

A Personal Farewell After Ten Years as Your General Secretary



As I sit down to write this final message as your General Secretary, I find myself reflecting on what has been a brilliant ten-year journey. It is difficult to put into words the mixture of emotions I feel as I prepare to step

down from a role that has been such a significant part of my social work career and one that I have been honoured to hold on behalf of our members.

Ten years ago, when I accepted the responsibility of serving as the General Secretary of the Social Workers Union and voted in after being endorsed by the SWU Executive, I knew I was joining a very new union with a limited history, but we had a clear purpose of being the only specialist union for social workers. What I could not have fully appreciated at that time was the privilege it would be to work alongside so many committed, passionate and spirited social workers who dedicate themselves every day to supporting people, families and communities, often in the most challenging of circumstances.

Throughout my career, and particularly during my time as General Secretary, I have never lost sight of why social work

matters. Social work is a profession rooted in social justice, human rights, equality and compassion. Social workers stand beside people at some of the most difficult moments in their lives. They advocate for those whose voices are too often ignored and challenge systems and structures that create inequality and disadvantage. They do this not because it is easy, but because it is right.

Over the last decade, our profession has faced challenge after challenge. We have seen austerity measures impact communities and public services. We have witnessed increasing pressures on social workers, rising workloads, recruitment and retention difficulties, and growing complexity in the lives of the people we support. We have experienced a global pandemic that tested individuals, communities and public services in ways few could have imagined.

Yet through all of these challenges, our social work members continued to show resilience, professionalism and commitment. Time and again I have been inspired by members who have gone above and beyond for the people they serve, often while managing immense pressures themselves.

During my time serving two tenures, I have had the opportunity to visit workplaces, attend conferences, speak at events, participate in campaigns and meet social workers from every nation and region of the United Kingdom.

Wherever I have gone, I have encountered people whose commitment to social justice remains undiminished despite the obstacles they face. I have also been fortunate to have travelled outwith the UK and each journey has created a lasting memory.

SWU has continued to raise its profile within the wider trade union movement, and our 10-year membership of the General Federation of Trade Unions (GFTU) has played an important role in that growth. Throughout this period, I have actively contributed to the GFTU Executive and its campaigns, and I was recently elected to serve on its Management Committee as Vice President. This is a significant achievement and a great honour for both me and SWU, reflecting the growing influence and recognition of our union across the movement.

Those conversations have always reinforced my belief that the strength of our profession lies not only in our knowledge and skills but in our values. Social workers understand the importance of collective responsibility. We know that people achieve more when they are supported, empowered and connected. The same is true of trade unions.

The Social Workers Union has always been more than a union. It is a collective voice. It is a movement of professionals who recognise that standing together is far more effective than standing alone. Over the past ten years, I have been proud to witness the continued development of SWU. Together we have strengthened our position as the UK's specialist union for social workers. SWU provides BASW membership with the opportunity to join a trade union and receive trade union protection in the workforce, it has enhanced the A&R Trade Union offer, developed new partnerships and campaigns, and ensured that social workers have a strong and respected voice within both the profession and the wider trade union movement. These achievements have never been the work of one individual. They belong to our

members and the terrific members who have volunteered their time to be active on our National Executive who have provided leadership and direction.

Most importantly, they belong to every member who has chosen to support SWU, got active with us and who believes in the value of this union.

One of the aspects of this role that I have treasured most has been the opportunity to advocate not only for social workers but also for the values that underpin our profession. Throughout my time as General Secretary, I have sought to ensure that SWU remains a voice in the media. Whether challenging inequality, promoting anti-racist practice, supporting international solidarity, defending public services or speaking out against discrimination and exclusion, I have believed that our union should never be afraid to stand up for what is right.

Social work does not exist in isolation from society. The issues affecting our communities inevitably affect our profession. Poverty, inequality, inadequate housing, discrimination and social exclusion continue to shape the lives of the people we support. As social workers and trade unionists, we have a responsibility not only to respond to the consequences of injustice but also to challenge its causes. I am proud that SWU has consistently sought to do both.

As I prepare to leave office, I do so with confidence in the future of our union. The challenges facing social work remain significant, but so too are the opportunities. There has never been a greater need for a strong, independent voice for social workers. There has never been a greater need for solidarity, collective action and professional advocacy.

The future of SWU will be shaped by a new generation of members, activists and leaders. I have every confidence that they will continue to build upon the foundations that have been laid and ensure that our union remains a powerful force for good.

Although I am stepping down as General Secretary, I will always remain a proud supporter of SWU and of the social work profession. The friendships I have made, the experiences I have shared and the lessons I have learned during these ten years will stay with me forever.

To every member who has supported me, challenged me, encouraged me and worked alongside me, thank you. To every colleague who has contributed to the success of our union, thank you. To every social worker who continues to make a difference in the lives of others, thank you.

The privilege of serving as your General Secretary for the past decade is something I will always cherish. As I leave this role, my belief in

social work, in trade unionism and in the power of collective action remains as strong as ever.

The future belongs to those who continue to stand together, speak out and advocate for justice. I know SWU will continue to do exactly that.

I wish Dave Callow well in his new position and I am sure he will carry the baton well in what will be our 4th General Secretary.

In solidarity.

John McGowan
Outgoing General Secretary
Social Workers Union
j.mcgowan@swu-union.org.uk

SWU Social Workers Union Assignment World Social Work Day 2026 essay competition winners

WILL BE ANNOUNCED SOON

STAY TUNED

#SWUAssignment

WORLD SOCIAL WORK DAY
17 MARCH 2026
#WSWD2026



Thank you to everyone who has submitted an entry to the [SWU Assignment: World Social Work Day 2026 Essay Competition](#)!

Our judges **Allison Hulmes**, **Narinder Sidhu**, and **Ann Marie Hayes** who are marking this year's SWU Assignment essay competition are enjoying reading through a record number of responses from social work students and apprentices from across the UK.

Stay tuned for a winners announcement at the end of July, where up to four of the most compelling arguments will each win a £500 prize.



Ann Marie Hayes, Narinder Sidhu, and Allison Hulmes

Parliamentary monitoring report - June 2026



Campaign Focus - Key Issues and Debates in Parliament

1. Anti-poverty

- **Water poverty (HoL)** - in answer to a question on what proportion of households for which water [Bills](#) will be unaffordable by 2030, the Minister said, 'around one million.'
- **Westminster Hall Debate - State Pensioners personal allowance** - by 2024, pensioner poverty had fallen to just 12% for pensioner couples and 16% for pensioners overall. Poverty among pensioners is now lower than in any other age group in the UK. The debate concerned those at the bottom end of the income stream who are now creeping into the tax system and the need to protect and look after them in retirement.
- **House of Lords debate** - questions the economic implications of the Government's approach to welfare reforms and the current levels of youth unemployment. (NEET crisis)
- **PQ - on 'steps being taken to reduce the rate of stillbirth and neonatal deaths**, where the mother has recently lived or is living in temporary accommodation.' The minister's answer referred to the government's child poverty strategy and 'ending the practice of discharging newborn babies into bed and breakfasts or other unsuitable shared accommodation.'
- **PQ - on steps being taken to 'reduce the number of households affected by the benefit cap.'** The minister's answer, 'Entering work remains a key route out of poverty and the Department is driving forward labour market interventions that will deliver a step-change in support to help customers to enter and progress in work, including through our Get Britain Working reforms.'

