

# CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

Members of the Society are invited to submit nominations for the following positions on the Society's main Boards to serve from April 2003

## RESEARCH BOARD

**One Ordinary Member**

(two-year term)

**One Ordinary Member**

(one-year term)

## PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE BOARD

**One Ordinary Member**

(two-year term)

## PUBLICATIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS BOARD

**One Member**

(two-year term)

(renewable)

## MEMBERSHIP AND PROFESSIONAL TRAINING BOARD

**One Ordinary Member**

(two-year term)

**One Ordinary Member**

(one-year term)

## PSYCHOLOGY EDUCATION BOARD

**Two Ordinary Members**

(two-year term)

## NOMINATIONS

Nominations should reach the Chief Executive's office by Thursday 2 January 2003. To ensure validity of nomination, you should use the standard nomination form, which gives details of the information and signatories required.

## VOTING

The Board membership for which nominations are invited in this issue will, if contested, be decided by postal ballot prior to the Annual General Meeting 2003. Voting papers will be sent out to Members during February to be returned to Electoral Reform (Ballot Services) Ltd, which will administer the count and confirm the results to the Chief Executive and President before the meeting.

Elections will be conducted using the single transferable vote system, except in the case of elections to fill single seats where there are only two candidates, in which case voters will be asked to place a mark against the candidate of their choice.

**The British Psychological Society**  
**St Andrews House**  
**48 Princess Road East**  
**Leicester LE1 7DR**  
**Tel: 0116 254 9568**

# A game of two halves

**A**T the time of writing this I am halfway through my presidential term of office; this provides a suitable moment to look back at the events of the last six months and to look forward to the remainder of the Council year. There has scarcely been a day so far in my presidency when I have not had to deal with some piece of Society business. Juggle that with the day job that pays the mortgage, and life has certainly been busy – but eminently interesting.

So far we have implemented the new board structures, and at the time you read this, the Membership and Qualifications Board will have evolved into the Membership and Professional Training Board (dealing with membership issues, maintaining the Society's registers and taking responsibility for all aspects of education in psychology beyond GBR) and the Psychology Education Board (which is constituted to deal with the development of the psychology curriculum up to the level of GBR). Professor Peter Morris has been appointed as the first chair of PEB, and I am sure that under his guidance the board will pursue some exciting and long-awaited developments in psychology education at both secondary and tertiary levels.

I have been particularly keen to work with the Society's Branches to develop a Branches strategy. There are many energetic members who contribute significantly to their local Branch, and work with and for their local psychological community. We are now very close to producing a strategy document that will channel this energy and interest into clear strategic objectives backed by appropriate resourcing. These objectives are likely to include involvement in the delivery of CPD, recruitment and retention, developing and maintaining relationships with the local media, taking psychology to the local community, and liaison with local schools, colleges and university departments.

Projects that are ongoing and are likely to progress significantly over the latter part

of this Council year are initiatives to promote recruitment and retention of members, and statutory registration. The initiative on recruitment and retention of members has been ably led by former president Tommy MacKay. It has involved a detailed questionnaire to academics soliciting their views on the Society and the benefits (or not!) of membership; this drive will now be led by the Society's new marketing officer, Anne Pollard. If a recruitment and retention drive is to be successful, it will undoubtedly be necessary for the Society to outline more clearly the benefits of membership, and in particular to be able to offer services to members that are relevant across a broad range of employments.

As the possibility of statutory registration comes closer, the Society is going to have to undertake a good deal of discussion and consultation on what its consequences might be and how the Society will deal with those consequences. While it is clear that statutory registration is undoubtedly in the public interest, we will have to ask searching questions about how it will affect the Society's disciplinary and investigatory procedures, what role the Society will have to play in the accreditation of professional training courses, and how it will affect both Chartered status and membership generally.

Another issue that is unlikely to go away, despite some sustained attempts in the recent past to define its limits and legal standing, is *ultra vires* – what the Society is and is not allowed to do under the terms of its Charter. It is good to see that Ian Rivers has raised some points relevant to this issue in this month's *Psychologist* (p.558), and I am sure the debate will continue in one form or another for some time. In the past the Society has tended to err on the side of conservatism when visiting these issues – if only because the consequences of getting it wrong could be quite catastrophic for the Society both in terms of its charitable status and its finances.

The going has been tough but enjoyable, and I am looking forward to what can be achieved in the next six months. Every president has achievement goals for their own presidential year – in six months' time I'll let you know if I think I've made any impression at all!

*Graham Davey*

Contact address: School of Cognitive and Computing Sciences, University of Sussex, Brighton BN1 9QH. E-mail: [grahamda@cogs.susx.ac.uk](mailto:grahamda@cogs.susx.ac.uk).

