

The Social Work Show

Event Programme

16 March 2026

Birmingham Conference and Events Centre

Media Partner



Social Work Today

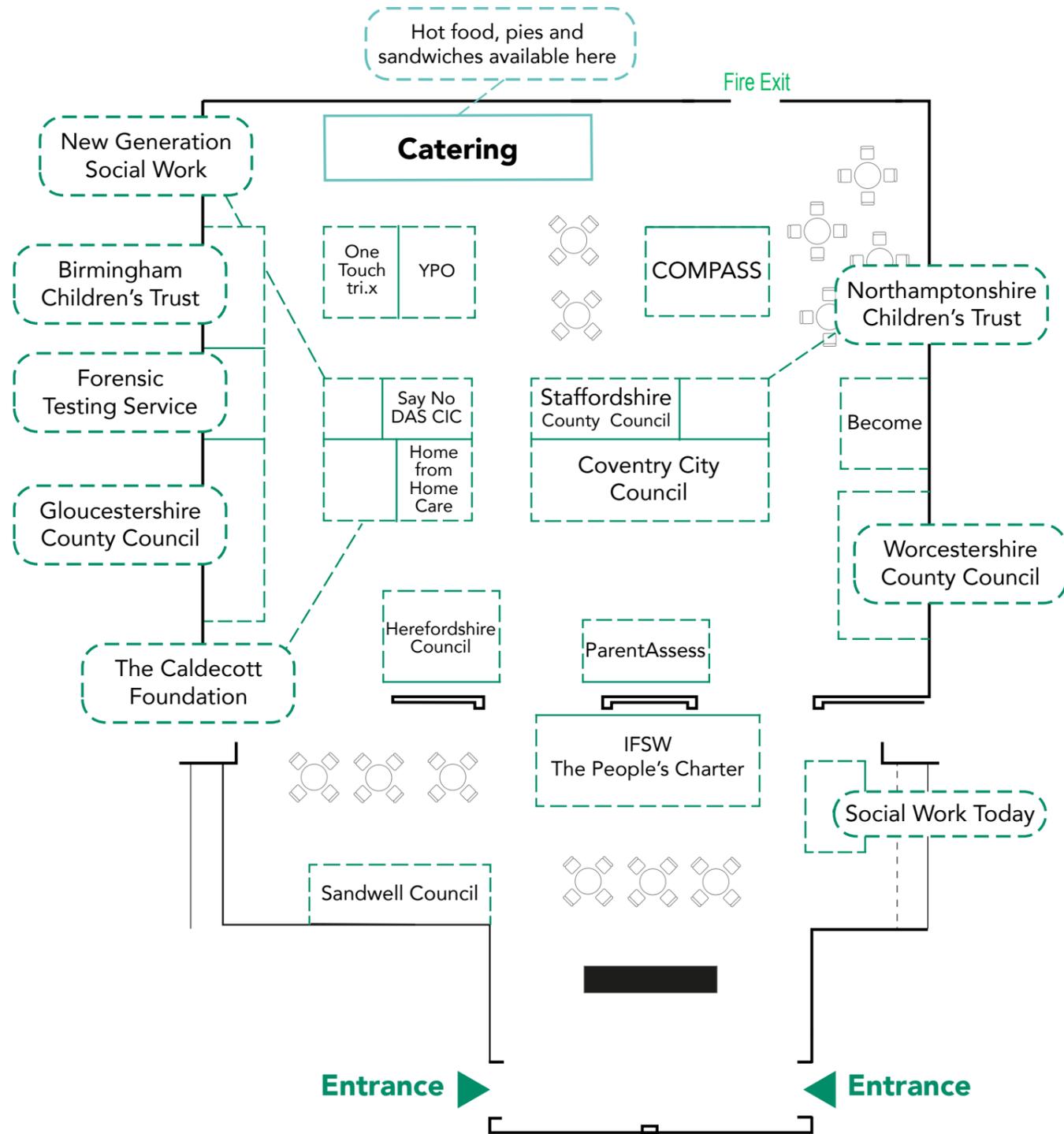
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The **Social Work** Show
Hilton Deansgate Manchester

Speak to the following organisations exhibiting at The Social Work Show



2F – Exhibition Hall



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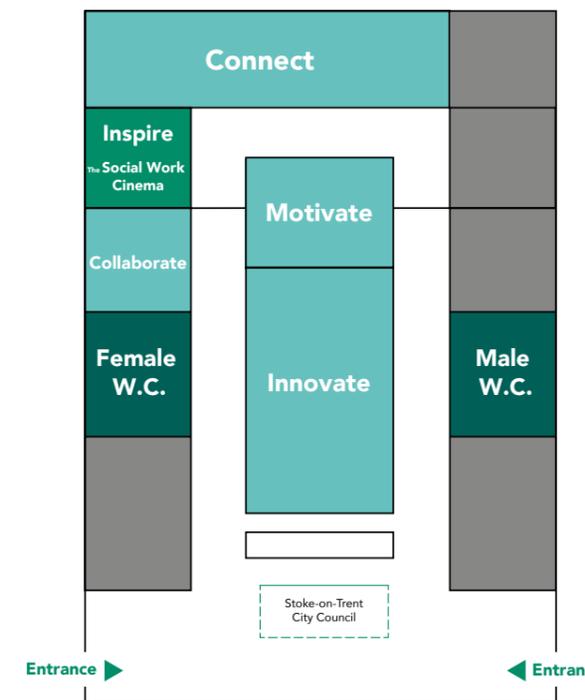
Retain this guide as evidence of your CPD
Hold onto this guide, along with your CPD certificate which can be collected at 4pm, as evidence of your attendance at this event