- **PQ - estimate of ‘the number of households at risk of fuel poverty** in the current year.’ Minister’s answer ‘an estimated 8.4% of households (2.13 million) in England are in fuel poverty in 2026.’
- **PQ - on nutritional quality of free school meals** - they are being extended to all children from households in receipt of Universal Credit pulling 100,000 children out of poverty. Changes proposed include increasing fibre, reducing sugar and further restricting foods higher in fat, sugar and salt.

2. Workforce - working conditions, recruitment and retention, sharing research

- **Community Care report** - [Councils using fewer agency social workers on back of rules](#) - Community Care examines how well the rules are working and what the impact has been on social workers. (Includes quote from SWU)

3. Social care reform - Casey Commission (Independent Commission on Adult Social Care, private sector funding, and Artificial Intelligence (AI))

- **Business and Trade Committee** - evidence session on AI, business and the future of the workforce that specifically mentioned social work. A Unison witness described AI as both a helpful tool and a source of risk in social work, with transcription tools highlighted as helpful, but with serious concerns about mistakes, liability, training gaps, and lack of regulation. Most benefits were gained when workers are involved from the start, not treated as an afterthought. Concerns that liability is unclear and that workers are already being disciplined for not catching AI errors.
- **HoL** - [Statement: Enduring Relationships Strategy for Children’s Social Care](#) - (children’s social care reform programme) the Minister said the reforms are intended to reset the culture of social work so that: “Children’s social work must prioritise relationships... the core purpose of practice, the lens through which every professional judgement is made.”
- **Casey Commission** - [May newsletter](#) focused on Cross-party engagement and constituency visits.
- **Public Accounts Committee (PAC) - Financial sustainability of children’s care homes in England** - the government rejected the PAC’s recommendation that DfE should commit to reducing the number of unregistered care homes to zero by the end of 2027. The [Chair of the Public Accounts Committee wrote back](#) asking for a greater sense of urgency. [A response from the Permanent Secretary was received on 8th June](#) setting out a more detailed timeline of action.
- **Health and Social Care Committee - Health Bill** - introduced on 14th May - [SEND, mental health and prevention overlooked in NHS reforms, say MPs preparing amendments to Health Bill](#).

Parliamentary Business that may affect Social Workers

Name	Inquiry /stage	Key dates/Action
Public Accounts Committee	Financial sustainability of adult hospices in England	Govt response published 1st June
Public Accounts Committee	Financial sustainability of children's care homes	Letter from the Permanent Secretary published 8 th June
Education Select Committee	Children and Young People's Mental Health	Oral evidence sessions Written evidence online
Education Select Committee	Deliver the Child Poverty Strategy	Oral evidence sessions
Education Select Committee	Early Years: Improving Support for Children and Families	Oral evidence sessions
Health and Social Care Committee	Community Mental Health Services	Awaiting next steps if any
Health and Social Care Committee	Inquiry - The first 1000 days of life	Awaiting next steps if any
Housing, Communities and Local Government Committee	Inquiry - Housing Conditions in the Social Rented Sector	Awaiting next steps if any

Social Media

If you have not done so then please follow us on Social Media - we post 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:

Website: <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>

Bluesky: <https://bsky.app/profile/swu-uk.bsky.social>

Summer listening: “Who you gonna call?”



Let's Talk Social Work podcast meets the BASW/SWU A&R Team.

Social workers sometimes need help too. Whether it's to resolve a workplace conflict, navigate a fitness to practice referral, manage complex or difficult cases, or to seek advice on an employment matter, knowing where to turn when facing professional challenges is critical.

The temptation might be to go it alone, but doing so can be overwhelming, stressful and burdensome, taking a heavy toll on mental health and

wellbeing. This isn't good at any time, and especially when you're also trying to fight for the best outcomes for those you're supporting through your practice.

That's where the [BASW/SWU Advice and Representation \(A&R\) service](#) comes in. A team of social work qualified professionals holding a unique array of expertise and understanding of the social work profession. They provide invaluable advice and representation for employment and regulatory issues, including workplace employment law matters and fitness to practice processes, supporting BASW and SWU members encountering unknown, worrying or difficult situations.

This podcast episode is dedicated to exploring the various ways the A&R team can assist social workers across the UK. Jonny Adamson is joined by two experienced A&R Officers, Lynne Gargiulo and Lisa Fitzpatrick. They cover a host of varied areas in this one-hour episode from workplace rights and trade unionism to promoting better wellbeing at work, the cost-of-living pressures facing professionals, and how we can create overall healthier working environments.

Listen here: <https://basw.co.uk/training-cpd/lets-talk-social-work-podcast>

Guidance sheets for BASW/SWU members

From the day you join you will have access to 50+ guidance sheets created by the BASW/SWU A&R Team which may assist you in resolving a current issue or managing the immediate problem and by providing an overview of what to expect from the process. The sheets cover a wide range of employment and regulatory processes as well as tips on how to approach certain situations or to prepare for meetings.

BASW/SWU members can access these guidance sheets on the BASW website:

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

New research suggests a 4-day work week would result in a significant improvement to disabled peoples' inclusion at work

Switching to a 32-hour working week with no loss of pay would improve health, wellbeing and long-term employment sustainability for disabled workers.

Researchers with **Disability Rights UK, Patchwork Hub and the 4 Day Work Week Foundation** have released new research which indicates that switching to a 32-hour working week with no loss of pay would improve health, wellbeing and long-term employment sustainability for Disabled workers.

The 32-hour week would be a genuine reduction in hours with different levels of flexibility depending on staff choice, but with no loss of pay. This is distinct from practises of compressed working weeks or uniform practices.

Benefits relating to health, work-life balance, and career progression are garnered, the report suggests, through giving Disabled workers greater control over working patterns, which in turn allows people to manage impairments, energy-limiting conditions, medical appointments and caring responsibility while maintaining and potentially improving productivity.

The campaign makes the following recommendations to Employers for implementing a Four-Day working week:

1. Ensure genuine reduction in working hours.
2. Keep flexibility at the core by co-producing design and evaluation plans with DDPOs and Disabled workers.
3. Protect part-time workers from disadvantages. Explicit design and consultation with part-time staff is essential.

