

General Secretary's Report

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 A&R 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 a social worker providing advice and, if needed, representation at the highest level. More recently, I am hearing from A&R staff and members that they have been misadvised by other employees and employers that SWU is not able to represent them in work related matters. If you hear of this in your workplace could you please get in touch as this is far from the truth and we would like to be able to correct any inaccurate information about our services.

The Social Workers Union offers its wholehearted support to colleagues in public sector trade unions who are considering taking industrial action in the future linked to pay offers. SWU is equally committed to campaign with others to support better pay, but the wider issue for us is to ensure that we have suitable working conditions for our members and other social workers in the UK. This has seen SWU and BASW actively campaign for better working conditions which has been ongoing locally, nationally and with significant political support to enable change. SWU will be consulting with the wider membership in the future to assess the overall membership opinion on strike action, and when this is appropriate. This is known as a consultative ballot. If we want to move towards industrial action for local or national issues, we would need

this to hold a statutory ballot - to meet the complex trade union legislation. This is one of the issues under discussion from the SWU Executive Committee.

As a matter of principle however we want to express our solidarity with colleagues taking part in any planned lawful industrial action arising out of a dispute with their employers. Local government and health workers have endured a decade of austerity with job cuts, resulting in real-terms pay cuts. A decade of austerity has led to staffing shortages in key areas of local government like social care and school staff. Our door is open to work with other unions on issues that are important to the social work profession.

I was delighted to attend the SWU/ BASW/ Bath Spa Working Conditions awareness raising event in the Westminster Parliament on 27th November with BASW colleagues, the SWU President and the SWU Assistant General Secretary. With 25 signatures from MPs and Lords from across the country we had a successful parliamentary event where we championed social work and lobbied for urgently improving working conditions for social workers. This builds on previous political work, including a House of Lords' debate, meetings with Local Authorities, media coverage, and raising awareness throughout the UK on the issue of Working Conditions.

SWU remains active with the Austerity Action Group and particularly with the media project. We do however need your input urgently as

submissions are on the short side to enable us to develop further. Please see page 6. We need you to tell the public how austerity affects you, your colleagues and service users. What is really going on? Please do consider being part of this so we can make a great difference in sharing your stories.

Have a lovey festive time and thank you once more for your commitment to SWU.

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



John McGowan, SWU General Secretary, with Ruth Allen, BASW Chief Executive Officer, at the Palimentary launch

Social Media

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

Monthly ebulletins

Monthly ebulletins are emailed to all SWU members. If you are not receiving this then please check what email address we have. The ebulletins are also published on the web site.

SWU can be found on the following:

Twitter: SWU_UK
Facebook: www.facebook.com/socialworkersunionuk/
Internet: www.swu-union.org.uk

Standing Up for Social Work conference

Rebecca Austin reports on the discussion about social work as a vocation

This October SWU attended the Standing up for Social Work conference which saw the launch of the Working Conditions research by Dr Jermaine Ravalier. Through discussions on the key finding of the research reference was made to the idea of social work as a vocation - for an individual with a vocation there is a commitment to a deeply held set of values and ideals and a strong desire to uphold these values. It is unsurprising therefore that the respondents within the research highlighted that amongst of the main stressors social workers faced included, a lack of resources available for services users and high caseloads. It is these kind of restrictions that place a significant strain on practitioners' ability to practice in a way that is consistent with values and ideals that are often held central both personally and professionally - fairness, justice, equality and so forth.

The impact of this as an 'emotional strain' made for an interesting group discussion. Attention was drawn to the idea of ethical stress, wherein practitioners are placed in the impossible position of knowing that a service, a financial input, or something as simple as time, could significantly improve an individual's wellbeing, and potentially prevent a service user falling into future crisis - yet service users time and time again are denied these resources in a climate of austerity. The reality for practitioners appears to have moved beyond decision making based on a choice of two decisions that may both be acceptable (although not desirable). Instead, practitioners are prevented from doing what they feel is right, through a toxic combination of the lack of resources and consistently with working beyond capacity in terms of workload - resulting in not only an undesirable outcome but often an inadequate response in relation to needs.