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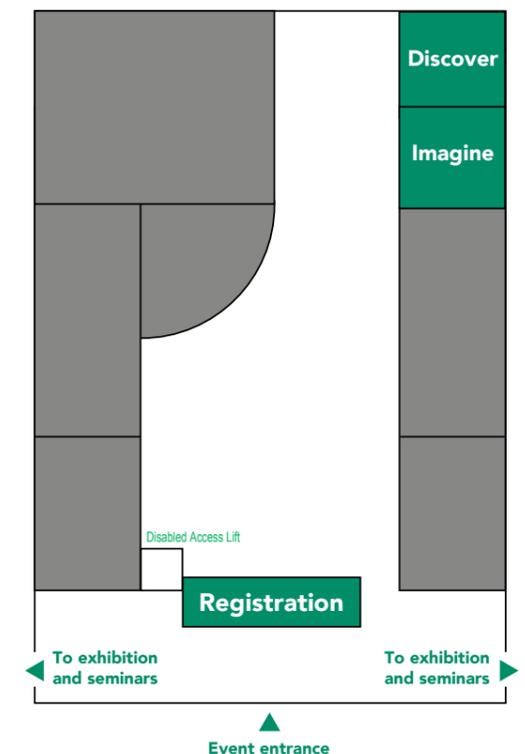
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Seminar Rooms – Conference Programme on pages 11-19



1F – Seminars



GF – Seminars

A national conference for
social work and
social care professionals

The Social Work Show

Hilton Deansgate Manchester
28 September 2026

"I attended this event last year and due to a very helpful and insightful experience I promised myself to commit to this every year! I am pleased to say that again I am feeling more enriched with knowledge and support which is so valuable."

Social Worker

A COMPASS event
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Visitor information

Speak to the organisers

The COMPASS team can be found on our stand in the Exhibition Hall. Come and find us for any questions relating to this and future events. You are also invited to network and chat with us in the Exhibition Hall at 4.00pm, where you can also collect your CPD certificate.

Free seminars

All seminars are free to attend. However, entry to the seminars is on a first-come, first-served basis. To adhere to the Health & Safety Regulations there is a maximum capacity for the seminar rooms. If you are unable to attend the seminar of your choice please come to the COMPASS stand and we will arrange to have any questions answered for you.

Photographs

Photographs are taken throughout the day. These will be used in promotional literature for future events. Attendance at the event signifies acceptance of this use.

Would your organisation like to exhibit next year?

To reserve an exhibition stand for next year's Social Work Show, please speak to one of the COMPASS team on our exhibition stand and we will be able to discuss your requirements.

Refreshments and other food options

Drinks, sandwiches and hot food will be available to purchase throughout the day from the catering area in the Exhibition Hall.



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Speak to the following organisations exhibiting at The Social Work Show

See the Exhibition Plan on the inside front cover of this programme

Become

Become is the national charity for care experienced young people- we are here to support every child and young person with experience of the care system. We deliver free services and provide support to young people, train the professionals around them, and campaign together for change within the system.



Birmingham Children's Trust



Birmingham Children's Trust exists to make a positive difference for vulnerable children, young people and families in Birmingham and our focus is clear. Talk to us about the improvements we have already made in children's social work, and how you can be part of our journey. Join us so we can support you in your future career development.

The Caldecott Foundation



The Caldecott Foundation is a not-for-profit charity delivering specialist therapeutic residential care, education, and foster care to traumatised children or those with specific educational needs.

Our Relational Model of Care and Education ensures that we support children and young people to feel safe by developing nurturing, nourishing, and safe relationships.

COMPASS



Come and meet the team who put this event together. We specialise in events, marketing, and publishing for the social work and social care sector. We organise three events throughout the year across the UK with The Social Work Show in Birmingham and Manchester, and the COMPASS Jobs Fair in London.

Collect your CPD certificate from 4.00pm in the Exhibition Hall from Stand 26 – COMPASS

Coventry City Council



At Coventry Children's Services, children, families and relationships come first. As a 'Good' authority, we are committed to strengths-based, relational and restorative practice through our Family Valued approach. Visit our stand to speak with social workers and residential colleagues about career opportunities, progression and development across our Children's & Adult Services. You'll also find The Relational Social Work Podcast zone, sharing honest conversations about social work practice and leadership. If you're looking for a place where your values matter and your work makes lasting change, come and meet us.

www.coventry.gov.uk/socialworkjobs

Forensic Testing Service



Forensic Testing Service (FTS) specialises in comprehensive forensic drug and alcohol investigations, providing expert analysis tailored for legal proceedings. Unlike routine testing labs, FTS offers in-depth evaluations that ensure accurate interpretations, reducing the risk of misleading results. Their advanced approach is crucial for reliable, evidence-based decisions in family court cases.

Gloucestershire County Council



Discover the magic of Gloucestershire—where vibrant communities, beautiful landscapes, and supportive teams empower you to thrive. Whether you're building your career in Children's or Adults' Services, enjoy meaningful work, flexible options, strong development pathways, and a generous rewards package. Join us and make a lasting difference across our county.

