuring there is a clear avenue for reporting complaints about harassment and that all complaints are investigated and dealt with effectively - even if they are historic ones.

- Considering third-party facing steps like installing visible signs in areas where customers interact with staff members explaining that threats, violence and harassment will not be tolerated and providing a means for bystanders to report instances of staff harassment.

It will be important to factor in any new requirements from the expected EHRC statutory Code of Practice, as well as the existing guidance.

Sexism, Sex Discrimination in the workplace:

Open conversation with SWU Trade Union Officer (TUO) Lisa Fitzpatrick

I met with Lisa Fitzpatrick (BASW A&R - SWU TUO), a lifelong trade unionist. Lisa first studied sociology, which focusses on inequality in society, before going on to become a social worker specialising in child protection and fostering form F assessments.

When you meet Lisa her passion as a trade union official is abundantly potent, as is her commitment to social work values. She feels fortunate to be in a job she loves, where she strives to empower others to be optimistic and challenge employment processes and decisions. Commenting, she feels privileged meeting and working with women at varying stages of their life cycle.

I meet people at transitional life stages when they begin their careers and towards the end of them: newly qualified social workers (20's - 30's) going through ASYE; when they have maternity needs; returning to work with young children; working hard in to their 50's - 60's when career demands and mid-life caring responsibilities impact on health; and finally, retirement.

It is not unknown for women in social work to push themselves near to the point of death because they are so busy caring for others, neglecting their own needs, possibly because of a culture shaped by patriarchal influence. *They have to prioritise work, we all know the difficulties in managing the weight of the job and finding a work life balance, ignoring personal impact so they don't miss promotions and mitigate fears of performance management... is there a machismo culture? There are still more men at the top in these organisations.*

Lisa has told me of the many women she encounters nearing retirement, and subject to scrutiny overlooking personal sacrifices they have made for social work, encountering unfair employer processes because of time off for health issues (often exacerbated by working conditions).



Employer absence policies can be incredibly brutal, and at times HR staff demonstrate lack of compassion for workers stating *I'm here as an advisor to the manager.*

Covid heightened attention to punity of sickness procedures and policies, and the inflexibility of flexible working rights. Some people sadly experienced multiple bereavements and needed significant time off. On return there may have been need for reasonable adjustments for health reasons. However, if there was another absence for anything aside from a cold it immediately triggered as the same episode of absence, plunging into sickness procedures again with a do not pass go - straight to stage 3 or 4. Lisa asserts in such instances employers riskily overlook legal protections for carers under sex discrimination within the Equalities Act 2010.

Are employers/society recognising or accommodating the increased demands many women in social work face?

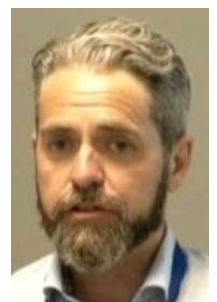
*It is so important that employers are protecting pregnant staff at work - members report working long hours and suffering excessive stress and work overload when pregnant. [Maternal stress and anxiety can alter the development of a baby's brain](#). Lisa finds it inexcusable that employers are not taking health and safety duties seriously - [pregnancy risk assessments](#) should be completed and need to be reviewed regularly throughout to minimise risks to the worker and their child. Such assessments can guide the need for reduced caseloads and volume of visits, *it is important to raise formally if employers are not complying with responsibilities* - consider taking out a grievance.*

On return to work from maternity there there may be need for flexible working arrangements and sometimes as a reasonable adjustment. The Flexible Working Act 2023 has not availed the increased rights we hoped for. Lisa says return from maternity leave can be high tariff, childcare unaffordable to most working people and the cost-of-living crisis compounding financial worries - many women need flexible working arrangements. Some people seek compressed hours but encounter opposition with managers citing conflicts with business needs. *It's important to follow the processes that exist and ensure requests are recorded, these can be monitored for impact on recruitment and retention issues. If requests are refused, appeal if there are grounds... evidence how it can work and not affect the service. Don't think oh what's the point, there is always a point. If it is feasible and possible - it can happen!* In Lisa's experience a fresh pair of eyes and a robust argument can win appeals. It's important to follow the processes that exist - ensure requests are being recorded and monitored by the employers as it can impact on recruitment/retention issues too. Post Covid some members re-evaluated their overall priorities for multiple reasons, and sought to reduce hours, *many social work teams that function with staff working different hours - this can also be beneficial for the team.*

Concluding our conversation Lisa said something we don't have acknowledged often by the public, employers, media, and even ourselves: *social workers are people too, many are carers.* Lisa would love to see research done with retired social workers, life story work, to truly reflect the lives of social workers - how much they take on and manage and the impact on them as people.