Further discussions on this pointed to the detrimental impact on the ethos, spirit and trust within teams when social workers are consistently working beyond capacity, and the likelihood of this leading to



an environment that fosters cynicism. This is significant because it is the opposite - hope - that is central in effecting change, particularly as change can be tedious and take time. Attending SWU and BASW events really gives that sense of solidarity and of hope. The energy for change is often infectious which was highlighted when one attendee stated "I'm feeling more radical as the day goes on." However, the feeling of hope on the front line appears to be in short supply when 60% of social workers within the research were looking to leave their current job within the next 15 months. As such, the question was rightly raised as to how 'hope' and the feeling of empowerment felt within the conference translates back into front line practice, where apathy can become entrenched.

Evidently, there is no easy answer to this question; however, what was clear was the importance of finding the spaces for solidarity amongst those in front line practice, so that practitioners who feel empowered are not merely the minority who attend these events; but rather, that message of solidarity, change

and action in the work of SWU and BASW has a wider impact - from social work students to those in practice. Social workers need to know they are backed by their union and professional association and feel confident that they are represented, with political pressure maintained to address the challenges they face. Local BASW/SWU branches and the role of union contacts have an important role here in finding the spaces for solidarity locally, translating the messages of hope from the conference hall to our own work settings and local community meetings. When social workers believe in change and come together the energy is infectious; in finding the spaces for this to happen we empower one another to maintain our values and ideals and reject these being belittled when the focus in the working environment can so easily become surviving.

Perhaps the most significant point, for me, came as the conference drew to an end where a service user perspective was put forward. Here, attention was drawn to the importance of service users as an alliance, who alongside social workers can articulate the important role social work plays. For me, this is central to the working conditions campaign, in recognising that crucial to achieving these alliances is ensuring social workers have the capacity to maximise the use of their knowledge and skills, working within their capacities and not beyond them - this has a significant impact on the messages that are relayed about social work interventions and the quality of service provided. Additionally, the campaign brings to the fore that adequate resources are vital to the role of social work because we do not believe that it is fair or just that needs remain un-met. Right now it can feel as though we are in an impossible position and a vicious cycle where despite the best intentions, in many ways the climate is not geared to evidence the best outcome but rather decisions that are resource led rather than needs led. In continuing to fight for working conditions we seek to increase social works capacity to maximise the benefit to the people we work alongside and to maintain the values and ideals we hold central.

Rebecca Austin
SWU Executive
UK Rep

Call for Nominations SWU Executive Committee

(1 x Scotland representative)

The Social Workers Union (SWU) is the trade union dedicated to representing the interests of social workers and the social work profession.

There is currently a vacancy for a Scotland Representative. All candidates for election must be nominated by another member of the union. The National Representative from Scotland nomination must be by a member within the relevant nation.

To stand for election a candidate must meet the conditions set out in Bye Laws 1.4 and 1.5, a copy of the SWU rules can be found at www.swu-union.org.uk

The Executive Committee is made up of nine members (at least one member each from England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales) and up to five others (UK representatives). The President of the union is elected by the executive from the UK representatives.

SWU encourages applications from Students/Newly Qualified Social Workers and black and minority ethnic (BME) who are currently under-represented on the National Executive of SWU.

Information regarding terms of office for this vacancy can be found at www.swu-union.org.uk

Candidates must complete a nomination form. **The closing date for receipt of nominations is Monday 14th January 2019.** The full timetable for elections can be found at www.swu-union.org.uk

Completed nomination forms must be accompanied by an election statement of no more than 500 words together with a head and shoulders colour photograph in a TIFF or JPEG format. These should be sent via email to: swu-admin@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 from the SWU website at www.swu-union.org.uk or via email from swu-admin@swu-union.org.uk (0121 389 9248).

If you have any general queries about this process please contact the SWU Administration Manager on 0121 389 9248.

SWU Social
Workers
Union

We love to hear about the positives of joining SWU. Here are a selection of recent comments from some of our Union Contacts.

"I feel proud to be part of a confident and strong union and I am looking forward to being active with SWU and BASW member. I feel less vulnerable now as an employee and more confident with the support of a union and a professional association together." - **Rodney Faizi**



Rodney

"I was a member of another union and required social work representation at work, it was disheartening that my allocated Union Rep had no knowledge of social work at all. If I was left to agree with what they were advising despite my misgivings, eg I was asked to amend my statement to read a certain way that would read well to my employer. I then decided to join SWU after I was informed it was run by experienced SWs who have knowledge and understanding of the profession and active with working conditions." - **Thembi Jubane**



Thembi



Colette

"SWU is a union that is run by social workers for social workers. The representatives understand the role and pressures of social work and this insight enables them to offer meaningful and appropriate support. SWU and BASW together makes a strong combination." - **Colette Hawkens**