4. Conduct workload reviews for all Disabled workers before implementation of a four-day week.
5. Invest in four-day week pilots combined with accessibility, good technology and hybrid working.
6. Embed the four-day week in any Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Strategy.
7. Tailor your approach to organisation size by working with DDPOs and Disabled workers.
8. Collect data to monitor impact. There is a need to explicitly monitor work intensity and collect data by impairment type and neurodivergent status in pilots in a way that is sensitive to employees, that builds trust and demonstrates a commitment to disability inclusion. Break down findings by disability type, neurodivergence, gender, ethnicity, age, caring status, contract type (part-time/freelance/self-employed) and seniority.
9. Model the effects of a four-day week on the disability pay gap, recruitment of Disabled people and organisational costs. This modelling could calculate: The immediate impact on the organisation. The long-term impact as the four-day week becomes embedded.

Ensure four-day week pilots never water down rights to individual reasonable adjustments. Instead, they can create a more enabling baseline, making it easier for adjustments to work: less fatigue, fewer clashes between medical appointments and work, more energy to advocate for and implement adjustments.

You can read the full briefing [here](#)

SWU will see you at The Social Work Show Manchester

Join us on 28th September at The Manchester Deansgate Hotel for the UK's largest social work and social care event bringing together professionals, expert speakers, and leading organisations from across the sector. This free event runs from 9.30am - 4.30pm and you are welcome to arrive at any time throughout the day.

Here's a glimpse of what the day will involve:

- Networking with colleagues and a brilliant range of exhibitors
- Up to 40 insightful seminars and interactive workshops
- Employers sharing their current job vacancies
- A full day of free CPD

Whether you work in children and families services, adult social care or mental health, this is an unmissable event. The programme will have seminars for visitors at all levels of their career.

Register for your free ticket here: <https://www.compassjobsfair.com/Events/The-Social-Work-Show/Book-Tickets>



Discounted legal services for SWU members.



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A&R Team Digest - What to Expect from Fitness to Practice Hearings

BASW/SWU Advice & Representation (A&R) Officer, Laura Sheridan answers commonly asked questions about the fitness to practice process.

What to expect and how to approach them

When your regulator decides that your case needs to proceed to a full fitness to practise hearing, this naturally triggers huge stress and anxiety. For most regulated professionals, this is the first experience they have had of this kind. The process is daunting and complicated.

What happens in the lead up to the hearing?

The regulator will usually issue some case management documents, to establish your availability, whether you plan on calling any witnesses and what your response is to the allegations. You do not have to provide any response to the allegations at this point and can choose to respond once you have received 'full disclosure'.

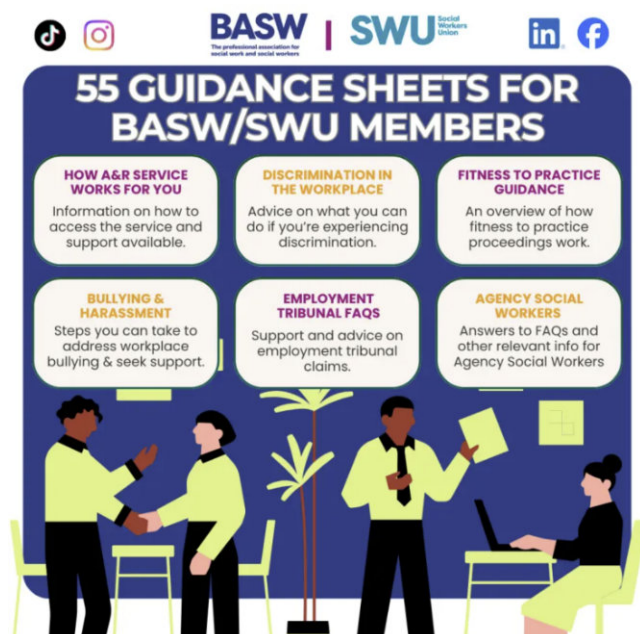
Once these documents are filled in, a date will normally be set for the hearing and 'case management directions' will be sent to the parties. These will specify when the regulator must disclose their case to you and when you need to respond to this disclosure by.

Can I get advice and representation from BASW?

Only a trade union can guarantee representation in hearings before an employer. Under section 10 of the Employment Relations Act 1999, members of the Social Workers Union (SWU) have the right to be accompanied by a SWU Trade Union Official to certain workplace meetings such as a disciplinary or grievance hearing.

As the British Association of Social Workers (BASW) is not a Trade Union, members of BASW without union membership do not have this right.

SWU works with BASW to guarantee our joint members the legal entitlement of representation in employers' hearings. Our skilled A&R team understands the issues you face and is able to advise and represent you at regulatory councils. Opting in to SWU membership means you get all the benefits of the trade union alongside BASW, your professional association - all under one roof.



If you are a BASW member, our Advice and Representation service is available for any issues that arise a month after you joined. We ask members to get in touch as soon as they know they have been referred to their regulator - the sooner we are aware of it, the better the advice and representation we can offer.

Members who have just joined are not eligible for representation but can access a range of [guide sheets](#) written by our team to assist with providing a response to the regulator and how to approach a hearing.

They also include advice for managing common workplace issues that might crop up.

What is 'disclosure' and what do I need to do in response?

Disclosure is when the regulator provides you with all the evidence that they plan to use in your case. This will usually include a statement of case, statements from witnesses that the regulator intends to call and a bundle of supporting documentary evidence that they plan to refer to during the hearing.

You need to read all disclosure documents thoroughly and ensure that you are fully aware of the evidence against you. You should provide a response to the allegations and send the regulator any evidence that you plan on using to support your case. You should also provide statements from any witnesses that you plan on calling to give evidence at the hearing.

What should I include in my response statement?

This is very dependent on whether you are admitting or denying the allegations. It is highly recommended that you get advice on your response statement, as the contents of this statement can strongly affect the outcome of your case.

What happens at the hearing?

A panel will hear your case. Some regulators have a legally qualified member of the panel; others use a separate legal adviser who advises the panel on the law and procedure.

The regulator will present their case first and will call their witnesses. You can ask questions of the witnesses. Following this, it is your turn to present your case. The regulator and the panel will ask you questions relating to the allegations and your response statement. Both parties will be given the opportunity to summarise their case to the panel in the form of a 'closing statement'.

When both parties have given their evidence, the panel will retire to reach a decision on whether the allegations have been proven. If the allegations are not proven, the hearing will end at this point. If they are found proven, there are further states for the panel to consider. They will first

consider 'misconduct and impairment'. This means they will be considering whether your failings amounted to 'misconduct' (a serious professional error) and whether your fitness to practise is **currently** impaired. If they consider that you have remediated, they may not find impairment. If impairment is found, the panel will then go on to consider what sanction they issue.

What sanction might I get?

This is very dependent on the seriousness of the allegations and the level of insight and remediation the panel find that you have demonstrated. The panel can decide to take no further action, issue a warning, put conditions on you being able to practice your profession or suspend you from the register for a period. They can also remove you from the register.

Do I have to attend the hearing?

We strongly advise that you do! Attending a hearing is stressful, particularly when you are giving evidence. But if you don't attend, the panel has the right to view this negatively and it will affect the outcome in your case. The hearing is your opportunity to present your case - if you don't attend, you won't get to do this and the panel will make a determination on the evidence before them alone.

Why Join BASW?