What then can we be doing as a trade union to help women - please keep the conversation open.

**Interview by Calum Gallacher,
SWU Assistant General Secretary**



Social work students win post-graduate funding reform

Postgraduate social work students will be able to benefit from reform to the bursaries system in Scotland after a Government announcement



SWU Social Workers Union
Campaign Fund

SASW

The professional association for social work and social workers



Speaking at the Scottish Association of Social Workers (SASW) conference on 29th November, the Scottish Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs, **Angela Constance MSP** confirmed that postgraduate students not eligible to receive bursary support through the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) will be able to apply for the postgraduate funding package administered by the Student Awards Agency Scotland (SAAS).

The reforms, which come in from the 2024-25 academic year, will help to alleviate concerns students expressed to MSPs about the postgraduate funding system.

Students had [called on](#) the Scottish Government, SAAS, and SSSC to reform funding for postgraduate social work students to ensure objective assessment criteria are used to assess the need for bursaries and that they should be funded adequately.

David Grimm, a student who helped lead the campaign, commented:

“This reform should mean that the lottery of students

having to rely on recommendations and endorsements from their lecturers will no longer be such a huge problem.

“Without reform to student bursaries we risk not having enough social workers in the future to meet the statutory roles they play. This is a welcome first step towards wider reform of the system.

“We now need Ministers to publish the review of the support available for social work students and agree to provide bursaries for all third and fourth year undergraduate social work students who work on the front-line alongside their studies.”

The review was established by the Scottish Minister for Further & Higher Education, **Graeme Dey MSP**. It came after a powerful [cross-party committee of MSPs agreed to take action](#) to support the need for social work university students to be provided with bursaries.

Students campaigning for change have been backed by the Social Workers Union (SWU) and the Scottish Association of

Social Workers (SASW) and argue that third and fourth year undergraduate social work students in Scotland should have equality with other students who work in the public sector in front-line roles during their studies.

SWU has previously calculated that the total for nursing, midwifery, and paramedic bursaries currently on offer is a non-repayable £37,500, but for social work students the basic support available is between £20,400 and £32,400, mostly in the form of a repayable loan and depending on household income.

John McGowan, General Secretary of the Social Workers Union, commented:

“This represents a step towards ensuring that students who wish to become social workers are financially supported to do so. We have been proud to support the students in their campaign so far and will continue to do so until we see meaningful reform of social work bursaries in Scotland.”

Alison Bavidge, National Director of the Scottish Association of Social Work added:

“Well done to David Grimm and Lucy Challoner for leading the campaign. I’m so pleased that the Scottish Government has taken this positive step to help some of our students. SASW will continue to work to improve the financial situation for social work students.”



www.islamophobia-awareness.org

Islamophobia Awareness Month 2023 - Unity in Diversity: A Call to End Religious Prejudice

This article issues a global call to end religious discrimination, motivated by the suffering of those who are being persecuted for their religious beliefs.

The hatred directed towards Muslims and people of other religions emphasises how urgently we need to act as a group. Regardless of our religious affiliations, we all have a stake in establishing an inclusive, diverse society that is free from prejudice. The article seeks to go beyond religious differences and encourage people from all backgrounds to work together to promote harmony, peace, and understanding by examining the unity-promoting principles found in Islam.

The Challenges of Islamophobia

Islamophobia poses a complex range of issues that affect many facets of life and is fueled by misconceptions and stereotypes about Islam and its adherents. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission reported a 15.8% increase in religious discrimination charges in 2020, indicating that Muslims face discrimination in the workplace frequently. Islamophobia also shows up outside of the workplace, as evidenced by the FBI's report of a 17% increase in anti-Muslim hate crimes in the United States in 2020.

Islamophobia, a pervasive problem, has a lasting impact on Muslim lives and affects many areas outside of the workplace. The prejudices against Muslims are ingrained in society and provide a complicated array of issues that require our attention and cooperation. Some of the challenges faced by Muslims as a result of Islamophobia include:

- **Mental Health Struggles and Social Exclusion:** The subtle nature of Islamophobia has a negative impact on Muslims' mental health. Persistent exposure to prejudiced attitudes raises stress, anxiety, and depressive symptoms. Beyond the individual, Muslims' exclusion from many facets of community life causes the social fabric to unravel. The social repercussions of Islamophobia, whether in public or educational settings, go well beyond acts of discrimination and pierce the core of interpersonal relationships.
- **Physical Safety and Educational Challenges:** Muslims' safety is directly threatened by the increase in hate crimes directed towards them. A climate of fear and insecurity is fostered by physical abuse and vandalism committed against mosques. Furthermore, Muslim students face obstacles in the classroom, including harassment and bullying that prevents them from pursuing their academic goals. The assault on both physical safety and educational opportunities feeds into a discriminatory cycle that impacts Muslims at different phases of their lives.
- **Economic Disparities and Discrimination in Employment:** Muslims frequently find themselves at the intersection of economic inequality and Islamophobia, which prevents them from obtaining fair treatment in the workplace and job opportunities. This financial hardship not only has an impact on people's lives, but it also fuels larger social injustices.