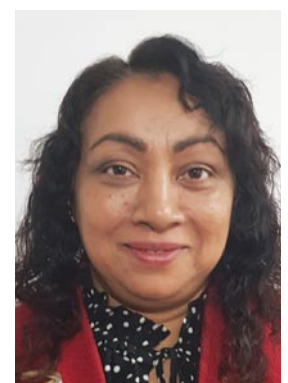
Petra

"I joined BASW because of SWU. It is a professional union run by social workers for social workers who clearly understand SW values and ethics. I now want to get involved in advocating for the SW profession; particularly as this matters to us and the people we work with." - **Petra Heighway**



Saima

"BASW and SWU are terrific organisations to join as a student. You get professional support/advice and it provides an opportunity to build on your strengths as part of a bigger network of social workers and social work students. I was attracted to SWU, they will be there to listen to your professional issues and give valuable and appropriate advice from social workers with knowledge." - **Saima Naheed**



Najma

"I joined SWU to support the union's growth and to protect the rights of social workers. SWU and BASW can provide a personalised trade union and support with social work professional development unlike other public sector unions. The idea of a social work union run by social workers is unique and one to join." - **Najma Begum**

The SWU/ BASW Anti Austerity Group - Media Project

The objective of this project is to draw the attention of the public to the effects of chronic austerity on social workers and those who use their services in whatever setting.

Please would you take the opportunity to give us the stories that we can use.

The Stories Project

We are looking for stories, poems or songs that portray working on the frontline under the pressure of austerity. The project is coordinated by Peter Unwin (the poet austeriate of the 2017 100mile walk).

If you can write a short story, poem or song, an outline of one or suggestions for such situations please bring it to the meeting pop it into the box provided or sketch something out during the meeting. The plan is to produce and circulate a pamphlet or booklet.

We accept anonymous contributions but if you wish to own your story please include your name and email address as we need to contact you before publication.

The Monologue Project

As a path to a full TV programme we want, on the model of Alan Bennett's famous series, to run a series of monologues spelling out the facts and feelings of working on the frontline today. These will be distributed via the internet. Your recordings and ideas will be scripted and sent to established popular actors for filming. We have volunteers in place, all we want now are your contributions. During breaks in proceedings, for you to have your say in a two or three minute monologue or to outline your experience. This project is being coordinated by Malcolm Jordan, a member of the SWU Executive. *We guarantee to protect your identity and confidentiality unless you wish to own your monologue. In any case we need a contact so that you can agree the final script.*

Please send your recording to our confidential address film@swu-union.org.uk

The SWU/BASW Anti Austerity Group MEDIA PROJECT

Don't keep it all to yourself – let it out!

We need you to tell the public how austerity affects you, your colleagues and service users.
What's really going on?

There are two ways you can do this

The Stories Project

Send stories, poems, songs that portrays working on the frontline under austerity. Write a short story, a poem or compose a song, or even outlines. A booklet or pamphlet will then be produced.

Send your contributions to

Peter Unwin (The poet austeriate of the 100mile walk) p.unwin@worc.ac.uk

The Monologue Project

Just grab your phone, go to a quiet corner and record a 3 to 4 minute blast about what life on the frontline is really like today. Send the recording, or an idea to this confidential address film@swu-union.org.uk

We plan to make each of these into a script and create a short series of videos by well known actors. The Director and crew are standing by, we just need real life material
(If you leave us a contact we will check back as the script is developed)