Joining your professional association not only provides you with employment protection and peace of mind that you'll be supported if you are under investigation, but it also opens doors to an array of additional resources, coaching, mentoring, training and networks that will help you to advance your career.

- **Protection:** £5 million professional indemnity insurance cover tailored to your social work role and experience level.
- **Advice and Representation:** Access BASW/SWU Advice and Representation, a team of qualified social workers for professional/regulatory help.
- **Professional Support Service:** Confidential 1-1 support and coaching service for social workers and students.
- **Training and CPD:** Develop your knowledge and skills and carve out your career path with free and discounted CPD.

[Click here to discover how BASW membership can support you.](#)

Why Join SWU?

SWU works with BASW to protect social work professionals - speaking as social workers, for social workers. Having a professional association and trade union together is important for the social work profession. We aim to be the best trade union for social workers.

SWU Trade Union Officials in the Advice & Representation service work throughout the UK and provide representation at internal hearings for disciplinary and grievance procedures, and employer investigations into practice and misconduct allegations. Our team provides professional, swift, practical representation.

SWU also offers members:

- Free access to the majority of the [GFTU Education Programme](#) training courses and discounts on professional development courses.
- Funding and support for activism through the [SWU Campaign Fund](#).
- [Union Contact](#) training and support to promote membership and activism in workplaces, universities, and beyond.
- Eligibility to apply to sit on the [SWU Executive Committee](#) which plays a key part in setting the union's direction and overseeing its aims and mission.
- The invitation to contribute to the monthly [SWU Newsletter](#) on topics relevant to social work, trade unionism, and activism.
- [Member offers](#) including a free financial health check and 10% discount on legal fees.

BASW members can opt into SWU membership at a discounted rate. [Click here for more information.](#)

We Stand with Migrant and Racialised Communities in Belfast

Coordinated by the Migrants' Rights Network, this statement of solidarity with those affected by the racist violence in Northern Ireland calls for collective action against anti-migrant hate and violence.

For over a year, warnings about paramilitary links to the far-right and police inaction were ignored. This is a crisis point. The racist, paramilitary-backed pogroms in Belfast cannot be met with government silence or standard political platitudes.

The Social Workers Union and over 135 organisations have already signed the Migrants' Rights Network collective letter demanding four non-negotiable actions from Stormont and No. 10.

The community belongs here. Far-right violence does not. We are demanding immediate accountability and systemic change:



We stand in full solidarity with migrant and racialised communities in Belfast who have been subjected to coordinated racist violence: homes burned, families terrorised, people driven from their neighbourhoods by organised far-right and loyalist paramilitary groups.

This is a pogrom. We will not use softer language.

We stand with Anaka Collective, No One Left Behind, CATU Belfast, End Deportations Belfast, Migrants' Rights Network, and every community organisation and volunteer who acted last night where the state did not.

This violence was not spontaneous. It was built - by paramilitary networks with decades of practice displacing marginalised communities, by political institutions that ignored warnings, and by a political culture in Westminster and Stormont that has deliberately weaponised anti-migrant hatred for electoral gain. Racism and anti-migrant hate are not "legitimate concerns." They are the kindling, last night was yet another fire.

We endorse these demands:

- An immediate end to anti-migrant rhetoric from No. 10 and Stormont
- A new, independent review into paramilitarism in Northern Ireland
- A full, independent panel-led inquiry into recurring paramilitary-backed far-right violence in the North of Ireland
- Assurances that the actions of one individual will not be used to collectively punish and surveil migrant communities

To every migrant and racial justice organisation that has not yet spoken: silence is not neutrality. Stand with racialised people and migrants in the North of Ireland. Loudly. Publicly. Now.

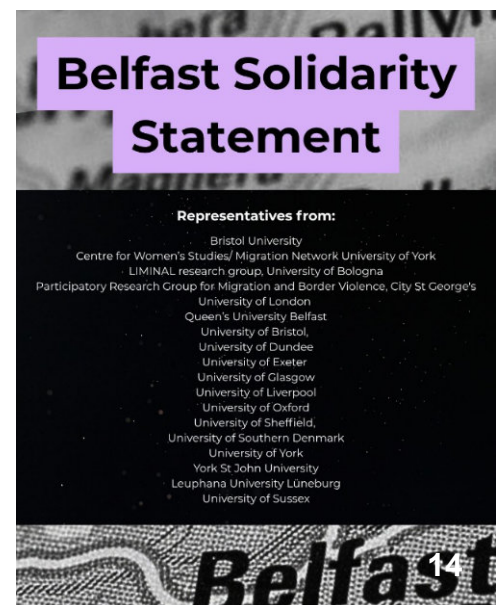
The communities being attacked belong here. We keep each other safe. We are not strangers.

We are demanding immediate accountability and systemic change. The community belongs here. Far-right violence does not.

Organisations and individuals can now sign the collective letter. Demand justice with us.

Sign the letter of solidarity with Migrant and Racialised Communities in Belfast here:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeSOjkgi3cFE3oyKzc8FKRFaAXsECU6mS5H1bHss5O--KcBg/viewform>



Scotland's care system emergency

The children's care system is in a state of emergency with vulnerable children in danger and staff being pushed beyond breaking point. This must not be normalised.

On 12th June [Scotland's 32 Chief Social Work Officers \(CSWOs\) issued a joint statement](#) that “the capacity of the care system is saturated, and it is only thanks to the incredible efforts of Scotland's carers, social work staff and other professionals that we have been able to prevent the system collapsing entirely.” All the CSWOs - every strategic and professional lead for social work in each of the local authorities in Scotland - have made it clear that urgent action is needed from Scottish Government and council leaders to address the acute shortage of suitable homes and carers for children who are unable to remain in the care of their family.

The CSWOs bluntly state that placement shortage is increasing the “risk of harm to children from physical, sexual, emotional abuse or exploitation and neglect, as well as placing undue and unsustainable pressure on the people entrusted with keeping Scotland's children, young people and adults safe.” The care system is overstretched, the emergency placement measures that are being taken are not sustainable, and these emergency measures must not be normalised:

- Social workers are having to take children home as there are no other safe options.
- Newborn babies are remaining in the care of hospital nurses.
- Children as young as three years old are being placed in residential homes with young adults.
- Older children are sleeping on the sofas of foster carers and residential homes.
- Expensive specialist options are being used for children who do not have high levels of need.
- Some foster carers have not had a break in many months.

Community Care has reported that Siobhian Brown, who became minister for children, young people and The Promise after last month's Scottish elections, [said she took the issues raised by the statement "very seriously"](#) and has asked to meet with Social Work Scotland "as a priority to discuss their concerns". The Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) - the local government leadership body - has recognised and shares the CSWOs' concerns.

Social Workers Union (SWU) General Secretary John McGowan who is a SSSC registered Scottish Social Worker said, “Social workers in Scotland are going above and beyond and I applaud their compassion and dedication. Despite [poor working conditions](#), social workers are regularly stepping in to support people in crisis by [personally funding basic items for people they support](#) and opening their homes to children with nowhere to go. On top of this, social workers are working an average of 11 additional hours of unpaid overtime per week.