Islam as a Religion of Peace and Unity

The Quranic Perspective

The Quran, which is regarded as the holy book of Islam, offers significant understandings of the value of unity. The Quran chapter 3 verse 103 (Surah Al-Imran) exhorts believers to "hold firmly to the rope of Allah all together and do not become divided." This appeal for harmony transcends religious differences by highlighting how humanity is interrelated in the pursuit of shared objectives. These lessons' core ideas are for humans and cross religious lines.

Another verse from Surah Al-Anfal (Quran chapter 8: Verse 46) calls for unity when it says, "And obey Allah and His Messenger, and do not dispute and [thus] lose courage and [then] your strength would depart; and be patient. Indeed, Allah is with the patient." This verse underscores the importance of obedience and patience as integral aspects of unity.

Hadiths on Unity

The collective aspect of humanity is emphasised in the hadiths, or the sayings and deeds of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW). A poignant Hadith compares believers to "one body," meaning that the body as a whole experiences pain when any part of it suffers. This metaphor serves as a potent reminder that prejudice against any religious group hurts everyone on the globe.

Combating Islamophobia: A Unified Approach

Fighting Islamophobia requires a multidimensional approach. Education is essential; misconceptions can be dispelled by including truthful knowledge about

Islam in curricula and encouraging cross-cultural interactions from a young age. It is also the duty of media outlets to portray complex stories in a way that avoids sensationalism and stereotypes.

In addition to providing protection from religious bias, laws that criminalise hate crimes and discrimination must be strengthened. Initiatives for community engagement, which promote communication and understanding, are essential links between different religious communities. Active education, strong legal protections, and neighbourhood-based projects work together to change the narrative in favour of acceptance and unity.

Universal Appeal

Religious discrimination is a worldwide issue that affects people of all faiths and crosses national boundaries. Regardless of our religious convictions, we must acknowledge that our strength lies in our unity. People from all walks of life are urged by the article to actively engage in fostering discourse, dispelling myths, and advancing social justice.

Links from the author to read more about it!

- <https://news.gallup.com/poll/157082/islamophobia-understanding-anti-muslim-sentiment-west.aspx>
- <https://www.justice.gov/crs/highlights/2022-hate-crime-statistics>
- <https://www.eeoc.gov/publications/questions-and-answers-about-workplace-rights-muslims-arabs-south-asians-and-sikhs>
- <https://www.un.org/en/observances/anti-islamophobia-day>
- <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Islamophobia>

Author's Biography

Mustapha Odunsi is a seasoned and qualified social worker dedicated to children's welfare and protection. With a wealth of experience, he has been actively involved in collaborating with non-governmental agencies, leading campaigns against child abuse and neglect. Mustapha has orchestrated a series of impactful programs aimed at providing support to children facing challenges with basic educational materials. His commitment to the well-being of children is evident in his extensive work within various sectors, contributing significantly to the betterment of young lives.

Mustapha is proudly registered with the Nigeria Association of Social Workers (NASoW), further demonstrating his dedication to professional excellence in the field. Mustapha has the intention to practice social work on an international level and he's working on getting registered with a regulator in the United Kingdom.

This article was written for the Social Workers Union (SWU) to mark Islamophobia Awareness Month (IAM) 2023. This is a campaign founded in 2012 by a group of Muslim organisations with the aim to showcase the positive contributions of Muslims as well as raise awareness of Islamophobia in society. Learn more at: <https://www.islamophobia-awareness.org>



THE APPG'S MANIFESTO FOR MENOPAUSE

1. Integrate menopause into the NHS free Health Check for women over 40

Evidence shows a large number of women come into primary care from the age of 40 with menopausal symptoms, unaware they are experiencing perimenopause or menopause. Clinicians often fail to recognise these symptoms too. Discussion and diagnosis must be incorporated into the free NHS Health Check that women over 40 are eligible for every 5 years.

2. Create a National Formulary for all types of HRT to ensure that doctors and pharmacists can prescribe any approved medicines, supported by standardised local prescribing guidelines

This is critical to ensure that medical professionals feel equipped and empowered to prescribe all types of HRT according to individual need. This will also help to tackle the UK's ongoing HRT supply shortages and address the inequity that many patients currently experience as a result of regional variations in the types of HRT products that can be accessed.