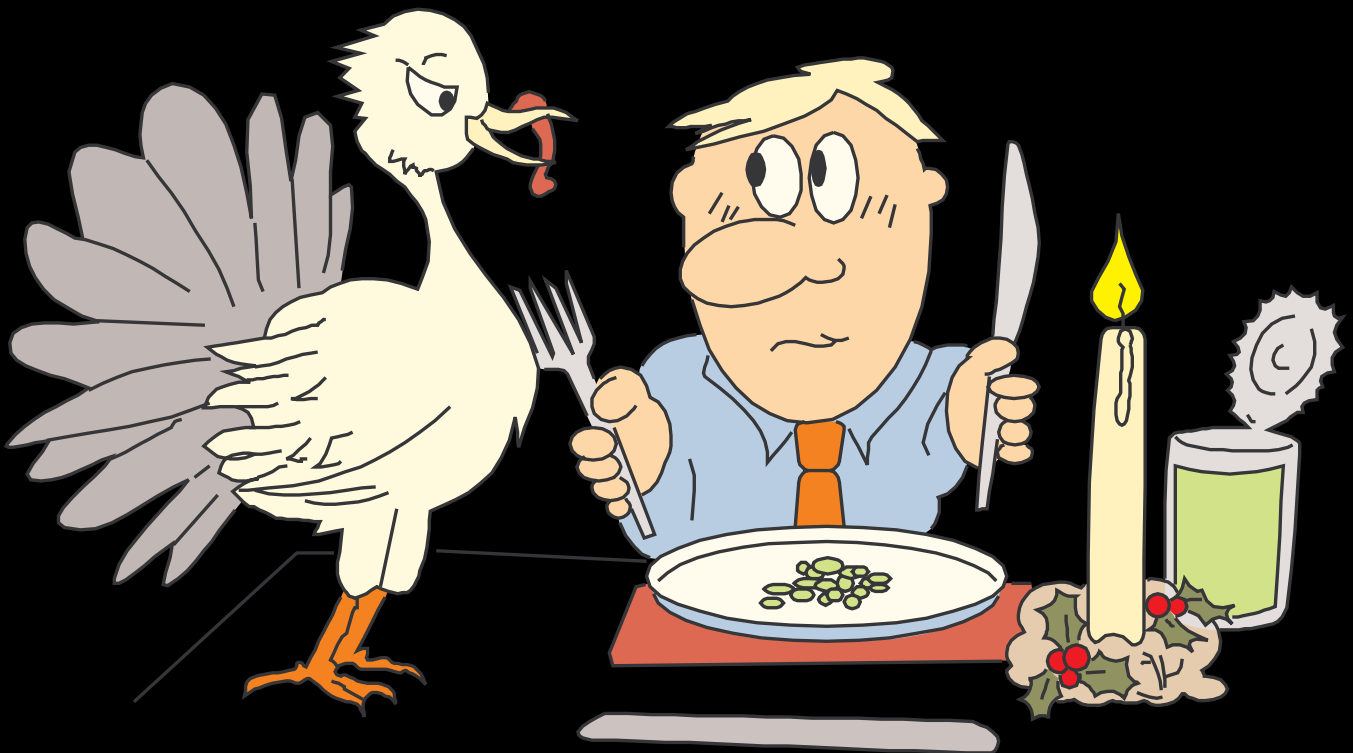
*Any questions please contact Malcolm Jordan
(malcolm@mjordan.demon.co.uk)*

President's Christmas Message

And it came to pass that Mother Theresa May called her people unto her declaring Austerity was over. The people were wonderous, amazed and happy. They began talking to each other, one to another, saying what wonderous thing is this. It is amazing. How did this happen, we are very happy and we must go and celebrate. So they left their houses, their sleeping bags on the street and their cardboard boxes to join together to celebrate the end of Austerity. And it transpired that they had no money so could not celebrate. So they returned to their houses, their sleeping bags on the street and their cardboard boxes with forlorn faces. And an eerie silence descended upon the land. Here endeth the first lesson, and much else beside.

As time passed the suffering became much worse, even if it could get worse, yet so did it. Mother Theresa May had deceived the people. Austerity had not ended. Only the very rich were spared the ravishes of Austerity because they were much loved by the leader. So bad did the situation become that an Angel from the EU was dispatched to the people to provide comfort, joy and hope. But the people heard not the words of the Angel. The Angel could not visit the people because a hard border had been created. Here endeth the second and final lesson.

James Birchall
SWU President



*SWU would like send all our members
warm wishes for the winter season*

Union Contacts Section

Union Contact Induction Days

On 3rd November we had another successful Union Contact Induction Day which welcomed a new group of enthusiastic participants who all signed up to be SWU Union Contacts. The number is consistently growing, and we now have over 50 Union Contacts in workplaces and universities up and down the UK. Our Induction days are an interesting mix of activities and learning about the Union Contact role as well as trade unionism in general, and importantly it gives Union Contacts an opportunity to meet each other, exchange ideas and develop networks. We also have the support of Dr Neil Thompson, the well-known social work author, who delivers a thought-provoking presentation at each meeting. Our next Induction Day is scheduled for Saturday 2nd March in Manchester (venue to be confirmed) and will be advertised nearer to the date. Lunch will be provided, travel expenses reimbursed, and accommodation arranged for anyone travelling from further afield. Please look out for the advert and ensure you book early as Induction Days are very popular!