“However, it never should have come to this. Social workers should not be forced to choose between a child's safety and putting themselves in a position of risk. The government must take its duty of care to the social care workforce seriously and invest in the care system to keep children, young people, and adults safe. The system's reliance on the shadow labour of social workers must end.”

SWU shares the CSWO's concerns and agrees with comments from the Scottish Association of Social Work (SASW) that [this must be a catalyst for change](#):

The statement by all 32 of Scotland's Chief Social Work Officers last week highlighted the scale of the crisis in children's care. A report from social work leaders warning of social workers taking children home because no alternative safe places can be found, of children being placed with young adults, and expensive independent providers being used out of necessity rather than assessed need, must be a catalyst for change.



The dedication of the workforce to those they support is clear, but social workers having to take children home because there is nowhere else for them to go cannot be normalised. Alternative care placements are needed to protect children who are not safe at home, where these do not exist, children can remain in unsafe homes. This environment has potentially catastrophic consequences for those children.

For Scotland's children and young people to be in this position over six years since The Promise was made is a stark indication of how far we are from our national ambitions. Making The Promise was easy, but keeping it is proving much more difficult.

We recognise that the Minister is new in post and has met with colleagues from Social Work Scotland within just a few days of the statement being made. That, and the commitment to finding solutions with the sector, is welcome and a positive first step. However, this engagement must be followed by concrete action to support children and young people.

The immediate needs of children must be the priority, and we must support the profession's leadership to provide for them in the short-term. In the long-term, there must be significant changes to resourcing and funding for services to protect and care for vulnerable children and young people.

FORMAL NOTICE

SWU 2026 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

FRIDAY 27TH NOVEMBER 2026

The 2026 Annual General Meeting of the Social Workers Union will be held online and joining instructions can be found at <https://swu-union.org.uk/2025/10/swu-annual-general-meeting-2026>

As per SWU rules, the SWU Executive shall have power to make and provide a provision for 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:

01-10-2026	Deadline for receipt of motions
05-11-2026	Notice of any proposed amendment to rules given in writing to members
19-11-2026	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 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

SWU survey finds unacceptable pressures on social work departments in UK universities

Lack of sufficient funding is threatening the future of the profession.



Survey results released by the [Social Workers Union](#) (SWU) today highlight alarming pressures facing social work departments across UK universities, raising significant concerns about the future of social work education and, ultimately, the social work profession itself.

The survey of social work academics in UK university-based programmes, revealed that **70%** of respondents reported a decrease in funding for their social work departments over the past year. This has translated into a challenging environment for students and educators alike, **with over half (57%)** of respondents saying that teaching staff in their department have faced redundancies. Additionally, **22%** reported

long-term vacancies among social work staff, which has exacerbated the challenges in delivering quality education for students.

Student experience and retention is an additional worry for teaching staff, with **78%** of respondents stating that some students have left their programmes without completing their course and **83%** reporting concerns about either the working conditions, or the quality, of work placements for their students.

Most concerning is that **52%** of respondents fear their social work course may face closure in the near future, a reality that could have dire consequences for the profession and lead to a shortage of qualified social workers across the country. The recent [changes surrounding student visa holders](#) have further complicated matters, with **70%** of staff surveyed stating these changes have impacted their programmes over the past year.

The stress of this situation has also taken a toll on social work department staff. **26%** said they don't feel valued at all in their roles, and **96%** reported experiencing negative emotional responses such as crying or feeling unwell due to their jobs over the last year. Sadly, **78%** stated that their job has worsened their mental health or caused its collapse within the same time period.

John McGowan, General Secretary of the Social Workers Union (SWU), said:

"Social work educators are currently operating under unacceptable pressure due to insufficient funding and support, which is affecting both the quality of education for students and the future of the profession.

"The role of social work in our society cannot be overstated, without adequate investment in university-based programmes and the academics who lead them, we risk jeopardising the very foundation of social care. Without immediate action, the long-term repercussions will be dire for staff, students and the vulnerable people who rely on the invaluable support of social workers."

Allison, a social work academic and teacher at a UK university, said:

"In the last 18 months our staffing team has been cut by 40% through voluntary exit. Years of experience have just gone and the volume of work left

behind has not reduced. We've lost vital professional service staff, creating even more work and pressure on academic staff which is simply unsustainable. As a female academic who is also neurodivergent and from an ethnic minority, I feel even more vulnerable and unable to manage the multiple spinning plates."

Bernadette, another social work academic and teacher at a UK university, added:

"The increasing use of fixed-term contracts in social work education has implications not only for staff, but for the profession itself, shaping how we sustain values, continuity, and commitment in training future practitioners. On a personal level, this uncertainty can make it harder to remain ambitious and fully invest in long-term goals, even while staying dedicated to the work. It raises important questions about how we nurture a confident, stable academic workforce that can both thrive and drive the future of social work."

BASW and SWU publish updated online safety guide for UK social workers

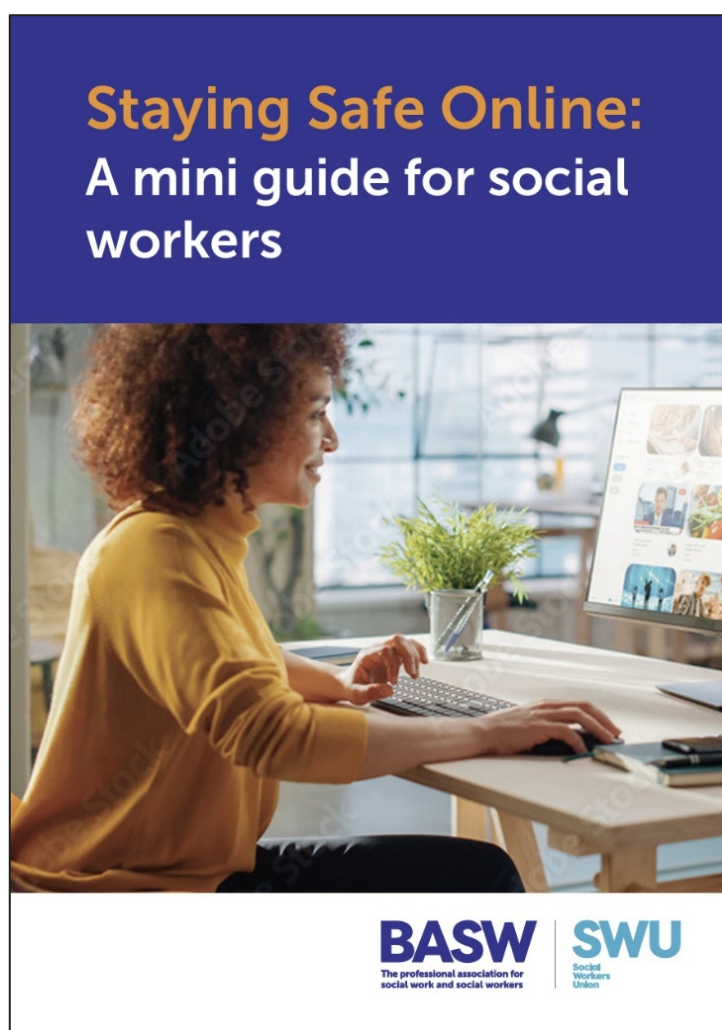
Staying Safe Online: A Mini Guide for Social Workers

Social workers are increasingly being targeted through doxxing, which is the deliberate publication of personal information online without consent, often with the intention to intimidate, harass, or undermine confidence in professional practice.

