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British
Psychological
Society

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The Society has offices in Belfast, Cardiff, Glasgow and London, as well as the main office in Leicester. All enquiries should be addressed to the Leicester office [see inside front cover for address].

The British Psychological Society

was founded in 1901, and incorporated by Royal Charter in 1965. Its object is 'to promote the advancement and diffusion of a knowledge of psychology pure and applied and especially to promote the efficiency and usefulness of Members of the Society by setting up a high standard of professional education and knowledge'.
Extract from The Charter



President's column

Sue Gardner

Contact Sue Gardner via the Society's Leicester office, or e-mail: president@bps.org.uk

Communication is an important part of our work as psychologists, and it is a priority for the Society. We communicate in so many ways about a range of issues and we are continuously striving to improve our functioning and effectiveness. The Board of Trustees and the Representative Council recently had presentations to update them about the new website design project, which is very exciting. Over 40 people representing all areas of the Society, both staff and members, have been involved in focus group workshops to help with the design. In addition over 500 people responded to the online consultation about what would make for a user-friendly, up-to-date and relevant site. The ideas from these activities have informed this key project, which will help us to achieve our strategic aims to become the first port of call for psychology, to create an interactive online community for psychologists and to disseminate good research and practice from our member networks to wider audiences. A major audit of our existing and future web content requirements is currently under way. This coupled with the results of the consultations will lead on to mapping work about how we organise the site and its contents. Mike Laffan and his colleagues within the office have been working hard over the last few years to bring this to fruition and we are looking forward to the launch this autumn. The project team is keen to keep you informed and www.bps.org.uk/webproject has the latest news.

The Society's work with the media continues to generate interest and we are always looking for members who are keen to communicate their work to the public. We have developed a database over the years of members who are willing to engage with the media. This database and the information that members can provide are highly respected in media circles. For some members with experience and confidence this is relatively easy, but some of you suffer from excessive modesty or apprehension about involvement with journalists. To help support members with

this work the Society has run media training courses over the last 20 years. The current courses on 'Introduction to the Media' and 'Broadcast Media Interview Skills' are part of the Learning Centre and can count towards your continuing professional development. Approximately 50 people are trained each year, and I took part recently. The courses are intensive but interesting, with small numbers of participants and experiential learning. Over a day my strengths were identified and some really good advice was given on preparation, handling tricky questions, giving focused answers and remaining calm under pressure.

It struck me that the skills identified could be used in a variety of situations: the next time my teenage son asks for an increase in his allowance I'll be ready for him! I came away feeling more confident and positive about communicating with the media and the other people on the course said the same. For more information about media training courses in 2010 visit www.bps.org.uk/mediatraining.

At the recent Representative Council meeting it was agreed that this would move to a General Assembly model of meeting over two days so that there was more time to share information, challenge, interact and debate at the one event which brings together all the member networks with the Board of Trustees and the Senior Management Team. The council is chaired by Professor Maurice Stringer and is an important sounding board for your representatives to have their say on Society matters. In addition to the General Assembly there will be an online forum so that representatives can be updated more frequently.

If you have any ideas about how we might communicate more effectively, please let me know.

"The Society's work with the media continues to generate interest"

CHARTERED SCIENTIST?

The Science Council has announced new CPD requirements as part of the revalidation process for the CSci award. We will be introducing these requirements for registrants in 2011.

See www.bps.org.uk/charteredscientist for information

Changing the relationship

Scotland's relationship with alcohol, and how to address it, are hotly debated issues. Sales data from the alcohol industry itself indicates that Scots are buying and drinking more than the rest of the UK, and most of the rest of the world. Figures from the Scottish Household Survey suggest that around 50 per cent of men and 30 per cent of women may be drinking above weekly recommended limits, and it is estimated that alcohol over-consumption costs Scotland £2.25 billion per year in extra services across the NHS, police, courts, social services and lost economic productivity.

The Scottish Government sees itself as having a key role in addressing alcohol consumption. Last year the Scottish Government produced *Changing Scotland's Relationship with Alcohol: A Framework for Action*, which proposed various legislative actions, including regulations to end irresponsible promotions, the establishment of a minimum price per unit of alcohol, and restricting the use of marketing material or activity on licensed premises.