## Press Committee

### Media Training Days 2002/3

**Monday 9 December 2002**

**Monday 17 February 2003**

**Monday 2 June 2003**

**Monday 29 September 2003**

**Monday 1 December 2003**

All Media Training Days will be held at the Society's London office at 33 John Street.

The days will include:

- news writing
- snapshots of the media
- media releases
- interview techniques

For a registration form and further details contact:

Dawn Schubert  
The British Psychological Society  
St Andrews House  
48 Princess Road East  
Leicester LE1 7DR  
Tel: 0116 252 9581

**RUN FOR CHARITY**

MENTAL health charity Mind is recruiting runners for next year's London Marathon on Sunday 13 April. Mind has places guaranteed, and their team will be supported through training and fundraising, and on the day itself. Events manager Olivia Richards said: 'We are keen to encourage both first-time and experienced marathon runners alike. This is an amazing and unforgettable personal challenge to undertake.' More information is available at [www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk).

□ Anyone interested in joining Mind's marathon team should contact Mind as soon as possible (tel: 020 8215 2215; e-mail: [marathon@mind.org.uk](mailto:marathon@mind.org.uk)).

**OPEN DAY**

THE Royal Hospital for Neuro-disability, a national medical charity in Putney, is holding an open day for healthcare professionals on Thursday 14 November from 10am to 3pm.

The open day offers an opportunity to learn about the broad range of services available at the Royal Hospital. The event includes a series of presentations by members of the hospital's clinical team, giving an insight into the treatment and care offered at the hospital. A full programme for the event is available at [www.rhn.org.uk](http://www.rhn.org.uk).

□ Entrance is free, but places must be booked. Contact Barney Johns, Communications Assistant (tel: 020 8780 4500 ext 5147; e-mail: [bjohns@rhn.org.uk](mailto:bjohns@rhn.org.uk)).

**CORRECTION**

In the August issue on page 401 two photographs appeared that were incorrectly captioned. One photograph was actually of André Imich and Jean Law (not André Imich and Elaine White) and the other was of Elaine White (not Jean Law). Our apologies to all concerned.

**DEADLINE**

We welcome news items from members for possible publication; deadline for the January issue is **22 November**

# New suicide strategy

**ON average someone takes their own life every two hours in England. Suicide is the main cause of premature death in people with mental illness, and the most common cause of death in men under 35. In 1999, 4448 people killed themselves in the UK. September saw the launch of the government's National Suicide Prevention Strategy to tackle the problem.**

The tactics include reducing the availability and lethality of suicide methods by promoting safer prescribing of

antidepressants, and identifying suicide 'hotspots' and improving the safety in these areas. Other key strategies include reducing the threat in high-risk groups and promoting mental well-being in the wider population. A media action plan is currently being devised that aims to improve the reporting of suicidal behaviour in the media.

Dr Rory O'Connor (University of Strathclyde) was at the launch of the strategy. He cites 'evidence-based consultation and meaningful targeting of the strategy' as two

reasons why 'it has every chance of being effective and reaching its target of reducing suicide by a fifth by 2010'. Dr O'Connor also believes that 'dealing with the stigma of mental health and using a multi-level approach, for example skills acquisition of primary school children and dealing with the wider social and psychological risk factors, are important in reducing suicide'.

□ For more information see [www.doh.gov.uk/mentalhealth/suicideprevention.htm](http://www.doh.gov.uk/mentalhealth/suicideprevention.htm) or tel: 08701 555 455.

## IN BRIEF

**FROM THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE BPS DEVELOPMENTAL SECTION, UNIVERSITY OF SUSSEX, 5-8 SEPTEMBER**

COMPUTER-game style (Pokémon) versions of the continuous performance tests designed to study inhibition in children with ADHD reveal fewer impairments than traditional tests. Rebecca Shaw (Open University) suggested that extra neurological stimulation and increased motivation provided by the games make it easier for these children to stay 'on task'.

GIRLS are more likely than boys to seek help if they are being bullied, according to a study by Simon Hunter (University of Strathclyde). He suggests emphasising the 'macho' aspects of reporting bullying, such as bravery, as a way of ensuring fewer boys 'suffer in silence'.

CHILDREN'S fascination with riddles, jokes and computers is being used to aid their language-comprehension skills in a project at the University of Sussex. Children are presented with a series of ambiguous riddles via software designed to foster children's linguistic awareness,

## WEBSITES

[www.iafpsy.org](http://www.iafpsy.org)

International Academy of Family Psychology.

[www.jasnh.com](http://www.jasnh.com)

Journal of Articles in Support of the Null Hypothesis.