Given the sensitive nature of social work, practitioners must take proactive steps to protect their digital footprint. This guidance outlines practical measures to reduce risk and ensure personal and professional safety online.

This free guide can be used by social workers across the UK. You are welcome to download this guide and share it with your team and colleagues.

Download your free copy from the SWU website: <https://swu-union.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026-BASW-SWU-Staying-Safe-Online-A-mini-guide-for-social-workers.pdf>



A black and white photograph of a man and a woman walking a dog on a hill. The man is wearing a dark vest over a sweater and jeans, and the woman is wearing a light-colored sweater and a dark jacket. They are both smiling and holding hands. A large, light-colored dog is walking on a leash to the right. The background shows a hilly landscape with trees and a body of water in the distance.

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The Social Workers' Benevolent Trust

Positive action where it's most needed.

The Social Workers' Benevolent Trust (SWBT) offers financial help to social workers in times of hardship, for example when experiencing sickness, bereavement, family difficulties or sudden catastrophe. The objective of this UK-wide charity is the financial relief of persons who have been engaged in professional social work, and their dependants, who are in need of such relief.



The trustees consider grants at their bi-monthly meetings, and applicants need to complete an application form if they wish to be considered for a grant. More information about the Trust, its work and downloadable applications forms can be found here: <https://www.swbt.uk>

The SWBT was established as an independent charity in 1971 on the initiative of the British Association of Social Workers (BASW). It remains independent of BASW, with its own trustees.

The Social Workers' Educational Trust

SWET aims to assist qualified, registered 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.

The Social Workers' Educational Trust (SWET) provides grants of up to £500 to individuals, and up to £1000 to assist team learning. The Trustees consider grant applications at three meetings each year (usually February, June and October). 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. More information about the Trust, its work and downloadable applications forms can be found here: <https://socialworkerseducationaltrust.org.uk>



SWET was established as an independent charity in 1972 on the initiative of the British Association of Social Workers (BASW). It remains independent of BASW, with its own trustees.

If you have any questions about either Trust which doesn't seem to be covered by the website information, please email Helen Randle at:

policyadmin@basw.co.uk

Rising to the Challenges

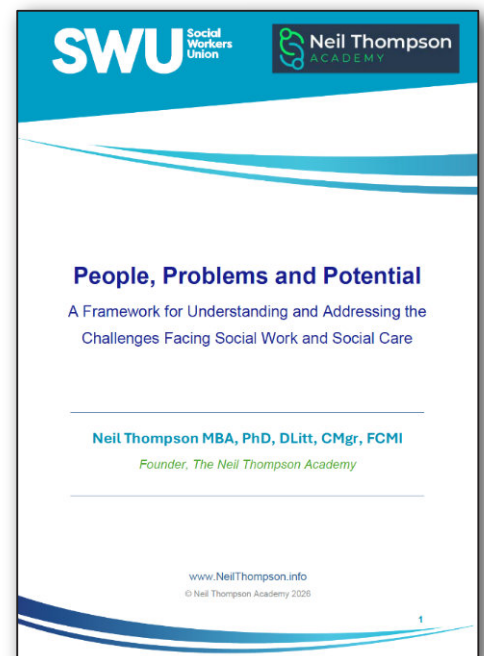
Social work and social care are under more pressure than ever. SWU Ambassador Dr Neil Thompson offers a framework for making sense of it - and makes a case for the kind of leadership development our field actually needs.

Let's face it, social work and social care are not in the best of places these days. There have always been difficulties and challenges - that is the nature of the work - but the modern scene takes us well beyond the familiar. The problems and the barriers to progress have multiplied, and they will not resolve themselves.

John McGowan and I set out some of the reasons for this in our book [How to Survive in Social Work](#) (Thompson and McGowan, 2024) and I explore similar themes in my [Facing the Challenges video](#) (Thompson, 2025). The feedback on both has been very positive - but the underlying issues remain a serious concern. We still have a long way to go.

More recently, working with SWU, I have produced a report that examines the situation through the lens of my 3Ps framework: where there are People, there will be Problems - but there will also be Potential. It is a simple idea but a powerful one, and it has fitted every stage of my career - as a social worker, manager, educator, consultant and writer. It keeps three things in view at once: treating people as people, taking problems and their consequences seriously and never losing sight of the potential and how to realise it. It also sits naturally with what trade unionism is all about.

The report (Thompson, 2026) sets out the challenges facing all of us in social work and social care and offers the 3Ps as a practical way of making sense of a complex picture. There are no magic solutions on offer - but there is plenty of food for thought to take the conversation further and deeper.



SWU members can read the full report at [https://swu-union.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/SWU-Neil Thompson - People Problems Potential 2026.pdf](https://swu-union.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/SWU-NeilThompson - People Problems Potential 2026.pdf).

The leadership gap we cannot ignore

One concern the report draws out has been on my mind a good deal over the past year or two: the state of leadership development in our field. Many managers in social work and social care have had little or no training in management and leadership. Others have had a great deal - but, in my experience, much of it has been 'generic'. By that I mean it was designed with commercial enterprises in mind - businesses, rather than public or personal services. Having reviewed a wide range of such training and spoken to many people who have been through it, I have reached a clear conclusion: too much of it is simply not fit for purpose. It does not recognise - let alone address - the distinctive challenges intrinsic to our work, moral distress being just one example.

These are demanding times and they call for strong leadership. But while the development on offer to our managers keeps

overlooking the very concerns that define our work - concerns that business-focused training was never built to handle - the people in key positions will remain poorly equipped to wrestle with the complexity they face. Unless we change our focus and make room for learning and development that makes sense in our world - our professional world - we will keep struggling to make real inroads into the challenges ahead.

This is precisely the gap I established the Neil Thompson Academy to address: leadership and management development designed for our field rather than borrowed from the commercial world. If the picture I have painted here rings true, it is well worth exploring what is now available.

References

Thompson, N. and McGowan, J. (2024) *How to Survive in Social Work*, 2nd edn, London, Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Thompson, N. (2025) *Facing the Challenges* (video): <https://vimeo.com/1047476534/c6bda4515e?share=copy>

Thompson, N. (2026) *People, Problems and Potential: A Framework for Understanding and Addressing the Challenges Facing Social Work and Social Care*, Birmingham, SWU.