The Scottish Parliamentary Labour Party have now established an Alcohol Commission chaired by Professor Sally Brown. In February 2010, it called for

written evidence on the best ways to address alcohol over-consumption. The Society's submission, led on behalf of the Division of Health Psychology–Scotland by Jenny Hutton (Chartered Psychologist and secretary of the Division), welcomed 'the chance to emphasise the complex nature of addressing Scotland's relationship with alcohol'. However, it warned that 'policy relating to alcohol... requires a strong evidence-base to win public support', and 'there are many areas where the evidence is not strong enough to justify a particular policy'.

The response calls for the recognition of the recent Generic Health Behaviour Change Competency Framework (produced by Dr Diane Dixon and Professor Marie Johnston of DHP-S for the Scottish Government), which 'begins to employ the science of behaviour change to promote and support behaviour change at

an individual as well as at a community/population level'.

On the specific issue of pricing, the response notes the much-cited Sheffield Report from last year, which extrapolates that because consumption has increased as alcohol price has decreased in the past, a corresponding decrease in consumption will be seen if alcohol is made more expensive. The response cautions that 'although price is considered by the World Health Organisation to be one of the most effective ways of tackling alcohol over-consumption, the impact of setting a minimum price for alcohol on drinking habits, particularly on young people and heavy drinkers, is as yet unknown.'

The response also warns that 'raising levels of knowledge and awareness of alcohol over-consumption does not translate well into actual health behaviour change', and advises that peer- and family-led schemes will be more effective than school-based interventions in effecting long-term culture change.

Men's health seminar

Men's health is said to be in crisis, a situation popularly linked to 'masculinity', yet we know relatively little about men's perspectives and practices related to health, lifestyle and embodiment. To investigate, a Society-funded seminar series will bring together researchers to discuss the relevance of masculinity in constraining and facilitating men's health practices and health-related behaviours, such as diet, physical exercise, smoking and alcohol consumption.

The first event in a series of three seminar days is at the University of Sussex on 9 June. It includes talks from Dr Claire Sloan, Dr Ilkka Pietila,

Dr Richard de Visser and Professor Brendan Gough.

Attendance at the seminar is free, but places are limited. To book please e-mail Sheilah Han by 30 April (Sheilah.han@ntu.ac.uk). Postgraduate students wishing to present a poster should send a 200-word abstract to Brendan.gough@ntu.ac.uk by the same date. A travel bursary of £75 will be awarded to the best abstract (judged by the organising committee).

If you have a proposal for a seminar series, information on how to apply for funding from the Society's Research Seminar Competition is available on the website at www.bps.org.uk/tesseminar.

Children in performance

The Society has submitted key points to the Department for Children Schools and Families as the department puts together a consultation document on its review of children in performances. This is a pre-consultation stage, and we're sure the Society will be involved in future stages of this review. To see what we've said so far go to www.bps.org.uk/childperformance.

SOCIETY NOTICES

Qualitative Methods in Psychology Section See pp.273, 327

Annual Conference 2010 See p.288

Public Engagement Grants – applications invited See p.303

BPS Conferences events See p.321

Learning Centre courses and events See pp.322, 323

PPB Lifetime Achievement Award – call for nominations See p.328

Award for Distinguished Contributions to Professional Psychology – call for nominations See p.331

British Journal of Educational Psychology – inside back cover

CONSULTATIONS ON PUBLIC POLICY

February was a busy month for consultations, with twelve responses being submitted to seven consulting bodies. Full details, including consultation papers and responses, are available at: www.bps.org.uk/consult. Brief details of selected responses are provided below.