3. Include menopause as an indicator within the GP Quality and Outcomes Framework (QOF), or any future incentive scheme, to incentivise GPs to improve menopause diagnosis, treatment and care within their practice

There is a deficit of knowledge and understanding amongst GPs when it comes to recognising and diagnosing menopause symptoms. Incentives within primary care would encourage better understanding and help to alleviate the problem, ensuring more timely access to treatment for women.

4. Mandate large companies (over 250 employees) to introduce menopause action plans to support female employees experiencing menopause, with specific guidance for SMEs to support employees going through menopause, and introduce tax incentives to encourage companies to integrate menopause into occupational health

With 1 in 10 women leaving their jobs due to menopause symptoms and thousands more reducing their hours and avoiding promotion, action must be taken to address the serious impact menopause can have on women's economic participation. Encouraging employers to support their staff would enable businesses to retain loyal and experienced members of their workforce, boost the economy and give women the confidence to progress in their careers.



5. Work with the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) to evaluate female-specific testosterone treatments in managing menopause symptoms with a view to getting this essential treatment option licensed in the UK

Male-specific testosterone products can be prescribed to women off-license for menopause, however no female-specific treatments are licensed in the UK despite the growing evidence of the benefits. The regulator must seek to license treatments to manage testosterone levels in menopausal women. GPs are also often reluctant to prescribe off-license and so in the absence of a specific product for women, there must be comprehensive guidance around safe dosages and the benefits of prescribing testosterone.

6. Dedicate further research funding to programmes that explore potential links between menopause, related health conditions and the varying experiences that women of all backgrounds and ethnicities have of menopause, to underpin all future policy

Evidence is emerging of the links between menopause and some health conditions, and of the varying experiences of menopause for women from different ethnic backgrounds. However there are significant gaps in our understanding due to a lack of research. Greater research into menopause must be fed into an updated Women's Health Strategy, and underpin all future policy making. This is critical to ensure women with complex menopause needs, and of all backgrounds, can access treatment and receive appropriate and relevant support.

7. Conduct an urgent review into the need and demand for specialist menopause care, map existing provision, and evaluate where new specialist NHS services need to be commissioned to ensure this can be accessed by all that need more complex care

The lack of NHS specialist menopause clinics continues to be a serious issue, with the majority having been decommissioned over the past few decades. The gap between primary and specialist services also needs to be bridged for women with more complex care needs. There are many other parts of our health system that can be further empowered to support women through the menopause, from specialist menopause nurses in general practices, to pharmacists, and a much improved NHS website for those seeking information.



THE JOINT COUNCIL *for* THE WELFARE OF IMMIGRANTS

Caitlin Boswell, Policy & Advocacy Manager, tells SWU more about Joint Council for The Welfare of Immigrants (JCWI)

At JCWI, we fight for a society in which people live safely and are treated with equal dignity and respect, regardless of where they are from or how they came to the UK.

This means creating an immigration system that is built on compassion and care, instead of cruelty. We do this through providing legal advice and representation to migrant communities, challenging harmful immigration policies and narratives about migration, and campaigning in solidarity with people who move.

In the wake of the COVID crisis in 2020, we launched our “Work It Out” campaign, which aims to advance the rights of migrant workers. The pandemic made it clearer than ever that migrants are the backbone of our workforce but are all too often at risk of workplace precarity - with those who are undocumented at the sharpest end.

We all deserve decent wages, safe and dignified working conditions, and protections if our bosses seek to take advantage of us.

No worker should lose their job, be vulnerable to exploitation or be unable to report mistreatment due to fear of being removed from the country.

But too often hostile immigration policies in the workplace - like the Illegal Working Offence and right to work checks - alongside immigration raids and employers sharing workers’ data with the Home Office, get in the way of workers’ rights. These hostile policies put migrant workers at greater risk of abuse and exploitation,

and make it harder to report or escape unscrupulous employers, particularly for those who are undocumented.

Recently, we’ve heard the Prime Minister boasting about ramping up workplace raids by almost 70% and have seen the government massively increase the use of temporary, sector-specific visas to plug skills shortages in sectors like agriculture and care. This approach reduces human beings to economic commodities, and pushes migrant workers into destitution, mistreatment, and can even make them undocumented.

But it doesn’t have to be this way. At JCWI, we call for everyone to have the right to work regardless of immigration status.

This means safe reporting pathways so migrant workers can report exploitation without fear of Immigration Enforcement action; for all work visas to come with the ability to change jobs easily, the option of renewal, and pathways to settlement; and for all migrants to have access to state support in times of need.