Website

We are currently in the process of developing our own SWU-Updates website which will be a great opportunity to keep SWU members aware of events, activities, campaigns and diary dates. We can of course still be found on the BASW website, and this will continue, but the new website will provide a place specifically for updates and information from and about SWU.

Social Media

SWU has accounts on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/socialworkersunionuk/>) and Twitter (@SWU_UK) which we encourage members to follow. We now also have a Facebook Group specifically for Union Contacts and I'd encourage all new and existing Union Contacts to join it if you use social media. New Union Contacts

are sent a Facebook request to join the group, and are welcome to contribute to it, as well as use it as a means of keeping in touch with each other.

Newsletter

It's important that as many Union Contacts as possible contribute to the monthly newsletter. It's YOUR Newsletter and we encourage you to provide items for the Union Contact Section. Just a paragraph or two will suffice and it can be about anything that is relevant to you and your role. What inspired you to join a union? Why do you think activism is relevant today? These are important messages for Union Contacts to spread to all SWU members, and you can remain anonymous if you wish. Contributions can be sent direct to me at: carol.reid@swu-union.org.uk

Social Work England

Social Workers' input and feedback is vital in determining the appropriate administering of Social Work England, the new social work regulator replacing HCPC. Union Contacts will have received consultation papers from our BASW colleagues, and I'd urge you to respond before the deadline of 12th December.

Workplace Queries

One or two of you have contacted me for clarification of what you are "allowed" to do within your role as Union Contact in your workplace. More detailed clarification will be provided in a future article, but in the meantime, I want to reassure Union Contacts that you do not need to seek permission from managers to discuss the union with colleagues, or to wear your union badge. Nor do you need to seek permission to give out leaflets or put up flyers. By way of courtesy you might wish to email or speak to your line manager to explain your role, but you are not obliged to do so, and they have no authority to stop you from doing it. Please keep me updated regarding any similar issues or concerns.

Branches

We are looking forward to forging links with existing BASW branches with the exciting opportunity of SWU Union Contacts attending branch meetings and being the branch “SWU rep.” I was warmly welcomed by BASW Cymru Committee who agreed that this would be an excellent way to collaborate with SWU, and we also have Union Contacts in Lincolnshire who are keen to be involved in the new BASW Lincoln branch. Watch this space for further updates and progress!

Thank you for your continued commitment to SWU and don't forget the next Union Contact Induction Day on 2nd March 2019.

YOU are the Union and TOGETHER we are STRONG.

Carol Reid
National Organiser
Social Workers Union

Who Cares About the Carer?

A SWU Union Contact shares her story about the challenges of juggling a personal life with studies in social work and also now looking forward to a career in the profession she trained for and remains passionate about.

Life never goes according to plan. I was a mature student and started my training in 2010. However after my close family member developed serious, complex health conditions and high needs I had to put my academic studies on hold several times to care 24/7 for him. It was a very difficult, stressful time but I was determined I wasn't giving up after all my hard work; even the journey getting to University was a massive challenge, having been out of the classroom for what seemed like a lifetime - some of my fellow student social workers weren't even born when I gave up work to have my family.

Eventually in 2017 I achieved my degree and qualified as a Social Worker, after several difficult years juggling caring, completing academic work, assessments and full time placements. I don't know how I did it but I found the inner strength and resilience from somewhere. I am so proud of what I've achieved.

However shortly after qualifying my close family member was diagnosed with a rare condition that had a further profound impact on his health and wellbeing. It was a constant merry go round of hospital appointments, consultants, health professionals, assessments, meetings, tests, and numerous in patient hospital admissions. At times there was nothing else but caring, eat, sleep, repeat. He never complained and didn't fully understand but I know he was afraid, as he was poked, prodded and given interventions that were painful but necessary to maintain his life. This new development also meant I could not commit to finding a Social Work post that would fit for me, even a part time one, and I continued my caring role for the next 14 months, putting all I had into providing support to meet his everyday physical and emotional needs.

In September 2018 he passed away with his close family by his side. It was a battle that was fought so hard, he was so strong, and he wanted to live so much. I am devastated, he was the centre of our world and I don't know how we will cope without him. I must try to move forward now, try to find a suitable post; another massive challenge ahead; as I know only too well that on a paper application my personal story and journey won't fully be heard. I will do this as I want a career in social work.