Herefordshire Council



At Herefordshire Council we're working hard to provide the best services possible for our children and families. We're looking for individuals who share our passion. Join us on our journey - take the first steps towards your new career! Come and meet the team on our stand.

Home From Home Care

Family Value, Data Informed Care; Home From Home Care provides specialist residential care for adults (18+) with learning disabilities, autism and complex physical health & mental health needs. As an outcomes-focused service, we design bespoke environments, care and support packages around each person to enable them to lead a fulfilled adult life on their own terms. We focus on independence, self-worth and new opportunities as well as build on life skills from education to ensure each individual continues to progress and develop to their fullest potential.



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www.socialworktoday.co.uk

International Federation of Social Workers – The People's Charter



Join Ruth Stark – Social Worker and IFSW Global President from 2014 to 2018 – in an open space for everyone to reflect and contribute to the vision, role and aspiration of 'leaving no-one behind, working with all people in our communities for our shared sustainable well-being.'

Building on The People's Charter for an Eco-Social World – Co-Building a New Eco-Social World developed with millions of people around the world at the UN summit in 2022 there are actions we can do together to *make a difference* – the most common phrase used by every aspiring social worker who seeks to develop their very precious skills as they learn to *walk the talk*.

Take part in activities in the Exhibition Hall, with the results shared through Social Work Today as we journey towards harmony in our eco-sustainable shared futures.

Come along to celebrate World Social Work Day, get involved in the conversation and have your say on the future of social work.



JOIN US ON OUR JOURNEY

Experience personal growth, continuous support and the opportunity to see where we can take your career.

Take the first step today and join us on our journey to a brighter future for children, young people and their families.

Experienced Social Workers will receive:
£10,000 Welcome Payment
PLUS annual £5,000 market rate supplement
Relocation package of up to £10,000
Ongoing training and support

We would love to have you on board

www.spiritofherefordshire.com/children-young-people/







hfdscouncil

herefordshire.gov.uk

New Generation Social Work



We build on passion.

New Generation Social Work is a project about redefining how we construct dialogue in safe and creative ways, whilst connecting with people, their perspectives and stories. Using modern tools like podcasts, blogs, newsletters, and social media to capture the imaginations of professionals from all backgrounds, we hope you will join us in capturing the true essence of social work perspectives and how their contribution creates the dynamics of the profession we are all passionate about.

Northamptonshire Children's Trust



At Northamptonshire Children's Trust, children, young people and families are at the heart of all we do – in every decision we make and every action we take.

Our workforce is our most valuable asset and are pivotal to making the services and support we offer to children, young people and families who need us to be the absolute best we can be.

We value our colleagues and empower them to be able to do the best job of their lives every single day, working in a culture of support and kindness where achievements are celebrated and creativity is very much welcomed.

OneTouch tri.x



Part of OneTouch, tri.x has been delivering web-enabled information, procedures and guidance for the social care sector since 2006. Our online procedures and handbooks underpin statutory requirements and reflect best practice in social care and safeguarding, supporting positive outcomes for children and adults. Used by over 98% of UK local authorities, we combine real-world legal, professional and technical experience with continuous innovation, working in partnership with public and private sector organisations to meet evolving needs.

ParentAssess



ParentAssess is a leading training provider dedicated to equipping social work professionals with practical skills and essential knowledge.

Our specialist parenting assessment model is the most widely recognised framework in the UK.

We offer a diverse range of training courses for all professionals working with families in social care.

Sandwell Council



Our most valuable asset is our staff. Make a real difference and join Sandwell Council. Staff have access to various benefits, including generous annual leave entitlement, a fantastic pension, and training and development. We are continually investing in the Borough to support our residents. Visit www.wmjobs.co.uk and search for Sandwell.

Say No DAS CIC



Say No DAS CIC is a trauma-informed community interest company tackling the root causes of domestic abuse and violence. We support survivors, children, and professionals through education, regulation tools, and risk-aware practice. Our work strengthens safeguarding, improves communication, and helps break cycles of harm through early intervention and system-ready support.

Social Work Today



Stay up to date with all things social work via our free daily e-newsletter sent out every weekday.

With information on social work jobs, news, events, CPD and more, Social Work Today is the platform for the social work sector. To be a part of this global community and to find out more visit www.socialworktoday.co.uk and subscribe for free.

Staffordshire County Council



We're always looking for caring people to join our Children's and Adults teams. We'll have team members such as Social Workers, Practice Leads, and our recruitment team on hand to talk about roles and what it's like to work with us! We're a friendly bunch so come and say hi!



Stoke-on-Trent City Council

Stoke-on-Trent City Council Children's Social Care is committed to protecting and improving the lives of children and families. We offer supportive leadership, clear progression routes and strong professional development.

Visit our stand to explore senior and experienced social work opportunities and build your career with us and be the difference.

Worcestershire County Council



Worcestershire County Council is a 'Good' rated Local Authority committed to helping children thrive and achieve their potential. In our recent staff survey over 95% of individuals reported high job satisfaction and feel happy. We offer a strong ASYE programme, excellent training and a supportive career development path. Come and meet our team to start your journey with us.