As migrants’ rights organisations, we cannot achieve this alone.

That’s why over the past year, we have worked alongside lived experience groups to build solidarity and collaboration between the migrant sector and trade unions with the simple message - migrants’ rights are workers’ rights. Just as our workforce would not function without migrants, neither would our labour movement.

Migrants have always been a vital part of our fight for workplace rights, often at great

personal risk, from the striking migrant women in the Grunswick dispute in 1976, to outsourced cleaners and security staff striking for better pay and rights with the IWGB union earlier this year. Despite this, migrants have historically been left behind by much of the trade union movement - particularly undocumented workers at the sharpest end of workplace precarity.

Now, the tide is starting to change. Over the past couple of years, it has been brilliant to see unions start to speak out more against hostile immigration policies, from the SWU taking a stand against age assessment on young asylum seekers, to the [PCS](#) and [Fire Brigades Union](#) bringing legal action against the Home Office's cruel plans to deport people seeking safety to Rwanda and house them on barges. We were proud to coordinate a Migrant Workers Pledge, signed by 22 unions [including SWU](#), which pledges to advance the rights of undocumented workers and calls for an end to temporary visa schemes and employers assisting with raids, and for safe reporting pathways to protect all workers.

We still have a long way to go.

As the government ramps up its hostility and racism, our solidarity across struggles must be stronger than ever. It's crucial that unions stand and organise with undocumented workers, listen to and work with lived experience groups, and speak out against the Hostile Environment at every opportunity.

As we know, resistance starts on the streets and in our communities. So whether that's through supporting our local anti-raids group, building strength within our unions or joining a solidarity group with people in immigration detention, together we can fight for a society where everyone can lead safe and fulfilled lives, with access to decent work and pay, regardless of what papers they hold or how they got here.

Visit JCWI's website for further information: <https://www.jcwi.org.uk>

If you would like to speak with Caitlin directly you can email: advocacy@jcwi.org.uk



BASW & SWU Statement on situation in Israel and Palestine/Gaza

Updated Statement
on 15th November 2023

Further to our joint statements released on [12th October](#) and on [27th October 2023](#), the British Association of Social Workers (BASW) and the Social Workers Union (SWU) want to further comment and call for more government and international action on the terrible escalation of violence and military action by the Israeli Defence Forces in Gaza following the Hamas terrorist atrocity against Israeli civilians on October 7th. Over 1200 Israelis were killed and over 200 people taken hostage by Hamas on that day the vast majority of which remain captive.

Since that time, hundreds of thousands of Palestinian people have suffered and continue to suffer continuing military attacks in Gaza by Israeli forces. This is causing indiscriminate harm to Palestinian civilians with no access to safe sanctuary.

The number of Palestinians killed in Gaza has reached over 11000 and is rising. A vast number of those killed have been children. Civilians have been killed indiscriminately in bombing of residential areas and public spaces and facilities.

The military offensive is also causing mass destruction of Gazan infrastructure and homes and the humanitarian crisis is worsening. Healthcare facilities are under attack and have run out of most essential supplies, and energy has been largely cut off.

BASW and SWU promote human rights and social justice ethics in social work in the UK and internationally. Through our statements we are adding our voice in speaking out on behalf of the profession, for the protection and rights of all innocent victims in this escalating conflict, for compliance with international law and for a political path to peace to be pursued for all Palestinians and Israelis. We believe there is no military solution to the decades-long conflict and human rights issues in Palestine and Israel.

The international political community, including our own UK governments and political parties, have a moral and political responsibility to do much more. We call on UK and international governments to press for an immediate ceasefire between the Israeli military and Hamas and to seek a political way forward that can promote the equal human and social rights of the Palestinian and Israeli populations. All efforts should be put into creating a durable solution for all in the region.

BASW is an active member of the [International Federation of Social Workers \(IFSW\)](#) and we support their statement in response to the situation, which can be viewed [here](#). SWU is an active member of the [General Federation of Trades Unions](#) and as a union affiliate SWU fully supports the [GFTU statement on Palestine](#) which builds on our statement produced with BASW. Together we will continue to work within respective bodies to advocate for social work's voice in this situation. Our thoughts are with all social work colleagues in the region.



The GFTU Executive Committee shows solidarity with Palestine during their meeting in November 2023

National Grief Awareness Week 2023: Hidden grief

It is generally the case that, when we think of grief, we associate it with bereavement - that is, with a death. Of course, death-related losses are indeed major sources of grief, and it would be foolish not to take account of that, whether in professional practice or in the workplace.