Whatever legal help you need, we're there for you.

We are friendly, professional and affordable. And we work across the Trade Union movement.

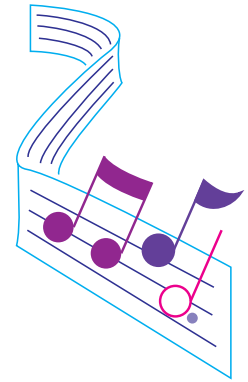
In addition to our **free personal injury service**, SWU members receive **exclusive benefits** including:

- ▶ **10%** discount for wills and probate services
- ▶ **10%** discount for residential conveyancing and commercial property services
- ▶ **10%** discount for family and matrimonial law services
- ▶ **10%** discount for criminal/motoring offences and court litigation services

Visit morrishsolicitors.com/socialworkersunion to find out more
or call **033 3344 9600**

First They Came

Angi Naylor shares the lyrics from her recent song which will be available soon to view on the SWU website:



“First They Came” After Malcolm Jordan’s words at BASW Conference, reworked by Angi Naylor, with sincere acknowledgement to Pastor Neomuller for SWU AGM 2018.

*First they came for my desk and renamed it a hot desk and told me it was no longer mine
And I lost an hour a day, of productive recording time wandering round the office trying to find a place to sit.
Then they came for my parking place,
And I lost an hour a day of productive recording time trying to find somewhere to park near my workplace.
Next, they gave me a laptop and got rid of the admin workers and the landlines
And I spent another precious hour sitting in my car listening to my messages and writing them down to try and prioritise them ... and as I did ... more calls were being received.
Then I checked my email and found a dozen or more messages some via the call centre, and then I spent another fifteen minutes re-prioritising these alongside the phone messages.
After 5pm I managed to find a free workstation and print off the reports that I needed for the safeguarding meeting the following day.
Then I headed home and sat down with my TV supper and started to do today’s admin work. But not before I switched the phone message to “I am away from my desk till tomorrow am.”*

*Then they said you can work from home and my bedroom became my work space
And my boundaries got blurred.
My partner saw my distress but could not help
And because of confidentiality I could not share my distress with them
But I could shout out my frustration at them.*

*I strained my back carrying round my laptop, the files and table top office equipment,
I gained an ulcer through not being able to find time or space to relax with my lunch,
And then came the burn out and the phone calls to Advice & Representation and BASW and SWU,
And I cannot share that with you because of the clause in the settlement that enabled me to get early retirement!
But I can tell you they made me feel valued for the first time in years.*

*Twenty Eighteen A Survey of Working Conditions by Dr Jermaine M Ravalier for SWU and BASW and finally closed ears are starting to listen.
Then another Twenty Eight. Not eighteen but eighty.
Someone, somewhere says social workers should be spending twenty percent of their time on paperwork and eighty percent of their time in direct work with the people they serve,
And I realised they were talking about people like me.
Then they gave the workforce their own desks so they could sit down and quickly and efficiently do their reports,
Then they brought back Admin support workers and told staff they should only work from home for a maximum 20 percent of their time and that having opportunities to be with their colleagues was extremely important for the wellbeing of the workforce.*

*But I and quiet a number of my compatriots had already abandoned the good ship social work, having been battered and bruised over those efficiency years.
So my young, passionate and enthusiastic about to be, or just become, social workers
Reflect on this tale*

And when they come for you make sure you have SWU and BASW in your corner.

Angi Naylor, SWU Executive Member

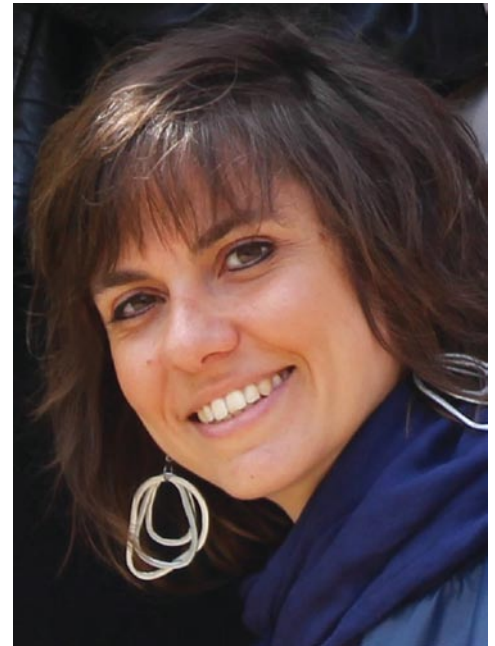
Social work and choice agendas: an opportunity to have your say

Social work and social policies

The relationship between social work and social policies is a topic which has gained increased attention in recent years. Yet, this relationship is all but obvious and there are still many unanswered questions that could be asked.