YPO



YPO has been at the heart of public sector procurement for over 50 years, providing commissioners with the tools they need to work more effectively. Our health and social care frameworks help commissioners meet the varying challenges faced within the sector; including achieving better value for money and high quality, personalisation and market development.

Collect your CPD certificate from 4.00pm at the COMPASS stand in the Exhibition Hall

All exhibitors listed here have an employer profile on the COMPASS website

Information about all Social Work Show exhibitors and advertisers can be found on our website. You can get information about current job vacancies, open days, training opportunities, and new products, as well as follow up on conversations you've had today. Profiles will remain live for **one month** after this event, so make the most of today and visit

www.compassjobsfair.com



JOIN OUR TEAM!

We are seeking experienced social workers who have a passion and determination to make a real difference to the lives of children, young people and their families



What we offer you:

- 28 days' annual leave, plus 8 Bank Holidays (pro rata for part time) and an additional 5 days, after 5 years
- Local Government Pension Scheme plus immediate life cover (3 times your annual salary from day one) and ill-health pension protection
- Opportunity to purchase up to 25 days additional annual leave
- Employee Assistance Programme - Health Assured is available for you and your immediate family members, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and includes telephone counselling, legal advice, bereavement support and medical information
- Employee discounts with local and national retailers, days out, travel and eating out plus lots more
- Flexible and family working arrangements including enhanced maternity benefits
- A permanent, supportive and inclusive management team where you will be empowered to make good professional decisions
- Extensive Learning and Development and career development opportunities
- Heavily subsidised town centre car parking scheme

Supporting Children - A Career That Matters

Find out more: <https://careers.nctrust.co.uk>




Northamptonshire Children's Trust

Save the date for next year's event

15 March 2027



Social Work Today

Your social work community

Social Work

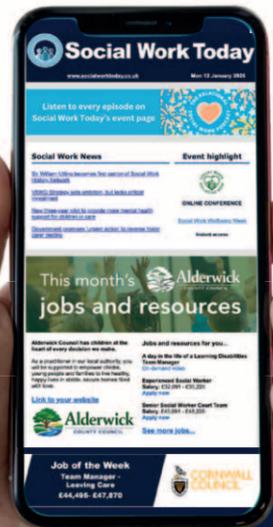
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Receive daily e-news bulletins on the latest issues, jobs and CPD events for professionals in the social work sector.

Receive one email with everything at 10am, every day.

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Relationships are central to social work practice. The Relational Social Work Podcast explores the importance of connection and relationships in social work, celebrating excellent and innovative practice 'with' amazing children, young people and families, and having honest conversations about some of the struggles which we can face in children and families social work.

Each episode is a conversation between hosts, Matt Clayton and Hannah Bedford, with prominent guests from the field of social work



The Social Work Show

Part of **compass** events



Conference programme

Discover		Ground Floor			
10.00 - 10.40 Social work and homelessness: Bridging the gap Katherine Hutton & Luke Morrisson, Williams, Staffordshire County Council	11.00 - 11.40 Let's talk about race Delroy Madden, Independent Trainer	12.20 - 1.00 Generative AI and its implications for safeguarding, identity, relationships and wellbeing Dr Peter Buzzi, Author	1.20 - 2.00 Managing conflict in social work Dr Neil Thompson, Author	2.20 - 3.00 Deprivation of Liberty and Best Interests Sandra Wilkinson, University of Wolverhampton	3.20 - 4.00 Keeping stress at bay Dr Neil Thompson, Author
Imagine		Ground Floor			
11.00 - 11.40 Why neurodiversity matters in social work Lauren Crickmar, Independent SW	12.10 - 12.50 Working in a trauma-informed way with parents Cathy Sharman, ParentAssess	1.30 - 2.10 Understanding madness: A new psychosocial model of mental health in practice and theory Dr Robert Murphy, Author	2.30 - 3.10 'I didn't even know I had any rights': Addressing the Care Cliff Helen Leadbitter MBE, Become	3.20 - 4.00 Decision-making and interventions with adults in legal frameworks Sandra Wilkinson, University of Wolverhampton	
Innovate		First Floor			
10.00 - 10.40 Exploring social work and Parental Alienation Nushra Mansuri, University of Birmingham	11.00 - 12.00 Panel session Social work reforms and integrated AI - What does the future of social work look like? The Relational Social Work Podcast	12.40 - 1.20 Engaging with fathers in child protection Linda Halliday & Sobia Sultana, Parallel Lives CIC	2.00 - 2.40 Panel session An interview with Newly Qualified Social Workers on their ASYE journey: Real life stories Sophie Gilbert, Birmingham Children's Trust	3.00 - 3.40 Using social media safely as a social worker Vicki Shevlin, COMPASS	
Connect		First Floor			
10.20 - 11.00 When risk hides in plain sight: Why dangerous patterns are still being missed Kate Beesley, Domestic Abuse Expert	11.40 - 12.20 Young people's participation and co-production Emma Lightfoot PSW, & members of The Voice project, Staffordshire County Council	12.50 - 1.30 What self care really means as a social worker Vicki Shevlin, COMPASS	1.50 - 2.30 The adultification of Black & Asian children Delroy Madden, Independent Trainer	3.10 - 3.50 Responding to male victims of domestic abuse and other forms of harm: What professionals need to know Linda Halliday & Sobia Sultana, Parallel Lives CIC	
Motivate		First Floor			
10.00 - 10.40 Before you knock: Confidence and safety in home visits Vicki Shevlin, COMPASS	11.10 - 11.50 Becoming agents for positive therapeutic change: Three questions the 'person in the parenting role' should ask Colin Maginn, Pillars of Parenting	12.10 - 12.50 Having difficult conversations in social work: Golden tips for practice Hardeep Sandhu, Worcestershire County Council	1.10 - 1.50 Starting and growing an independent social work practice Joe Z Mairura, Independent SW	2.10 - 2.50 The forensic lens: Gaining clarity in complex safeguarding cases Steve Nurdin, FTS	
Collaborate		First Floor			
11.30 - 12.30 Meeting the CPD requirements for Social Work England re-registration Dr Carol Stewart, Independent Trainer	12.50 - 1.30 Beyond crisis response: Building trauma-informed systems that work Kate Beesley, Domestic Abuse Expert	2.00 - 2.40 Should youth justice play a greater role in social work education? Dennis Egenamba, Youth Justice Expert	3.00 - 3.40 Conscious leadership in social work practice Joe Z Mairura, Independent SW		
Inspire - The Social Work Cinema		First Floor			
10.00 AI Klaxons - AI deciding elderly care and the fake selfie Digital Care Hub	11.30 Five Myths about Mental Capacity Mental Capacity Law and Policy	1.00 Release from Detention: Mental Health Act 1983 and Court of Protection Garden Court Chambers	2.40 Facing the Impact: a restorative justice film from Southwark YJS Restorative Justice Council	3.20 March 2026 Mental Capacity Report and walkthrough Mental Capacity Law and Policy	