Draft Service Specification for Services Providing Care to Adults in Wales Who Have Been Sexually Assaulted or Abused (Welsh Assembly Government)

This service specification was designed to ensure that Sexual Assault Resource Centres (SARCs) in Wales meet the holistic needs of adult sexual assault victims and provide consistent minimum levels of service. It is proposed that all SARCs should offer a wide range of services, including: crisis intervention, support and debriefing at first contact; counselling; and routine proactive follow-up and advocacy. The Society's response:

- | offered a range of suggestions for how the service might be enhanced so that individuals at risk of traumatisation can be identified and offered appropriate, evidence-based, psychological packages of care;
- | included advice in relation to staff required to assess and offer interventions for people who have been sexually assaulted.

Regulation of the Sunbed Industry in Northern Ireland (Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, Northern Ireland)

This consultation concerned whether and, if so, by what means the sunbed industry should be regulated in Northern Ireland, where the incidence of malignant melanoma has increased almost three-fold since 1984. The Society agreed that the industry should be regulated and recommended that:

- | user-operator sunbeds in unsupervised commercial premises should be prohibited, since these pose the greatest health threat;
- | funding should be provided to enable: a general campaign to raise awareness of the dangers of sunbed use; research into subgroups' sunbed-related behaviours; and a further campaign, specifically targeted towards particularly vulnerable groups (e.g. teenagers) with a view to reducing their sunbed use.

Drugs: Guidance for Schools (Department for Children, Schools and Families)

The draft guidance addresses matters relating to drug education and the management of drugs (including medicines and volatile substances as well as alcohol, tobacco and illegal drugs) within the school community in England. The Society felt the guidance promoted awareness that the use of all such substances have dangers that need to be respected. However, several suggestions for its improvement were also made, including:

- | it would be helpful if some discussion were included of how best to address the potential risk of schools' messages being viewed as 'discredited' by children who encounter adults (in the home and elsewhere) whose attitudes towards, and consumption of, alcohol is incongruent with schools' messages regarding responsible consumption;
- | the guidance would benefit from being more informed by recent research findings on withdrawal symptoms and cognitive impairment associated with cannabis use.

The preparation and submission of the Society's responses to consultations on public policy is coordinated by the Policy Support Unit (PSU). All those holding at least graduate membership are eligible to contribute to responses and all interest is warmly welcomed. Please contact the PSU for further information (psu@bps.org.uk; 0116 252 9926/9577).

Psychology taster day in Wales

The Welsh Branch of the British Psychological Society, in partnership with Cardiff Council and Careers Wales, played host to a group of over 60 sixth-form school students for a psychology taster day.

After introductions by Fiadhna McEvoy and Dr John Boddy, the audience was treated for the rest of the day to a series of talks from a variety of specialists, covering educational, health, occupational/business, sport and exercise, forensic, and clinical, as well as Dr Nick Perham, the Branch chair, outlining how his career evolved into his current role as university lecturer and researcher, and Britt Hallingberg describing the structure of a university degree course and her experience of the life of an undergraduate.

The educational slot was taken by a panel of four – Joanne Western, Fiona Higgins, Joanna Pike and Juliet Whitehead. Two of the panel were qualified and two in training. They explained the routes they followed for qualifications, the client

groups they worked with and the roles they undertook. There was some discussion over whether teaching experience was necessary and the types of issues they may encounter.

They were followed by Dr Katie Thirlaway, a health psychologist based in UWIC. She explained the general principles underlying her work and gave as a case study the insights that a psychologist can bring to anti-smoking campaigning – showing how playing on the fear and shock of illness or death would have less effect than targeting different types of smokers in areas that were of more immediate concern to them.

Dr John Boddy gave his perspective on the world of occupational and business psychology. He showed how recruitment and selection has become a core area of work, linked in with competency frameworks. He also talked about the contribution psychology can make with organisational change.

Before the lunch break, Nic Bowes introduced the

Society vacancies

Journals Committee

Editor – British Journal of Clinical Psychology

see advert p.316

Closing date 23 April 2010

LEARNING CENTRE

To have your CPD event approved by the Society and for a catalogue of forthcoming opportunities, see www.bps.org.uk/learningcentre or call 0116 252 9512.

To advertise your event in *The Psychologist*, e-mail psyadvert@bps.org.uk or call +44 116 252 9552.