Dr Neil Thompson is the Director of Studies at the Neil Thompson Academy, providers of online learning, social care-specific Chartered Management Institute qualifications and an online Centre of Excellence for leaders of all kinds. He is a SWU Ambassador and a Visiting Professor at the Open University. His recent books include *Anti-racist Practice* (2nd edn, 2026) and *Values-based Practice* (with Bernard Moss, 2nd edn, 2026), both published by Routledge. The Academy website is at www.NeilThompson.info.

SWU joins the Cliff Edge Coalition NI

SWU is proud to join over 100 organisations from across Northern Ireland that make up the Cliff Edge Coalition.

This coalition came together in 2018 to campaign to sustain and strengthen crucial welfare reform mitigations. These mitigations were first agreed by the Northern Ireland Executive in 2016 and were designed to alleviate some of the harshest impacts of the Westminster welfare reform agenda.

As the mitigations were only due to run until April 2020, the impending 'cliff edge' meant that many households in Northern Ireland would abruptly lose vital support. Following campaigning by the Coalition, the NI Assembly legislated to:

- ✓ Indefinitely retain the mitigations for the Social Sector Size Criteria (Bedroom Tax)
- ✓ Close the loopholes which had prevented many claimants from accessing financial assistance through the mitigation scheme
- ✓ Extend the Benefit Cap mitigations until 2028

A renewed campaign

The Cliff Edge Coalition is now calling for further measures which are urgently needed to strengthen the current benefit system in Northern Ireland.

What are we asking for and why does it matter?

We want to see the mitigations package strengthened to protect people and

families from the harsh impacts of new welfare challenges and in light of the current cost of living crisis.

Our three new asks are to:

- ✓ Resolve the five-week wait in Universal Credit
- ✓ Remove the two-child limit

- ✓ Provide support for private renters affected by the Local Housing Allowance

More details about the new campaign are outlined in this [briefing paper](#).



Safeguarding is everybody's responsibility

Safeguarding children is a collective responsibility, not just the duty of social workers. As a social worker myself for 12 years, I've seen how often the blame is placed on our shoulders whenever a child dies and serious case review is conducted. Yet, we never work in isolation; we're part of a network of professionals and services striving to protect children.

Publicly naming individual social workers in cases undermines the entire profession and adds to the stigma that makes this work even more challenging. It's important to remember that we are often managing high caseloads and limited resources, working extensive hours to keep children safe. When a tragedy occurs, it is a tragic event that reflects on the collective responsibility we all share.

We need to continue to emphasise that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and that should continue to be upheld in practice by referring to the government's 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' guidance.

I know that many social workers right now may feel fearful and question whether they want to remain in the profession. But it's crucial that we stay strong in our practice, continue to advocate, remain professionally curious, and not lose faith in the work we are doing to safeguard children, young people, and families even when public scrutiny is intense.

As always, I will continue to advocate for our profession. I know how hard we're working, and I work alongside social workers who give their all. I'll continue to represent social workers in all forums, ensuring that people understand what we do and pushing back against the stigma. And as always, I'll represent.

*Kind regards,
Nana*



Nana Yabbey-Hagan is a Qualified Social Worker for Children and Families of 12 years and a member of the SWU Executive Committee. Nana is currently a Team Manager for a Looked After Children's Team, a Practice Educator, ASYE assessor, University Lecturer, mentor to Social Work Students and NQSWs, and co-host of [The Social Worker & The Mentor Podcast](#).

SWU screening of *The Story of Jenin*

Thank you to all who attended SWU's online screening of *The Story of Jenin* - a powerful story of resilience, memory, and resistance. We hope you were inspired by the conversation with the director Ehab Ghafri afterwards. As he said, "The story of Jenin is now your story. You can tell it to everyone. Please don't stop talking about Palestine."



Ehab made a poignant statement that Palestinians are refugees in their own country and that "what is happening right now in the West Bank is what happened in the Gaza strip 17 years ago when they were squeezing it."



As a reminder, in place of a booking fee, attendees are invited to make a donation to support the WAVES mobile cinema school for children and teenagers across underserved communities in the northern West Bank. If you would still like to contribute, donations can be made here:

<https://whydonate.com/fundraising/support-the-mobile-cinema-school>

If you would like to watch the film again or share details with friends or colleagues who were unable to attend, the film will be available to watch on Vimeo in the near future for a small fee. This film is available for further online and in-person screening events and it can also be screened alongside 3 short Palestinian films *The Refrigerator*, *Survivor*, and *My Crutch*. These films are part of a wider effort to create and share Palestinian cinema independently, outside institutional and commercial control. As Ehab writes: "These films tell the realities of Palestine, without interference from biased filmmakers or external control over the Palestinian narrative."

As SWU General Secretary John McGowan mentioned in his introduction to the screening, in 2019 a Palestine-UK Social Work Network (PAL-UK) / SWU delegation of social workers visited Palestine, where they met Ehab Ghafri in the historic city of Nablus. The visit was captured in *The Other Hand - Walking to Learn*, which explores the delegation's experiences and reflections from their time in Palestine. You can watch the film on YouTube here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Szelq-J6TMA&t>



The Other Hand - walking to learn

Thank you again to those who joined us in solidarity with Palestine.



The [International Anti-War Conference on 20th June](#) was incredible. 3,000 trade unionists and anti-war activists from at least 27 countries packed into Central Hall Westminster in an amazing show of international solidarity against war and militarism.

The conference agreed a statement which includes calling for a co-ordinated day of demonstrations in every country for Palestine on Saturday 10th October. We urge all who support the aims of the conference to start building for 10th October now - share the graphic, spread the word! The statement and information on days of action are available here: <https://www.stopwar.org.uk/article/statement-from-the-international-conference-against-war>

If you couldn't be there, or just want to remind yourself of the electric atmosphere, you can watch the speeches from the Great Hall on Stop The War's website: <https://www.stopwar.org.uk/article/thousands-gather-in-london-to-forge-the-future-of-anti-war-movement>

SWU Executive Committee Members

We are looking for SWU members committed to social work and trade unionism, who can represent the decision-making process covering members and offer insight and accountability.

SWU is now seeking nominations from members to fill vacancies on its Executive Committee. Executive Members play a key part in setting SWU's direction and overseeing its aims and mission, as part of SWU's three-year plan.

The General Secretary is elected by the membership and then provided with a mandate from the Executive to manage the union, the SWU staff and SWU's key functions and legal responsibilities. Executive members can take on responsibilities and activities relevant to their interests and expertise and may represent SWU externally.

The Executive Committee is made up of twelve members: at least two members from England; at least one member each from Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales (national representatives); a Student / NQSW Representative and up to six others (UK representatives). The Chair of the union is elected by the Executive from among the representatives.

The time commitment includes attendance at up to six Executive meetings a year (online or in person) and occasional additional days such as attendance at Annual General Meetings (AGMs). Attendance at Executive meetings is remunerated (if applicable) and expenses can be claimed for other SWU activity.

