



The British Psychological Society
Promoting excellence in psychology

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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

Peter Banister

Contact Peter Banister via the Society's Leicester office, or e-mail: thepresident@bps.org.uk

Another BPS year has flown past, and I have been asked to introduce myself as the Society's new President from June 2012 until June 2013. Although this is a great honour, the span is all too brief and I am sure that, just as the nuances of the post come to light, it will be time to pass the role on to my successor.

There will be plenty for me to report on during the year, but this first column offers me the chance of being a little more personal. My first thing is to offer all our heartfelt thanks to the outgoing president Carole Allan, who nobly stepped into the wide breach left by Noel Sheehy's sad death. Carole has been a wise guide during the year: calm, unflappable and an inspiration to us all. I am very glad that she is staying on as our Vice President to help to guide us through the next year.

The Society is very diverse and there are many different and often conflicting viewpoints to try to steer our way through. I have become convinced that the Trustees, though frequently painted as a *bête noire*, have in fact an extremely difficult task to fulfil, including complying with the demands of the Charity

Commission. In particular there is the age-old belief from the academics that the Society is really only concerned with the practitioner side of psychology, and from the practitioners that the Society is dominated by academics. In truth we are, of course, trying to include both, and probably ending up satisfying neither.

People keep asking me what my goals are for the year, but I know that the year will rapidly disappear. I hope that the membership will surpass the 50,000 mark; growth has been relatively slow since the boost provided by the Health Professions Council (HPC) taking over our professional regulation, despite efforts to try to be more inclusive in our membership. There is an enormous interest in psychology out there, and sometimes I wish that we could have a charismatic representative who could be a figurehead for the discipline on a wider basis.

I am particularly aware of the great interest

in universities and other settings where the BPS, despite its many efforts, still needs to bring more into the fold. I would also like to boost *The Psychologist* as a more general publication, to blow our own trumpet in the world, to tell others of all the fascinating things that we are getting up to. I find it always interesting and thought-provoking, and I marvel at all the

diversity within the discipline it pictures. I realise how privileged I am to be part of this vast and diverse community.

Writing this now in May for publication in July, I thought it might be useful to say a little about where I am coming from, which may have accord with the experience of others. I do realise, however, that over time age means different opportunities, and patterns do not necessarily repeat themselves.

I recently retired from my substantive post as (latterly) Head of Department of Psychology at Manchester Metropolitan University, partly to take up this new role. I must thank the university and colleagues for their long tolerance of my frequent absences on behalf of the Society and psychology. I could not have achieved so much if it had not been for this, and I realise that this has been a privilege and one that many colleagues are less able to embrace, particularly in a world that is becoming more and more focused on the needs of an employer (or self-employment) who is less happy with subsidising other activities. This is probably making it increasingly difficult for people to get involved in BPS activities, which is to be regretted (though I would remind us all that there are lively Branches and Sections that people can get involved in that may be less time-consuming).

Like many that I come into contact with,



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Meet the President

We fire questions at incoming Society President, Dr Peter Banister

Why did you want to be Society President?

I felt that I could make a small difference to help the continuous development of the Society, and that this time immediately after my retirement from academe would mean that I would have the time to devote to this.

Do you think those time demands pose a problem for the Society in ensuring governance is representative of the Society at large?

There are definite problems in that voluntary work for the BPS can take up a lot of time, and there are increasing pressures put on professionals to do the best that they can in their substantive post, and to limit their outside activities. It is a problem that has no easy solution, and we certainly do not want the situation where only retirees have the time to devote to the Society. There are however many opportunities to help with the Society that are less time-consuming, and work for the Society often has many spinoffs, in terms of improving practice, aiding research and the general benefits of networking. Ultimately we may need to be thinking more as to what benefits we can get from external inputs, such as consultancies.

What are your priorities for the coming year?

The time will, I am sure, fly by – the Presidency is only for a year. I hope to be getting about the country as much as possible to meet colleagues and to talk and listen to them. I feel that the public face of the discipline is what we need to try to concentrate on – to quote part of our strap line the ‘promotion and application of psychology for the public good’.

The Society should soon have its 50,000th member. How can you best harness that incredible knowledge base in order to drive the Society and discipline forward?

This is a great milestone, but there are a lot more colleagues out there who we would like to have as members. Greater publicity re our achievements and potential is needed. I think that *The Psychologist* has the potential to be expanded and to appeal to a much wider audience.

Do you think the Society’s new ‘Accreditation in partnership’ emphasis gives undergraduate degrees and training programmes more flexibility and creativity in producing the psychologists of tomorrow?

In the light of the suggestions from the Chicheley Hall retreat on the future of undergraduate psychology, we may need to be moving away

from the detailed curriculum emphasis of the past to something that emphasises the primacy of psychological methods and the development of transferable skills. Hopefully the shift in accreditation in time will reflect this change in emphasis.

So you think the role of the BPS is changing post-HPC?

Hopefully we have left behind the more ‘policing’ and regulatory aspects, and we are developing into a Society that is helping to push forward and promulgate research, communicating to the public and our members about the applications of psychology.