However, it is also very important to recognise that grief can arise from any loss situation, and not just those that involve bereavement. If we are not tuned in to this fact, then (at least) three detrimental consequences can arise:

1. We may not realise that someone is grieving and may therefore fail to support them at a crucial time when they are perhaps at their most vulnerable.
2. Someone's behaviour or emotional response may make perfect sense to us if we are aware that they are grieving, but without that awareness, we may attribute their response to a situation to other factors and thereby distort our understanding of what is going on.
3. Because the association between grief and death is such a strong one, people who are grieving non-death-related losses may not realise that they are grieving. This can then add to their sense of confusion, distress and vulnerability because they do not know what is happening to them, thereby making a difficult situation even more difficult.

Clearly, then, it is vitally important that we are attuned to issues of grief as they relate to any significant loss and not just those that arise as a consequence of bereavement.

A key concept here is that of 'cathexis'. This refers to an emotional investment and can apply to a relationship (where we love someone or have a close friendship with them), to a job, a place or indeed to anything that really matters to us. When we experience a loss



we lose that emotional investment - we experience an emotional void, a sense of emptiness that reflects the loss we have encountered. So, the more we love someone or something, the greater the sense of loss and emotional and spiritual emptiness - that is, of grief - we will experience. This reflects the long-established idea that grief is the price we pay for love.

People can grieve because they lose a skill (through injury, illness or disability, for example) or the opportunity to use it (through changes at work, for example). Grief can also arise when we lose a hope or aspiration when we realise something we really wanted is now beyond us. In fact, we can experience grief in relation to anything we put our heart into (cathexis).

Very often, knowing that grieving is what we are going through can be enough to make the situation manageable (albeit, difficult, painful and exhausting for the most part).

Whereas wrestling with the powerful emotions associated with grief without realising that we are grieving can be extremely challenging. We may even feel that we are going mad because we are having such a strong reaction (to a loss) but we are not sure why we feel the way we do because we have not made the link between the intense reaction we are having and the loss we have encountered.

We therefore need to be wary of 'hidden grief' - that is, very real and potentially overwhelming grief reactions that we do not connect to the underlying loss(es) that will have provoked such a reaction.

When we fully recognise the implications of the fact that grief is not just about death, we begin to realise that grief is far more common than

we generally realise and a factor (often a key factor) in the situations we encounter in working with people, whether in the caring professions or in the workplace generally or in our personal lives. Being 'grief aware' can therefore be not only helpful, but also, in many sets of circumstances, essential for developing an adequate understanding of the situation we are dealing with.



Dr Neil Thompson is an independent writer, educator and adviser and a visiting professor at the Open University, as well as a SWU ambassador. His books include *The Loss and Grief Practice Manual*, *The Social Worker's Practice Manual* and, with John McGowan, *How to Survive in Social Work*. Access to his Academy, with free learning resources, including his acclaimed *Manifesto for Making a Difference*, is available at www.NeilThompson.info.



The 2024 BASW Social Work Journalism Awards need you!

Following this year's successful launch of the [Social Work Journalism Awards](#), the British Association of Social Workers (BASW) is now looking forward to making next year's event in Edinburgh even better.

The BASW Social Work Journalism Awards are supported by SWU and build upon our joint work with Campaign Collective on the new [Guidelines on media reporting of social workers](#). This guidance and advice was developed last year through the SWU Campaign Fund after members of SWU came

forward with harrowing stories about the impact of poor media reporting about the profession, and it has been approved by press regulator IMPRESS and supported by Independent Press Standards Organisation (IPSO) and the National Union of Journalists (NUJ).

Award nominations

These awards are the first in the UK to recognise high quality reporting of social work in the media and are a part of the association's wider campaign, with which works in partnership with SWU to improve the public's perception of the social work profession.

The search for next year's winners has begun and we're asking the social work community to help by [nominating examples](#) of good journalism - and this year there is a new award for drama. The media play an important part in shaping the public's view of social work and by nominating good examples of journalism featuring our profession you are helping to promote more responsible, fair, and positive reporting.

Awards will be given in the ten categories listed below covering the period between 1st April 2023 and 31st March 2024.

The categories are:

- **Written journalism in national media (UK, England, Scotland, Northern Ireland, Wales)**
- **Written journalism in regional/local media**
- **Broadcast - national media (UK, England, Scotland, Northern Ireland, Wales)**
- **Broadcast - regional/local media**
- **Trade press**
- **Lived experience (coverage in any media that gives voice to the experiences of people who use social work and/or social care services)**
- **Podcast**
- **Drama - fiction//TV/film/radio featuring social work**

Shortlisted winners will be invited to an awards reception at BASW's annual conference in Edinburgh on 18th June 2024, where the winners will be announced.