Collect your CPD certificate from the COMPASS stand in the Exhibition Hall from 4pm only

Find your way around the conference

See the full event plan on the inside front cover

Ground Floor Seminar Rooms
Discover & Imagine

Middle Floor Seminar Rooms
Innovate, Motivate, Connect & Collaborate

10.00 - 10.40
Room: Discover

Social work and homelessness: Bridging the gap

Katherine Hatton, Consultant Social Worker; and Luke Morrisson Williams, Rough Sleeper Coordinator, Staffordshire County Council



Social workers play a crucial role in supporting people experiencing homelessness — not only in responding to crisis, but in helping individuals access long-term stability, dignity and inclusion. This seminar explores how social work can bridge the gap between vulnerable people and the systems designed to support them, through strong partnerships, advocacy and relational practice.

Katherine Hatton will outline her role as Consultant Social Worker for Housing and Homelessness, focusing on how social work practice can connect housing, social care and wider services more effectively. Joined by Luke Morrisson Williams, Rough Sleeper Coordinator, the session will highlight the importance of joint working across agencies and the impact this has on outcomes for individuals.

Using real case examples, Katherine and Luke will demonstrate how collaborative approaches can reduce barriers, improve engagement and support people to move beyond homelessness towards sustainable change.

10.00 - 10.40
Room: Innovate

Exploring social work and Parental Alienation: Preliminary messages from an innovative research project

Nushra Mansuri, Assistant Professor in Social Work, Coventry University, and PhD Researcher, University of Birmingham



Social workers have been participating in a significant research study focusing on their experiences with 'parental alienation'—referred to by Cafcass as 'alienating behaviours'. Led by Assistant Professor in Social Work (Coventry University) Nushra Mansuri, also a postgraduate researcher at the University of Birmingham, where she is conducting this study which comprises a survey and interviews to deepen our understanding of child and family social workers' practice experience of these complex issues.

Parental alienation is a controversial yet critical issue in respect of the welfare of children. It involves behaviours by one parent that undermine a child's relationship with the other parent and presents unique challenges for social workers who strive to support affected children and families given that it has become the elephant in the room in statutory social work.

Join Nushra as she shares her early thoughts coming out of these interviews regarding social workers' knowledge of parental alienation, experiences of direct work and challenges in this area.

10.00 - 10.40
Room: Motivate

Before you knock: Confidence and safety in home visits

Vicki Shevlin, Trainer, COMPASS



Home visits are not simple, especially in safeguarding. Entering someone's home means stepping into their world. It requires sensitivity, self-awareness, and practical preparation.

This seminar explores what happens before you knock, focusing on how practitioners can prepare mentally, emotionally and practically for visits that may carry risk, uncertainty or emotional intensity.

Participants will learn how to take five minutes to plan for safety — including assessing known risks, considering travel logistics and thinking about when to visit alone or with a colleague. The session will also cover communication strategies such as leaving written notes or letters appropriately and ethically, maintaining confidentiality, and providing families with clear, compassionate messages even when contact isn't made.

Equally important, the seminar will offer grounding and self-regulation techniques that help social workers bring calm and presence into the home. From mindful breathing to managing tone and pace of speech, participants will discover small but powerful ways to build trust and de-escalate tense situations.

This session will equip you with practical tools, reflective strategies and confidence for one of social work's most complex tasks.

Collect your CPD certificate

only from 4.00pm

10.20 - 11.00
Room: Connect

When risk hides in plain sight: Why dangerous patterns are still being missed

Kate Beesley, Domestic Abuse Expert, Say No DAS CIC



In this impactful seminar, Kate Beesley, trauma and domestic abuse specialist, advocate, and trainer, unpacks the often-missed psychological patterns that underpin stalking, coercive control, and post-separation abuse.

