

BASW

The professional association for
social work and social workers

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM) – 15th SEPTEMBER 2021

MOTIONS

Please find all associated documents for the Annual General Meeting on 15th September at:
www.basw.co.uk/annual-general-meeting-2021

Motion 1

We recognise and welcome that BASW is taking action to incorporate the lived and living experience of those who access social work services into BASW operational business and into the shaping of social work practice. However, the North East branch believes we could do more.

This Annual General Meeting calls on BASW to set out a clear timeline that outlines measures that will transform the way the association learns from those with lived and living experience of social work services. This Annual General Meeting calls on BASW to:

- Consider appointing a dedicated member of staff to lead on transforming the way the association learns from those with lived and living experience of social work services.
- Consider opening up the association to affiliate membership to allow those with lived and living experience of social work services to join BASW.
- Consider forming a campaign in partnership with other organisations to highlight the importance and value of those with lived and living experience of social work services being represented within governance structures of organisations who work with and for people who use social work.

On the authority of the North East branch

Motion 2

Last year, this Annual General Meeting agreed motions highlighting the importance of education in anti-racist practice.

This Annual General Meeting notes that education - including social work education - is socially constructed, and in particular that Black history, the history of the British Empire and colonial history has not been taught in schools thus far. Social Work education needs to remedy that situation until such time as it is a normal part of modern UK education.

This Annual General Meeting, therefore, calls on BASW to further last year's motions by supporting efforts across the UK towards a social work education that addresses the impact of historical and current power on what is taught, and recognises the oppression of minoritised communities. Also to support calls for

education about Black history and anti-Black racism in particular.

**On the authority of the Wales Committee
(BASW Cymru)**

Motion 3

This Annual General Meeting recognises the importance of social workers understanding the living experience of poverty and combatting poverty. BASW should further understand and combat food insecurity. Food insecurity is the lived experience of food poverty, (*Watters, 2021*). It is not solely an economic issue. Food insecurity can affect all aspects of your wellbeing, your confidence and your ability to engage in society.

This Annual General Meeting agrees that BASW will consider understanding of food insecurity as a vital element of professional capabilities, and will promote this within professional capabilities standards, for example, the Professional Capabilities Framework in England. This will help to acknowledge the broader impact structural issues have on families and communities living in, and amongst, poverty.

On the authority of the Kent branch

Motion 4

BASW is concerned that homelessness and the lack of affordable, social and quality housing remains a key issue in terms of children coming into care, and as issues for older people and disabled people. The level of Rents and Benefits is a major concern. These are also issues for social workers themselves in many parts of the UK.

This Annual General Meeting asks BASW to review and update its policies on Housing and Homelessness by the 2022 Annual General Meeting in consultation with key housing and homelessness Non-Governmental Organisations, and with BASW UK members.

Further, this Annual General Meeting asks BASW to campaign on housing and homelessness issues, and to make sure in its own workings and investments we take an ethical approach and encourage the development of affordable housing and an improved benefit system.

On the authority of the Black Country branch

Motion 5

There need to be checks and balances in children's services and family law to ensure decision making is unequivocally evidenced-based, accountable, transparent and in the best interest of the child.

Involving parents with lived experience in a structured and purposeful way such as advocacy and mentoring (paid employment with the requisite training and supervision) is a means of redressing the imbalance of power held by local government and family courts. It is the duty of the social work profession to ensure anti oppressive/anti discriminatory practice so that the voices of those who are most vulnerable and marginalised are heard, understood, and effectively represented.

The Annual General Meeting calls on BASW Council to review how BASW can proactively support and encourage advocacy organisations such as the Parent Advocacy Network and Parents Friends and Allies Network (PFAN) as a vital resource for families and children who are in the children's and court systems, in order to improve outcomes for children.

**On the authority of the Wales Committee
(BASW Cymru)**

Motion 6

The North East branch recognises the distinctive and unique challenges and disparities affecting our region such as high child poverty rates and high rates of children coming into care. Inequalities highlighted in the pandemic show the unique living experiences and challenges of people in different UK regions and that social work practice differs depending on community and place.

This Annual General Meeting calls on BASW to review its current operational practices, including organisation of staffing to consider how the needs of the different regions of the UK are met.

On the authority of the North East branch

Motion 7

People whose preferred language is not English or those who are communicating verbally through an interpreter can experience some degree of misinterpretation of the message. This variability of message can range from slight to severe.

This Annual General Meeting urges all social workers to challenge the oppression experienced by people whose preferred language is not English in such situations.

This Annual General Meeting asks that BASW highlights the importance of this in its own guidance and professional development activity. And that BASW advocates for the resourcing, training and support, and operational accessibility of interpreter services across children's, adults' and mental health services.

Communication is key to social work.

**On the authority of the Wales Committee
(BASW Cymru)**

Motion 8

BASW North East branch is opposed to BASW supporting the Social Work Awards in England and is opposed to BASW England's position as a 'corporate partner' to the awards. BASW North East branch is concerned about the Social Work Awards close links to Sanctuary Personnel, which has been the 'headline sponsor' of the Social Work Awards for the past ten years, during which time its revenue from social work recruitment has steadily increased. Sanctuary is a growing network of businesses that has recently expanded into residential children's homes with an annual revenue in the £100ms. In 2020, a year of unprecedented challenge for social work and social care due to the pandemic and ongoing cuts to local government, Sanctuary has increased net profits to £2.3m, up nearly £1.5m on the previous year. This fact sits uneasily with BASW's concerns about chronic underfunding of local government services and workforce instability, contributing to poor working conditions for social workers.

This Annual General Meeting calls on BASW to withdraw support from the Social Work Awards in England. As the professional association for social work and social workers in the UK, this Annual General Meeting calls on BASW to consider hosting its own annual celebration of social work that is UK-wide and open to all social workers and the people they support, harnessing the 'new normal' of tech-enabled participation and built on the principles of co-production and equal participation.

On the authority of the North East branch

Motion 9

Recognising the substantial and indispensable contribution to the delivery of UK social services of social workers who qualified in other countries and those from diaspora communities who qualified and continue to practise in the UK, this Annual General Meeting:

- Acknowledges and deplores the discrimination and racism which our colleagues have experienced and continue to do so, in the wider community and in workplaces
- Regrets that the Department of Health did not consult with BASW when leading on the revised UK code of practice for international recruitment published in February 2021, and calls on government departments across the UK to engage with BASW and other stakeholders to ensure that the international code of practice has equal relevance to social as well as health services
- Calls on BASW to use its resources to develop more consistent and effective welcome and induction programmes for newly arrived social workers recruited from abroad and for employers
- Recognises the valuable assistance to individual social workers provided by formal and informal diaspora support groups
- Supports the creation of the BASW UK Diaspora Social Workers Special Interest Group to provide peer support, networking opportunities and advocacy for social workers, building on effective partnerships with diaspora support groups.

On the authority of the International Committee

Motion 10

BASW Council formed the Social Workers Union in 2011 to guarantee employment representation for members because a number of employers were declining BASW representation. From our very first SWU member in 2011 to 14,600 ten years later, SWU has grown and now the majority of BASW members are also SWU members. The significance of SWU as part of the growth of BASW is clear as the value of Trade Unionism has grown.

This Annual General Meeting recognises the terrific work of the Advice and Representation Service, and the partnership between BASW and SWU, and asks BASW to commit itself to reflect and develop that spirit of partnership.

This Annual General Meeting extends our warm congratulations to the Social Workers Union on its 10th anniversary, and looks forward to many more years of working together through the co-operation agreement for the good of social work and social workers.

Proposed by Angi Naylor

BASW

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