You’ve always had a keen interest in the undergraduate and pre-tertiary curricula in psychology. Do you think its popularity is matched by its practical utility?

Definitely; all along I have tried to emphasise that there are many more people that have studied psychology at the pre-tertiary level than go on to do a degree in psychology, and that only some of our graduates continue in psychology. We ought to be asking what contribution the study of psychology can potentially make at all levels to the development of our citizens. As a result of studying psychology at all levels we should be developing more thinking, inquiring, numerate, critical, reflective members of society, whose contribution is enhanced by the exposure to our discipline.

What research are you working on?

In recent years I have been concentrating on writing book chapters on qualitative methods and editing the second edition of the major text on qualitative methods in psychology. In the past I have held a number of grants for studies in areas such as long-term imprisonment, decarceration of people from long-term institutions and Parkinson’s disease. I am also very interested in curriculum development, and have published in this area, including contributing to the recent report from the Chicheley Hall retreat, which I hope will help to challenge existing thinking and help to improve our provision for our psychology undergraduates.

What are your interests outside psychology?

My interests outside psychology are diverse; these include an emphasis on urban mass transport – historically trams, now more ‘light rail’ – an area that is not extensively covered in psychology in the UK. I also collect late 19th-century and early 20th-century guidebooks for their different views on the world and their unintentional insights into the past. Both these interests perhaps suggest the need for us to learn from the past for the future.

I fell into psychology at university, starting off on a social-science degree and becoming inspired by psychology (and also curiously statistics) to transfer to and ultimately graduate in straight honours psychology (for which I was technically ineligible, not having O-level Latin – but the admissions people were happy to allow me to proceed). These early experiences

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convinced me of the need to be as flexible and inclusive as possible, and interested in curriculum development at all levels. I have worked in a variety of forensic and health settings, and helped both these areas to get professionally recognised; I am registered with the HPC (though I see myself more as an academic than as a practitioner). I would like to make the most of the

year in terms of getting out and about on behalf of the Society, so if you want me to attend at any event (and I have already done many this past year as President Elect) feel free to invite me, and I will endeavour to make it to as many as I can. I may not be able to answer all your questions and queries, but at least it will help me to be further aware of the concerns and interests of our diverse membership and be in a position to share them with my fellow Trustees and the Leicester office.



society

CONSULTATIONS NEWS

Twenty members from eight member network groups were involved in preparing the four consultation responses that were submitted during May; the Society would like to thank all those who took part. Some key points of the responses are provided below. For full details of the Society's consultation-related activities, both current and completed, please visit our website: www.bps.org.uk/consult.

Activities to Improve Young People's Well-being (Department for Education)

The Society welcomed the guidance and applauded its general rationale and aims. However, it was recommended that the guidance be more detailed and provide more specific actions leading to measurable outcomes. In addition, it was urged that the extent and seriousness of the problem be made more explicit and the urgency of delivering appropriate services be highlighted.

Gender Imbalance in EU Corporate Boards (European Commission)

Recommendations were made in this response for:

- | an initial period of self-regulation, rather than quotas, with senior management sponsorship and specific interventions;
- | the use of non-executive directors to support change;
- | the provision of wider societal support for women (such as accessible child care); and
- | a focus on positive goal setting rather than sanctions.

Offender Personality Disorder Workforce Strategy (Department of Health & National Offender Management Service)

Overall, the strategy was welcomed by the Society. However, it was recommended that, in order to avoid any reduction in standards as a result of commissioning, careful planning for the evaluation of commissioned-out services would be needed together with considered exploration of how quality will be maintained and assured within the contract.

Regulation of Health & Social Care Professionals (Law Commission)

The Society's responses to the specific consultation questions:

- | emphasised the principles of competence, high standards, ethical values and public protection;
- | favoured proposals that allow regulators to operate within more efficient, flexible and streamlined structures and as autonomously as possible within the constraints of appropriate public protection;
- | rejected the possibility of political interference in the way regulators are run;
- | favoured transparency, consistency and fairness in fitness to practise procedures; and
- | supported the incorporation in statute of special measures for witnesses who need assistance.

The preparation and submission of the Society's responses to consultations are coordinated by the Consultations Response Team (CRT). All those holding at least graduate membership are eligible to contribute, and all interest is warmly welcomed. Please contact the CRT for further information (consult@bps.org.uk; 0116 252 9508) or visit our website (www.bps.org.uk/consult).

Society vacancies

Professional Practice Board

Chair – Advisory Group on Informatics

See advert p.540

Contact

Zoë Mudie zoe.mudie@bps.org.uk.

Closing date 20 July 2012

Professional Practice Board

Chair – Mind and Body Task Force

See advert p.541

Contact

Zoë Mudie zoe.mudie@bps.org.uk.

Closing date 20 July 2012

Professional Practice Board

Chair – Assessment of Offenders Who Have Accessed Illegal Materials Working Party

See advert p.541

Contact

Zoë Mudie zoe.mudie@bps.org.uk.