Drawing on both professional expertise and lived experience, Kate explores the internal drivers behind perpetrator behaviour, the trauma-informed lens needed to truly understand risk, and the reasons why some of the most dangerous individuals are still being minimised or misunderstood in frontline practice.

You'll gain practical insight into key risk indicators, behavioural clusters, and safeguarding blind spots, including how language, fear, and professional assumptions can either reduce or escalate harm.

Designed for professionals across adult and children's services, this session will leave you better equipped to identify invisible risk and make informed, defensible safeguarding decisions in complex cases.

11.00 - 11.40
Room: Discover

Let's talk about race

Delroy Madden, Independent Trainer, Delroy Madden Training



Join this session to explore why race has become such a difficult subject to talk about. Participants will explore what race is and investigate when it started to be used by society and how this journey has shaped modern perceptions and attitudes towards race. In the discussion, Delroy will help you gain a better understanding of the lived experiences of ethnic groups who have experienced institution and systemic discrimination and how this impacts the way they engage with statutory services individually and as communities.

By the end of the course, learners will have gained a clearer and more confident understanding of how to be culturally competent in their practice. They will understand what race is, why it has been used to categorise people, and how these ideas developed over time. Learners will also explore the impact of systemic racism and how it shapes lived experience, attitudes and engagement with services. In addition, the session will examine common racist narratives, how they are formed, and the ways they continue to influence individuals, institutions and wider society today.

11.00 - 11.40
Room: Imagine

Why neurodiversity matters in social work

Lauren Crickmar, Independent Social Worker, NLP and ADHD Coach



Lauren provides expert court reports for parents with a learning disability or who are neurodivergent, assessing with insight from her lived experience, as Lauren is neurodivergent herself.

Lauren will explore the emergence of neurodiversity over recent years and the key issues for both social workers who are neurodivergent, and the families that we support within social work. This workshop examines what neurodivergence is, the challenges, strengths and key issues within society that impact on ND communities, in particular, social care staff and families. Lauren provides a unique insight into neurodiversity as a social worker, the challenges and superpowers and how ND staff can be supported within their organisations. Lauren has worked intensively with ND families and Local Authorities will know that learning disabilities or neurodiversity are being raised more frequently within care proceedings. Lauren uses case studies, good practice guidance and the law to demonstrate how, with acceptance, understanding and thinking outside the box, parents can be supported to safely care for their children.

Join this session to find out more about neurodiversity and how you can apply learning to your own practice.

11.00 - 12.00
Room: Innovate

Panel session

Social work reforms and integrated AI: What does the future of social work look like?

Hosts: Matt Clayton and Hannah Bedford, Social Workers, The Relational Social Work Podcast

Panel: Dr Neil Thompson, Independent Writer, Educator and Adviser

Lisa Harris - Director of Help and Protection, Birmingham Children's Trust

Mike Hayward, Principal Social Worker, Solihull Children's Services

Farai Kanengoni, Operational Lead, Children's Residential Services, Coventry City Council



Join Matt and Hannah for a live recording of the popular Relational Social Work Podcast, bringing thought-provoking conversation and real-world practice insight straight to the conference floor.

With relationships at the heart of social work, this special live panel will explore how current social work reforms and the growing use of integrated AI are shaping the future of child and family practice. What opportunities do these changes present — and what risks must the profession navigate to protect relational, ethical and trauma-informed work?

Ground Floor Seminar Rooms Discover & Imagine

Middle Floor Seminar Rooms Innovate, Motivate, Connect & Collaborate

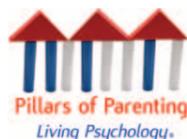
11.10 - 11.50
Room: Motivate

Becoming agents for positive therapeutic change: Three questions the 'person in the parenting role' should ask

Colin Maginn, Director, Pillars of Parenting

The person in the parenting role is most likely to be the one to have a positive therapeutic impact on the child. Yet, it is unlikely that most foster parents and residential care staff have been trained in the psychological theory to support children. This seminar organises the complex knowledge base from psychological theory and research, into three simple questions: First, 'What are Amy's strengths?' (The positive psychology of strengths). Second, 'What are Amy's parenting needs?' (The multiple psychological theories supporting our eight 'Pillars of Parenting' to find current priority parenting needs). Third, 'Where is Amy on her trauma journey?' (How to facilitate Amy's recovery from trauma and achieve post traumatic growth).

Join Colin as he explains how research shows an approach combining the adult's knowledge of the child with psychology insights, is most effective.



11.30 - 12.30
Room: Collaborate

Masterclass on meeting the CPD requirements for Social Work England re-registration

Dr Carol Stewart, Social Worker and Director, Chinara Enterprises Ltd

Are you a social worker wanting to meet the CPD standards set by Social Work England? Join this masterclass to equip yourself with essential knowledge, practical tips, and effective tools to help you confidently meet your CPD requirements.

Whether you're new to the profession or an experienced social worker, this masterclass will give you the tools you need to stay on top of your CPD requirements and make the process more straightforward and rewarding.

Facilitated by Dr Carol Stewart, Director Chinara Enterprises Ltd, a registered social worker of over 30 years, who has extensive experience in supporting the learning and development of health and social care professionals at all levels.