You can [submit nominations through this webform](#) and find out more information about the awards [on the BASW website](#).

SWU reporting mechanism for negative media coverage

If any social workers spot media coverage which misrepresents the profession or reveals personal details of social workers, which may be in [breach of the guidelines SWU has published](#) they can now report them

directly to the Union and we will take action. You can submit links to, or images of, media coverage about social work that you are concerned about to: campaigns@swu-union.org.uk

Social work reporting guidelines

SWU and IMPRESS's reporting guidelines lay out the following principles:

1. Maintain accuracy and take care to report on cases involving vulnerable groups accurately and in accordance with other standards relating to legal - or potential future - legal proceedings. Journalists should consider whether their reporting makes unfair generalisations about social workers.
2. Assess risk to ensure that coverage of issues does not create harm to the public and to individuals by ensuring no social workers are individually named or identifiable as working on a particular case (unless authorised to do so by court proceedings).
3. Ensure right to privacy of social workers by only naming them in exceptional circumstances, such as where direct wrongdoing is proven.
4. Recognise social workers are not spokespeople or able to breach confidentiality so cannot defend themselves from allegations or misrepresentation, by responding to or correcting the record.
5. Avoid portraying law-breaking as acceptable, excusable or perpetrators as victims. Social services, social workers or other authorities are in no way to blame for the actions of those breaking the law.

IPSO has its own [editors' code of practice](#), which also includes standards on accurate reporting and respective privacy, as well as on discrimination, harassment and coverage of children and victims of sexual assault.

Recently IPSO has advised on [how social workers can seek its support and protection](#). IPSO has also published specific guidance on areas including reporting suicide, sexual offences and deaths and inquests.



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Trans Day of Remembrance

November 20th, 2023



SWU Social Workers Union

Today we honour the lives of all the trans and non-binary people who have been killed by anti-transgender violence and discrimination

GFTU Executive Committee member Julia Georgiou, who is General Secretary of the NHBC Staff Association and a member of the TUC's LGBT+ committee, shares her thoughts on this day of remembrance.

Remember Brianna Ghey - her 17th birthday would have been on the 7/11 had she not been killed in a Warrington park earlier this year.

Remember Alice Litman, who died while waiting over three years for the care which is likely to have saved her - a wait which was heavily criticised by the Coroner for West Sussex.

Our thoughts are with you and your families.

Remember too, the 26 trans and non-binary people murdered in the US since the last TDoR. Violent deaths which all could have been prevented with greater understanding and empathy from society and political leaders in particular.

Remember that LGBTQ+ people face growing risk around the world but notably in countries in central Europe, Russia, Middle Eastern countries, the US, and others.

Remember that Uganda has enacted the most horrific laws against

LGBTQ+ people this year, and other African nations are seeking to follow suit.

Remember that in 2017 Theresa May committed her Conservative Government to banning conversion therapy and improving trans rights.

Remember too that Boris Johnson tried to row back from protecting trans people from conversion therapy, only to be forced back by public opinion.

Remember that on the 7th of November Sunak & Co again failed our communities by not announcing legislation to ban this abhorrent practice for all LGBTQ+ people in the final King's Speech of this failed Government, opening the door for further torture while those in charge of our country pander to a minority of their own MPs.

Remember that trans and non-binary people have been present in society for thousands of years, without causing any problems or diminishing women's rights. That we stood at the forefront of Stonewall fighting for LGB

rights, before LGBTQ+ was the umbrella term. That we stood with miners on their picket lines in the 80s. That we stand with women in the fight for their rights to equal pay and conditions, safe spaces in the same way that we need all of these equalities.

On Trans Day of Remembrance 2023, **remember** that we're only human. Your friends, your siblings. Your children, your partners or your parents.

That all we ask is to be able to live freely and with dignity in an equal society without threat of ridicule, violence or death. To work in equal workplaces, for a fair week's wage. To receive treatment if that is what we seek, without years of waiting.

Remember.



Read the SWU statement in support of the transgender and non-binary community here:

<https://swu-union.org.uk/2023/02/swu-statement-in-support-of-the-transgender-and-non-binary-community>



Whilst all trans people in the UK (and beyond) experience numerous health inequalities, these can be exacerbated for older trans people. The health and social care needs of older trans people are often overlooked, but it's time for that to change. To support the health and social care workforce to understand trans people's needs, TransActual are offering some free *Focus On: Trans Health* webinars in January and April 2024.

For more information, to sign up or to request access to the recordings, go to: <https://transactual.org.uk/training>

Employee Assistance Programmes - do they work?