Closing date 20 July 2012

SOCIETY NOTICES

Division of Health Psychology Annual Conference 2012,

Liverpool See p.491

BPS conferences and events See p.537

Learning Centre CPD Workshops See p.538

Postdoctoral Conference Bursary Scheme – call for applications See p.540

Transpersonal Psychology Section Annual Conference 2012, Scarborough See p.541

Dr Herbert Gordon Bevans died on 20 April 2012 at the age of 92. He was the principal clinical psychologist at St James Hospital, Leeds until he retired in 1985.

Northern Ireland Branch conference

The annual conference of the Northern Ireland Branch of the Society took place in the beautiful Fermanagh lakeland in May. Why should you be there next year?

You will hear papers on topics than you might not otherwise experience, from notable international and home-grown academics and students. Postgraduate students from Queen's University, Paul O'Callaghan and John McMullen, were the most talked about at the conference and since for their work designing and implementing a trauma-focused CBT programme in the Democratic Republic of Congo for former boy soldiers and sexually abused girls (see tinyurl.com/bwpro2l). The intervention was effective in reducing psychological and psychosocial distress, and the gains were maintained in a three-month follow up. I was one of many touched by their commitment and enthusiasm.

You will have the opportunity to network during well-catered breaks, this year including refreshments on a cruise on the beautiful Lough Erne. Many of the

participants were academics, but as a practitioner participant I found the event a wonderful way of having my own learning expanded, knowledge reinforced and thinking challenged while making new friends and professional contacts.

You will learn how to apply new skills in your own practice in dedicated workshops. Dr Anne De Prince from the University of Denver in Colorado wasn't going to miss her first opportunity to present her work in Ireland. In spite of having travelled across several time zones to be with us, she was like the energizer bunny as she inspired us with her passion. In the aftermath of intimate partner abuse, survivors often report feelings of alienation, fear, shame and self-blame that tend to prevent cases coming to a conclusion within the criminal justice system and leave the abused with the effects of trauma, PTSD, depression and dissociative behaviours. Anne's team has examined the impact of the multiple contexts (personal, interpersonal, spatial and community) in which partner abuse

takes place and assembled a multi-agency model for dealing with the aftermath. This has led to positive outcomes in victim well-being and criminal justice outcomes a year after the initial events (see tinyurl.com/cpv5k6b for more).

You will also have more fun than you imagined possible at a professional meeting as a result of the home-cooked entertainment. Dr Liam O'Hare and Dr Donncha Hanna and their willing stooges dispensed a generous dose of laughter, and guitars and singers were welcome in the bar afterwards.

We enjoyed meeting the Presidents of both the BPS, Dr Carole Allan, and the PSI (Ireland), Dr Michael Drumm. Michael closed the conference, leaving us uplifted about the possibilities that gaming technology offers to enable new ways of engaging with adolescents in professional mental health services.

There were too many great people to mention them all here by name. Why not come and see for yourself next year?

Alison Clarke, Committee Member



The British Psychological Society
Conferences & Events

Organised by BPS Conferences

BPS conferences are committed to ensuring value for money, careful budgeting and sustainability

2012

CONFERENCE	DATE	VENUE	WEBSITE
Association for the Teaching of Psychology	6–8 July	Aston University, Birmingham	www.bps.org.uk/atp2012
Psychology of Women Section	11–13 July	Cumberland Lodge, Windsor	www.bps.org.uk/pows2012
Division of Counselling Psychology	12–14 July	Mercure Leicester City	www.bps.org.uk/dcop2012
Social Psychology Section	21–23 August	St Andrews University, Scotland	www.bps.org.uk/social2012
Cognitive Psychology Section	29–31 August	Menzies Hotel, Glasgow	www.bps.org.uk/cogsec2012
Division of Health Psychology	5–7 September	Holiday Inn, Liverpool City Centre	www.bps.org.uk/dhp2012
DCP Faculty for Children and Young People	26–27 September	Palace Hotel, Manchester	www.bps.org.uk/cyp2012
North East & North West of England Branches	16 November	Etihad Stadium, Manchester	www.bps.org.uk/nenw2012
Psychology 4 Students, Nottingham	21 November	Nottingham Trent University	www.p4snottingham2012
Division of Clinical Psychology	5–7 December	University of Oxford	www.bps.org.uk/dcp2012
Psychology 4 Students, London	6 December	Kensington Town Hall, London	www.p4slondon2012
Special Group in Coaching Psychology	6–7 December	Lakeside Centre, Aston, Birmingham	www.bps.org.uk/sgcp2012

2013

CONFERENCE	DATE	VENUE	WEBSITE
Trainee Educational Psychologist Event	8 January	Thistle Hotel, Bristol	www.bps.org.uk/deceptep2013
Division of Occupational Psychology	9–11 January	Crown Plaza Chester	www.bps.org.uk/dop2013
Division of Educational and Child Psychology	9–11 January	Thistle Hotel, Bristol	www.bps.org.uk/decp2013
Annual Conference	9–11 April	Harrogate International Centre	www.bps.org.uk/ac2013