For instance, are social workers policy influencers or policy implementers, or both? How is social work - as a profession - affected by changing government priorities, such as managerialism and austerity? Is social work a profession charged with political and social responsibilities? And if so, how can these responsibilities be enacted?

I became interested in such questions whilst working in social care services in London and my interest grew after I started a PhD in sociology and I began exploring these topics further. In particular, two theories influenced my understanding of social work in relation to social policy processes. One is Lipsky's idea that public policies are made in crowded offices by front-line workers more than in top floor suites. The other is the concept of 'policy practice', which refers to social workers' role in influencing social welfare policies at different levels and in the name of social justice and social change.



Social work and choice agendas

As part of my PhD, I am now exploring the role of social work in relation to 'choice agendas': the ensemble of policies which, in the last twenty years, have focused on giving users of public services more choice and control over the support they receive. Within this, I decided to focus on care policies in the disability field.

What is the role of social workers in regards to choice agendas? How do social workers translate choice from policies into practice? What kind of choice can they offer to users of services? Why has much of the literature in this field focused on the 'gatekeeping' role of social workers in regards to self-directed-support? What about choice beyond self-directed-support?

An opportunity to have your voice heard

If you are also interested in these topics, there is an opportunity to make your voice heard. As part of my PhD, I am exploring the questions above in the context of support services for disabled adults in England. If you are a social worker with experience of working with disabled adults (learning disabilities, physical disabilities, autism) and familiar with self-directed-support tools such as direct payments and personal budgets, please consider being part of my project by taking part in an interview. If you live/work in London or surrounding areas, we could arrange a face-to-face interview. Alternatively, we could do it over the phone or on Skype. Your experiences are of paramount importance for research and practice. I hope to hear from many of you! These are my contact details: francesca.pozzoli@unimi.it / +447459811712. Just write, call or text me if you're interested. Thank you very much.

Francesca Pozzoli
Student, PhD Sociology

Internet: <https://nasp.eu/training/structure-of-studies/doctoral-defence/calendars/francesca-pozzoli.html>

Twitter: @Francesca_Pozz

Information for Social Workers from : The Richardson Partnership for Care

(info provided to SWU to share with members)



Acquired Brain Injury - the Need for Specialist Care

As a Social Worker you may well deal with clients who have an acquired brain injury (ABI), but this is a wide and complex area which presents many different issues. An ABI is one that has occurred since birth and is often sudden and unexpected. The effects of a brain injury are complicated and diverse, affecting each individual differently and causing changes in behaviour, cognitive abilities and memory, as well as physical abilities.

According to the brain injury charity, Headway, ABI admissions to UK hospitals increased by 10% between 2005/6 and 2016/17. Due to a lack of resources or information, some younger people are placed in elderly residential care when a specialist rehabilitation facility would be much more appropriate. Specialist care delivered by a multi-disciplinary team of therapists (including psychologists, OTs, physios, and speech & language therapists) has been shown to provide continual and successful rehabilitation, preventing the need for crisis care and delivering longer term value for money, greater opportunities for independence and a better quality of life.

One such provider is The Richardson Partnership for Care in Northampton. The independent family-run firm is celebrating its 30th anniversary in 2019 and opening its third residential care and rehabilitation centre for adults with ABI and complex needs. The official opening is on Thursday 24th January, when you can have a look around the home and find out more about what specialist brain injury care involves. For more information or to book your place contact Sian Richardson at sian.richardson@careresidential.co.uk or telephone 01604 791071.

The Richardson Partnership for Care also has three specialist residential care homes for adults with learning disabilities (LD). It has put together a range of resources about ABI and LD on its website: <https://www.careresidential.co.uk/resources/index.php>

The Richardson Partnership for Care
The Richardson Mews, Kingsland Gardens, Northampton NN2 7PW
www.careresidential.co.uk

General Federation of Trade Unions



The General Federation of Trade Unions (GFTU) concentrates on servicing the needs of specialist unions. It does this by providing courses, creating international union links, parliamentary links, undertaking research for its affiliated Unions and providing ongoing support and assistance to all members with additional support for General Secretaries.