11.40 - 12.20
Room: Connect

Young people's participation and co-production: Learning from The Voice Project

Emma Lightfoot, Principal Social Worker, Staffordshire County Council; Plus members of The Voice Project

Engaging young people in consultation and co-production can be challenging. Come and hear about Staffordshire's Voice Project who run ten well-attended forums every month as well as termly opportunities for children with special educational needs and disabilities and a growing offer for parents with experience of accessing children's social care services.

Get top tips on how to recruit young people and keep them interested and engaged, how to ensure meaningful participation and co-production and how to measure impact.



12.10 - 12.50
Room: Imagine

Working in a trauma-informed way with parents

Cathy Sharman, Trainer, ParentAssess



Many parents involved with social services have experienced trauma, whether in childhood or adulthood, which can affect how they think, learn, and respond to support. As a result, many traditional strategies for working with parents are ineffective and genuine long-term changes are not achieved.

There's a common perception in social work that prioritising parents' needs might compromise child protection. However, in reality, children thrive when their parents are supported to care for them safely. To make this possible, we need supportive tools and effective strategies that foster real change—not approaches rooted in blame or punishment.

Trauma-informed work isn't about directly addressing trauma. It's about recognising its impact on parents and children and supporting parents in caring for their children safely.

Join the ParentAssess seminar to explore key insights and practical strategies that help parents make meaningful, lasting changes—ensuring better outcomes for children.

12.10 - 12.50
Room: Motivate

Having difficult conversations in social work: Golden tips for practice



Hardeep Sandhu, Team Manager, Worcestershire County Council

Social workers should value relationships and believe these are core to everything they do. They recognise that they often must discuss emotionally challenging topics with the people they support. Therefore, this session will cover key messages from research and a range of tools to develop relational practice in this context.

Hardeep will share real examples and experiences to develop your ability to engage in meaningful conversations in which individuals feel respected and valued. The session will be interactive, and you will leave with some tips from people working on the ground whilst also hearing the voices of people with lived experiences.

12.20 - 1.00
Room: Discover

Generative AI and its implications for safeguarding, identity, relationships and wellbeing



Dr Peter Buzzi, Author and Director, Centre for Safeguarding and Wellbeing Practice and Research

This is an evidence-informed session that offers an opportunity for reflection on the possibilities and implications of generative AI and its significance for safeguarding.

Thinking about the impact of social technologies and generative AI, we'll examine some practice examples and reflect on implications of AI for identity, relationships, and well-being.

Save the date for next year's event

15 March 2027

Staffordshire County Council
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Ground Floor Seminar Rooms Discover & Imagine

Middle Floor Seminar Rooms Innovate, Motivate, Connect & Collaborate

12.40 - 1.20
Room: Innovate

Effectively engaging with fathers and father figures in child protection

Linda Halliday and Sobia Sultana, Founders, Parallel Lives CIC

Despite their significant influence on children's safety and wellbeing, fathers are often overlooked, marginalised, or engaged only at points of crisis. This session will consider why this happens and the impact it can have on assessment, planning, and outcomes for children.

The seminar will examine barriers to father engagement, including professional assumptions, organisational cultures, risk-focused practice, and challenges linked to conflict, separation, or safeguarding concerns. It will also highlight the risks of working around fathers rather than with them.

Participants will be introduced to practical, strengths-based approaches for engaging fathers safely and meaningfully, including curiosity-led conversations, inclusive assessment, and purposeful challenge. Drawing on learning from child protection practice and lived experience, the session will encourage reflection on how practitioners can balance risk management with meaningful involvement.



12.50 - 1.30
Room: Collaborate

Beyond crisis response: Building trauma-informed systems that work

Kate Beesley, Domestic Abuse Expert, Say No DAS CIC

This impactful discussion aligns with current government priorities to tackle the root causes of harm, reduce escalation, and relieve pressure on frontline services.

Moving beyond crisis-led responses, the session explores how trauma-informed practice can be embedded across systems to support earlier intervention, better decision-making, and sustainable safeguarding outcomes. Drawing on real-world case analysis and cross-sector experience, the discussion will identify common blind spots in current practice, highlight where risk is frequently missed, and examine how trauma shapes behaviour across the lifespan, from maternity through to adulthood.

Crucially, the session moves beyond theory into practical implementation. It will explore how reactive systems can unintentionally increase demand, escalate risk, and contribute to workforce pressure, and what can be done differently. Attendees will leave with clear, trauma-informed principles that can be applied immediately within local authority settings to strengthen prevention, improve professional confidence, and reduce repeat harm.



12.50 - 1.30
Room: Connect

What self-care really means as a social worker

Vicki Shevlin, Trainer, COMPASS

Self-care is more than bubble baths and quick fixes – it's about building real boundaries that protect your wellbeing and sustain your practice.

In this workshop, you'll gain the tools to recognise the difference between surface-level self-care and strategies that truly support you as a professional and a person. Learn how to create healthier patterns, maintain balance, and prioritise your needs without guilt.

Join Vicki for a reflective and empowering session designed to help you thrive in social work, not just survive.



1.10 - 1.50
Room: Motivate

Starting and growing an independent social work practice

Joe Z Mairura, Independent Social Worker and Leadership Coach

There is arguably a palpable silence in the national social work press about Independent Social Work and Independent Social Work practice in general.

Guidance from the Local Government Association, the Department of Health and Social Care and the profession's regulator rarely mentions Independent Social Work, despite it being a critical and indispensable component of social work practice with a lot to contribute to the social work profession.