[www.bps.org.uk/careers/research.cfm](http://www.bps.org.uk/careers/research.cfm)

Search a UK database of research interests, and add yourself.

[www.depression.org.uk](http://www.depression.org.uk)

Scientifically based information on stress, anxiety and depression.

[www.howitis.org.uk](http://www.howitis.org.uk)

NSPCC/Triangle image bank to enable better communication with disabled children about their needs, rights and feelings.

**If you come across a website that you think would be of interest to our readers, let us know on [psychologist@bps.org.uk](mailto:psychologist@bps.org.uk).**

explained Nicola Yuill. Understanding of how pairs of children interact with the software is helping to contribute to the literature on the evaluation of learning with school-friendly educational software.

WOMEN show a bias for holding babies on the left side of the body that is independent of handedness and is not matched in males. Now Brenda Todd and Victoria Bourne (University of Sussex) have found that participants who

cradled a doll on the left side had significantly higher laterality quotients than right cradlers on a face-processing task.

ACCORDING to self-presentational models of anxiety, the more you perceive an act as important the more anxious you are likely to be. However, research carried out by Robin Banerjee (University of Sussex) suggests that for children, social anxiety is better predicted by the difficulty of the act than by its importance.

## Maintaining a work-life balance

**T**HE Joseph Rowntree Foundation has published two research reports to mark National Work-Life Balance Week in September.

*Employed Carers and Family-friendly Employment Policies* reports on research into the experiences of managers and staff working in local government, supermarkets and banking. The main finding by researchers from Sheffield Hallam and City Universities, was that half of the employees surveyed were unaware of the full range of family-friendly policies adopted by their employers. Carers expressed concerns that increased workplace pressures were making caring difficult. But in general they valued the experience of employment, while some emphasised that their income was essential.

STEFANO CAGNONI – REPORTDIGITAL.CO.UK

### Working dusk till dawn is not family-friendly

*Happy Families? Atypical Work and Its Influence on Family Life* reports on a survey carried out by the National Centre for Social Research. The research shows that work at atypical times is widespread among parents, and among fathers in particular, and that this is linked with a decrease in family activities. Parents'

control over their working arrangements was found to depend largely on their bargaining position in the labour market.

☐ *Summaries of both reports are available free of charge from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, The Homestead, 40 Water End, York YO30 6WP. E-mail: [www.jrf.org.uk](http://www.jrf.org.uk).*

## DISABLED PARENTS PROJECT

The National Family and Parenting Institute is encouraging disabled parents with one or more children under 18 years old to contact them about what kind of support they have found, or would find, helpful in making parenting less difficult. The charity also wants to hear from people working with such parents about new and developing policies and services.

☐ *Parents and professionals interested in participating in the research can either visit NFPI's websites ([www.e-parents.org](http://www.e-parents.org) or [www.nfpi.org/disabledparents](http://www.nfpi.org/disabledparents)) or call freephone 0800 328 1720.*

# CHAIR – PUBLICATIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS BOARD

## Call for expressions of interest

*The Chair of the Publications and Communications Board, Dr Pam Maras, stands down next year at the Society's AGM after a three-year term of office. This is a call for expressions of interest from Society members who might wish to take on this role.*

The P&C Board Chair is a member of Council, the Board of Directors and a number of other Society committees. The P&C Board meets four times a year (three meetings in London and one at Annual Conference). Council has three meetings a year in London, and the Board of Directors meets 10 times a year usually in London on Fridays.

The main role of the P&C Board is to be responsible to Council for the Society's internal and external communications. A major task of the Chair is to represent it and its reporting committees (Journals Committee, Psychologist Policy Committee, Press Committee) to other parts of the Society. (The Board's Terms of Reference and Membership can be found on the Society's website.)

As the Board Chair is also a member of the Board of Directors the person will also have shared responsibility for all Society policy, strategy and governance.

A job description for the post is available on request from the Society's office. If you want to discuss the post informally and in confidence, please contact the present Chair, Dr Pam Maras, by e-mail ([p.f.maras@gre.ac.uk](mailto:p.f.maras@gre.ac.uk)).

Should you wish to know more about the duties as they relate specifically to the Board of Directors then please contact the President, Professor Graham Davey, at [grahamda@cogs.susx.ac.uk](mailto:grahamda@cogs.susx.ac.uk).

If you wish to be considered for the post, a statement of interest form is available from the Chief Executive's office in Leicester (e-mail: [barbro@bps.org.uk](mailto:barbro@bps.org.uk)).

**The deadline for the receipt of completed statement of interest forms is 5pm Monday 9 December 2002.**