A diary of non-approved events can be found at www.bps.org.uk/diary.

work of a forensic psychologist. Her first task was to dispel the myths about the discipline as portrayed in fiction. Day-to-day work does not involve catching murderers through profiling, but rather, through learning about the background behind

Dr Richard Neil started the afternoon with a description of the role of a sport and exercise psychologist. Using a combination of slides and video clips, he showed how advisers to sportsmen and women could assist them to focus on winning routines.

Dr Alyson Smith was the final specialist, bringing the perspective of a clinical psychologist. She outlined the range of models that could be used when making a clinical assessment of a client and described the types of treatments available.

From the evaluation responses received, most of the audience found the day a useful learning and development experience in the academic and practical aspects of psychology in its many forms. For the organisers, it was a rewarding experience that we hope will be repeated.

an individual's attitudes and behaviour, choosing from a range of psychological tools to bring about change. She ran through a case study of a violent offender to show how these techniques would be used.

Child bereavement

On 5 March, Sir Al Aynsley Green, who recently retired after five years in post as Children's Commissioner for England, met youngsters taking part in an innovative new project at the Child Bereavement Charity. The project is supported by a public engagement grant to Society member Ann Rowland to provide the psychological dimension of the project.

In collaboration with the Child Bereavement Charity, a young people's advisory group has been set up to seek views and opinions of young bereaved people. These views will then be used as a foundation to develop a resource for parents, carers and educational professionals to give them greater insight into the needs and experiences of young people affected by death.

The output of the sessions will be completed in September 2010, and will include written materials for the Child Bereavement Charity's website and film clips aimed at parents and teachers, educating and informing them about the challenges and issues associated with grieving amongst teenagers and adolescents.

Sir Al said 'I'm a bereaved child too – my dad died unexpectedly in hospital when I was 10 years old. I wasn't allowed to see him and it had a huge effect on me. I care very much about how you are being supported here and am very pleased to see the incredible work that's going on. I wish I'd had this when my dad died.'

The 2010 public engagement grant scheme, providing funding up to £14,000, is now open: see www.bps.org.uk/grants.

Organised by BPS Conferences

BPS conferences are committed to ensuring value for money, careful budgeting and sustainability in the current economic climate



2010

CONFERENCE	DATE	VENUE	WEBSITE
Annual Conference	14-16 April	Holiday Inn, Stratford-upon-Avon	www.bps.org.uk/ac2010
Student Members Group	16 April	Holiday Inn, Stratford-upon-Avon	www.bps.org.uk/smg2010
DCP Faculty for Learning Disabilities	28-30 April	Chancellor's Hotel, Manchester	www.bps.org.uk/flld2010
DCP Faculty for Holistic Psychology	13-14 May	Umi Hotel, Brighton	www.bps.org.uk/holistics2010
Paediatric Psychology Network	24 June	Hilton Hotel, Sheffield	www.bps.org.uk/ppn2010
Association for the Teaching of Psychology	2-4 July	University of Keele	www.atpconference.org.uk
Division of Counselling Psychology	8-10 July	University of Strathclyde, Glasgow	www.bps.org.uk/dcop2010
Psychology of Women Section	14-16 July	Cumberland Lodge, Windsor	www.bps.org.uk/pows2010
Qualitative Methods in Psychology Section	23-25 August	University of Nottingham, Jubilee Campus	www.bps.org.uk/qmp2010
DCP Faculty for Children and Young People	6-7 September	Warwick University	www.bps.org.uk/cyp2010
Social Psychology Section	6-9 September	University of Winchester	www.bps.org.uk/social2010
Division of Health Psychology	15-17 September	Queens University Belfast	www.bps.org.uk/dhp2010
Psychology 4 Students	17 November	Nottingham Trent University	www.bps.org.uk/conferences
Division of Clinical Psychology	1-3 December	The Lowry Hotel, Manchester	www.dcpconference.co.uk
Psychology 4 Students	7 December	Kensington Town Hall	www.bps.org.uk/conferences
Division of Sport & Exercise Psychology	9-10 December	Holiday Inn, Camden Lock	www.bps.org.uk/dsep2010