The GFTU has 30 affiliates with a membership of just over 250,000 and describes itself as the "federation for specialist unions." The GFTU offers a range of courses, from foundation to more advanced with the majority free for SWU members. The new training catalogue is soon to be launched with even more courses covering a range of topics.

John McGowan, SWU General Secretary sits on the GFTU National Executive Governing Body with a committee elected to meet regularly to manage the work of GFTU. SWU is a proud member of the General Federal of Trade Unions (GFTU). This section will provide an opportunity to meet some of the other unions affiliated to the GFTU. Meet the Transport Salaried Staffs' Association with information provided by Manuel Cortes, TSSA General Secretary:

Who are Transport Salaried Staffs' Association (TSSA) and what do they do?

Our union is the union for people in transport and travel in the UK and Ireland.

We were formed back in 1897 as the National Association of General Railway Clerks. This became the Railway Clerks' Association in 1888; then in 1951 following major changes that took place in transport during the post-war period the current title was adopted.

We remain proudly independent, with members in shipping companies, bus companies, travel agencies, airlines, call centres and IT.

We have members at Network Rail, Crossrail, Eurostar, Greater Anglia, London Underground and British Transport Police; at Amey, Balfour Beatty, CalMac ferries, Forth Ports, Tata Steel, Thomas Cook and London General Buses.

As a UK and Ireland-wide union we know it's crucial to have a footprint outside London. That's why we have regional offices in Bristol, Derby, Manchester, York, Glasgow and Dublin.



Our vision for the future is clear – for the TSSA to be growing in size and influence with a high level of loyalty and activism. That's why we have our Time to Grow strategy in place.

This is aimed at increasing and encouraging active membership; it's about collective strength.

We have an ongoing series of targeted projects aimed at increasing membership in our workplaces and increasing activism of members.

Our mission is to be regarded by our members as the best trade union – through the effectiveness of our workplace organisation and excellence of our services and representatives. It's also to project the positive influence we have on employers and government in pursuit of trade union aims and values.

For instance, we are very proud to be the first union in Britain to be selected to work as a diversity partner with Stonewall. As an employer we strive to ensure all our staff have the inclusivity and respect needed to empower them. We want to lead by example because we want to the world of work to work for everyone.

In an era where government is determined to further attack our human rights and employment rights; where we have seen years of deep cuts in our communities, TSSA will not stand to one side but act as a campaigning organisation in the workplace and beyond.

We believe in a public railway run for the people and not for profit. Alongside that campaign sits our major political campaign on Brexit, or rather stopping it.

That's because no Brexit deal could deliver the benefits of being in the EU. Brexit will hurt everyone but those at the very top of the tree and as trade unionists we will resist that with all our might.

We also believe in working as a team, having established a variety of workplace representative roles such as Industrial (general) Reps, Health and Safety Reps, Equality Reps, Learning Reps, and Neurodiversity Champions. Of course, we also work within existing company structures, such as Company Councils.

Taken together there's a clear picture of a transport union forging ahead, fighting for members and for communities - a very 21st century union.

Manuel Cortes
TSSA General Secretary



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Important consultation led by BATH SPA UNIVERSITY in association with SOCIAL WORKERS UNION

Help SWU and Bath Spa by answering a few questions and to build on creating better working conditions in our ongoing campaigning with BASW.

The Housing, Communities and Local Government Committee has launched a new inquiry into funding and provision of local authorities' children's services.

The inquiry will investigate what impact public spending has had on the provision of care services, and the approaches local authorities have taken in addressing funding constraints. It will consider how financial support for children's services can be made more sustainable in the short and long term, and examine the potential for innovative approaches to the design and delivery of services.

- **Is the funding for local authorities' children's services sufficient to enable local authorities to fulfil their statutory duties?**
- **What are the financial challenges for local authorities' in providing non-statutory services?**
- **How can funding for children's services be made more sustainable in the short and long term?**
- **How can innovative approaches to the design and delivery of children's services support financial sustainability?**

Social Workers in England please take part in a important consultation and discussion on the main points above:

Monday 10th December at 6pm - 7pm by following the instructions:

Please join the discussion from your computer, tablet or smartphone

<https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/623282173>

You can also dial in using your phone.

United Kingdom: +44 330 221 0088 Access Code: 623-282-173

For further details please contact j.ravalier@bathspa.ac.uk