There are currently vacancies for:

- **UK Representatives:**
3 positions (2-year appointment)
- **Scotland Representative:**
1 position (2-year appointment)
- **Wales Representative:**
1 position (2-year appointment)
- **England Representative:**
1 position (2-year appointment)
- **England Representative:**
1 position (3-year appointment)
- **Northern Ireland Representative:**
1 position (3-year appointment)
- **Student / NQSW Representative:**
1 position (2-year appointment)

The successful candidates would take office from the conclusion of the 2026 SWU AGM (27th November 2026) for a **2-year term or 3-year term** depending upon the position. Office holders may stand again for another consecutive term of 2 years.

Eligibility

All candidates for election must be a Member of the Union and have been a Member of the Union for a minimum of 1 year continuously immediately prior to nomination (except for student representative applications).

A candidate for election must be nominated by two Members of the Union. In the case of the National Representatives, nomination must be by two members within the relevant nation. Appropriate Executive applications will be reviewed by a SWU nomination committee for consideration and endorsement. The endorsement process will indicate whether an application is endorsed; however, applicants will still be entitled to stand for election where an election process is required. All candidates must meet the criteria set out in the relevant role description.

SWU encourages applications from Students / Newly Qualified Social Workers and Social Workers from ethnic minority backgrounds who are currently under-represented on the Executive Committee.

Candidates must complete a nomination form.

The closing date for receipt of nominations is 5pm on Friday 28th August 2026.

Completed nomination forms must be accompanied by a head and shoulders photograph in a TIFF or JPEG format. These should be sent via email to:

joanne.marciano@swu-union.org.uk

Please note that nominees need to provide full contact details including a telephone number and email address.

Nomination forms and role descriptions are available to download from

<https://swu-union.org.uk/work-with-swu>

or via email from: **joanne.marciano@swu-union.org.uk**

Joint Universities Social Work Association (JUSWA) Conference 2026

“Working Together in Challenging Times: Conflict, Complicity, Resistance, Innovation”

SWU is proud to have sponsored the first conference of the newly rebranded JUSWA -Joint Universities Social Work Association on 2nd - 3rd July. This international gathering at Swansea University was built around one central theme: **bringing people together**.

At a time when social work educators, researchers and practitioners are navigating complex and rapidly changing global contexts, our shared values and principles are more important than ever.

Former First Minister of Wales Mark Drakeford delivered a powerful first keynote speech that laid out how 40 years of neoliberalism has reduced the rights that we have as citizens, and how neoliberalism’s reliance on low-trust relationships and prioritisation of profit are deeply corrosive to the foundations of modern social work. At the end of his speech, he envisioned how a UK that centred solidarity would look like:

1. Reconnect to a belief that equality matters and that more equal societies do better - the evidence supports this.
2. Rebuilding our public services - satisfaction with the health service was at its highest in 2010 which was at the end of a 13-year period of investment in public services.
3. Be a place where citizenship rights are reasserted - bringing the core necessities back under public control, along with the core services that we all depend on.



SWU General Secretary **John McGowan**
and BASW Cymru Professional Officer
Dr Christian Beech



SWU Executive Committee Member **Edith Till**,
SWU Operations Manager **Joanne Marciano**, and
SWU Communications Officer **Dr Shawn Major** model the
new BASW Cymru sunglasses



- Relationships have to be recalibrated so that we are a society in which we are genuinely interested in one another, and our wellbeing depends on the wellbeing of strangers as we are all interconnected.

The second keynote discussed key issues and challenges for social work in the UK. Issues discussed included negative attitudes towards the social work profession, people not being able to afford the costs involved with becoming a social worker, struggles with recruitment and retention, and the need for social workers to be fairly remunerated for all of the work they do. The panel also discussed the lack of people from ethnic minority backgrounds in leadership positions in social work, social workers as agents of the state vs agents of change, and how do we make social work kind in every aspect - from service provision to how we treat each other.

SWU Ambassador Professor Jermaine Ravalier also announced that there will be a conference on 13th October 2026 in Bournemouth to disseminate his team's research findings on Best Practice for Recruitment and Retention of Social Workers in England's Coastal Communities. The guidance will cover:

- Individual social workers - surviving and thriving in coastal settings
- Employers - what good recruitment and retention looks like in practice
- Educators - how to prepare and pipeline coastal social workers
- Policymakers - what national investment and reform is needed



Scotland's National Social Work Agency & Chief Social Work Adviser to the Scottish Government **Joanna Macdonald**, Northern Ireland Social Care Council CEO **Tracey Reid**, JUSWA Trustee **Professor George Palattiyil**, Social Work England CEO **Colum Conway**, and Social Care Wales Director **David Pritchard**



SWU Ambassador & Pro-Vice Chancellor (Academic) at Buckinghamshire New University **Professor Jermaine Ravalier**, research assistants at Buckinghamshire New University **Marria Riaz** and **Rhiannon Cullen**, and Senior Lecturer in Psychology at Bath Spa University **Dr Pauline Wegrzynek**

Thank you to the JUSWA Trustees Board for putting together such an inspiring event that explored addressing conflict, social justice, and equality, diversity, and inclusion across the UK and the wider world. We also warmly thank SWU Executive Allison Hulmes for her organising efforts which greatly enriched the conference and for supporting the SWU team.

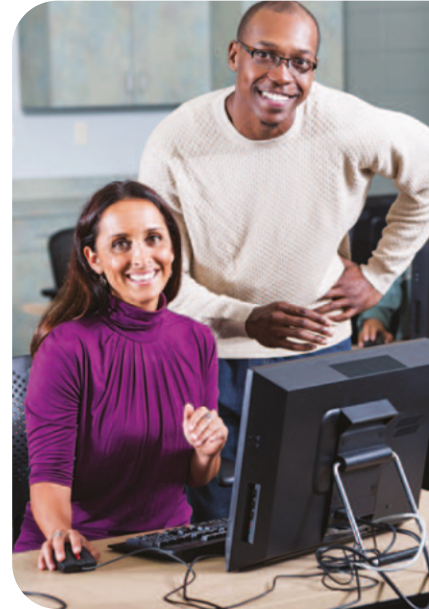
Only **£35** a year with your present BASW membership (**£10** a year for students)

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: unioncontacts@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.
- campaigns to change legislation bills.
- collaborates with external unions and continue to be active through membership of General Federation of Trade Unions and ongoing union campaigns.
- funds the Austerity Action Group and opportunities to get involved.

As a SWU member you get:

- Full guaranteed employment representation*
- Free advice and support from A&R and Union Contacts
- Free financial health check from Lighthouse Group
- 10% off Morrish Solicitors
- General Federation of Trade Unions free training courses
- Discounted training from Avenue Professional Group (Dr Neil Thompson)
- Opportunity to be active as part of the trade union movement
- Monthly Newsletter

**Terms and conditions apply regarding new members and levels of representation*

Please check your membership to continue or opt in to being a SWU Member through BASW membership

Find SWU on the following:



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



<https://www.facebook.com/socialworkersunionuk>



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



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