Employee Assistance Programmes provide access to counselling and other services for millions of workers every year to help support employee health and wellbeing. There has been a huge increase in the use of these programmes in recent years. But are they working?

The BBC is interested in hearing from people who have used these services with a view to understanding more about the effectiveness of the service and the outcomes for employees.

If you would like to speak to the production team, you can contact us - in confidence - on ella.rule@bbc.co.uk or on 07977855404 on signal or WhatsApp.



Event set to unite social work students behind bursaries campaign

Social work students and lecturers have been invited to an open event to discuss proposals for a fairer bursaries system in England



The proposals have been developed by the British Association of Social Workers (BASW) England and the Social Workers Union (SWU) following

snubs from both Conservative and Labour front benches to engage in discussion on reform for social work bursaries.

The recommended reforms would replace the current complex and fragmented system with a simplified and universal bursary system to ensure equitable access to financial support for all social work students in England.

Students will be given the opportunity to discuss the new proposals on **16th January 2024** and then sign up to take part in a campaign to call on politicians to agree to reform in the run up to the expected General Election next year.

BASW England states:

“The current bursaries system hinders access, creates disparities in support and is overly bureaucratic. These plans advocate for a simplified and universal bursary system which could be paid for mostly using existing budgets.

“We have argued for a universal bursary for all social work students in England alongside payment of tuition fees in full that mirrors the current system for medical students. To further simplify the system we need to see a user-friendly application process for the universal bursary and tuition fee support, minimising administrative burdens on universities and students.”

A previous [“open letter”](#) to the UK Secretaries of State for Health and Education set out arguments for

an end to the unique nature of hardships social work students face. Ministers [replied](#) expressing sympathy with the important role social work students play, but failing to agree to look at options for bursary reform.

[Three letters](#) to Labour front bench spokespeople including Wes Streeting and Andrew Gwynne have gone unanswered by the party.

John McGowan, General Secretary of the Social Workers Union, commented:

“Given the vital role that social work students play and the increasing social work recruitment crisis, you would have thought that politicians would be keen to work with us to develop proposals to reform the bursaries programme.

“We are disappointed that none were prepared to meet with students.

“These proposals are a positive step forward and, if students agree, we will provide them with assistance to campaign for reform of student bursaries through the SWU Campaign Fund.”

Students and lecturers can now sign up to the online event which will take place on **Tuesday 16th January at 6:30pm** so save the date and keep an eye on SWU’s social media and website. Click here to book your place: <https://www.basw.co.uk/events/can-bursaries-social-work-students-be-made-fairer>



SWU would like to send all our members warmest wishes for the winter season

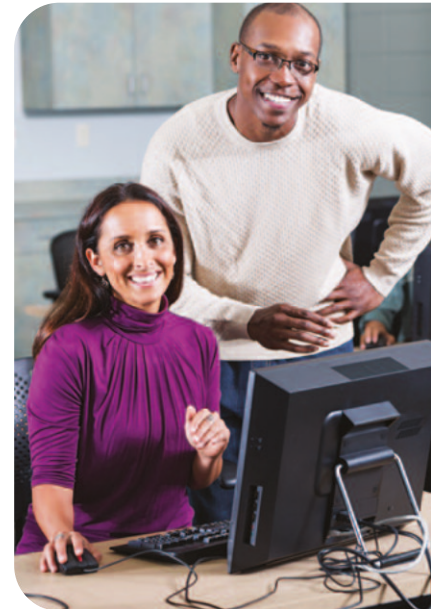
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Every year, the Social Workers Union skilled TU Officers help Social Workers with a range of different situations, from the small and easily resolved, to more significant and prolonged conduct issues. Disciplinary and grievance procedures, including representation at internal hearings - this is only guaranteed if you are a SWU member.

Remember - investigations into professional social work practice and allegations of misconduct - where this is done by your employer, representation is only guaranteed* if you are a member of SWU.

SWU sits on the National Executive of the General Federation of Trade Unions. Have a look at the access you get as a member of GFTU training and development. SWU is one of the fastest growing unions in the UK - be part of the progress.

Being part of a strong growing trade union is a vital and recognised way of successfully being part of the Trade Union movement. Help us campaign for better working conditions, pay and professional recognition. If you want to join SWU or learn more about becoming actively involved as a Union Contact get in touch: carol.reid@swu-union.org.uk or email SWU Admin: joanne.marciano@swu-union.org.uk



Belong to a Social Work union that:

- is lobbying MPs and Peers to improve working conditions for social workers.
- partners with organisations to support good working conditions and with opportunities to be active as a SWU Union Contact.
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- funds the Austerity Action Group and opportunities to get involved.

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