Join Joe Z Mairura as he raises the profile of Independent Social Work and its invaluable contribution to social work practice, as well as outlining how, as an Independent Social Worker, you can enjoy the freedom to practice autonomously and flexibly without the constraints of being an employed social worker and yet provide a first-class service to your clients, while providing practical information to social work colleagues who may wish to pivot and set up as an Independent Social Worker.



1.20 - 2.00
Room: Discover

Managing conflict in social work

Dr Neil Thompson, Independent Writer, Educator and Adviser



Conflict, if not well handled, can do untold damage to working relationships, organisational effectiveness and even to the mental health of the individuals involved. However, there are skills and strategies that can be developed to make sure that no one need fear conflict doing so much harm. In some circumstances, conflict can even have positive results. This seminar examines how conflicts arise and how they can be prevented or managed effectively. Successful conflict management can not only prevent or address significant problems but also boost confidence and a sense of security.

Neil Thompson is a qualified mediator with extensive experience of teaching and training about conflict management.

1.30 - 2.10
Room: Imagine

Understanding madness: A new psychosocial model of mental health in practice and theory

Dr Robert Murphy, Author



In this session, Dr Murphy invites participants to understand how they might achieve a mind of their own despite the pitfalls they encounter on their journey through life. He sets aside psychiatric diagnoses and psychological conditions which medicalise and pathologise our feelings, thoughts, and actions. Instead, he focuses on madness as a state of mind we can all experience if distressing and disturbing circumstances conspire to overwhelm us and 'drive us crazy'. He emphasises that madness is a temporary and not a permanent state of mind, providing we can understand the source of our overwhelming feelings and thoughts, and the reasons for our actions. Becoming conscious of the source of each feeling can then signpost a way through our madness.

1.50 - 2.30
Room: Connect

The adultification of Black and Asian children

Delroy Madden, Independent Trainer, Delroy Madden Training



This session will give the learner an understanding of what adultification is and the drivers that are behind the behaviours that are attributed to it and how they present in young Black and Asian children. Participants will also examine how notions of adultification are based upon negative societal notions about Black and Asian children. Professionals will then discuss the impact of racial trauma and how it impacts the safeguarding needs of the children involved when they are being assessed by social work teams.

By the end of the session, learners will have a clear understanding of what adultification is and how it manifests in practice.

2.00 - 2.40
Room: Collaborate

Should youth justice play a greater role in social work education?

Dennis Egenamba, Social Work Lecturer and Youth Justice Expert



Often social workers (and other professionals) within children's services know very little about the youth justice system. This stems from the fact many university social work programmes do not offer a dedicated youth justice module. This means newly qualified social workers working with adolescents may be ill-equipped to understand the legal complexities of the youth justice system.

This workshop will help to explain some of the key steps in the process from a child being arrested and charged with an offence, through to the point of sentence.

2.00 - 2.40
Room: Innovate

Panel session

An interview with Newly Qualified Social Workers on their ASYE journey: Real life stories



Sophie Gilbert, Head of Service for Learning & Development, Birmingham Children's Trust; plus a panel of Newly Qualified Social Workers

This engaging Q&A session brings together Sophie Gilbert and a panel of Newly Qualified Social Workers (NQSWS) from Birmingham Children's Trust to share honest, real-life reflections on the ASYE year. Through their own voices and experiences, the panel will explore what the first year in practice is really like – from early challenges and learning curves to moments of confidence, growth and achievement.

The session will offer practical insights into professional development during ASYE, including how to make the most of learning opportunities, manage expectations, and build resilience in frontline practice. The NQSWS will also share top tips for interviews and advice for navigating the transition from student to qualified practitioner.

Ground Floor Seminar Rooms Discover & Imagine

Middle Floor Seminar Rooms Innovate, Motivate, Connect & Collaborate

2.10 - 2.50
Room: Motivate

The Forensic Lens: Gaining clarity in complex safeguarding cases

Steve Nurdin, Senior Account Manager, Forensic Testing Service

In the complex world of social care and safeguarding, the difference between a life-changing decision and a missed opportunity often lies in the quality of the evidence. When a family's narrative is complex and the risks are high, social workers need more than just data—they need clarity.

Join Steve for an insightful session on how advanced forensic testing acts as a powerful lens, cutting through the "noise" of difficult cases. We will explore how to move beyond basic lab results to achieve a deeper, more accurate understanding of substance misuse and risk.



2.20 - 3.00
Room: Discover

Deprivation of Liberty and Best Interests

Sandra Wilkinson, Senior Lecturer and CPD Mental Health Courses Lead, University of Wolverhampton

This seminar will provide an overview of the broad context of legal frameworks and practising within the law, with respect to key issues of the Mental Capacity Act (2005) and the Human Rights Act (1998), and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards.

Join Sandra as she discusses how developing your career can empower professionals to carry out thorough risk assessments, complex decision-making, and consider service user and carer perspectives.



2.30 - 3.10
Room: Imagine

'I didn't even know I had any rights': Addressing the Care Cliff and learning from the Care Advice Service

Helen Leadbitter MBE, Become Services Manager – Care Advice and Wellbeing Support

Join this session to explore the challenges faced by children in care as they prepare to leave care, drawing on real scenarios shared by young people who have contacted Become's Care Advice Line.

Participants will also learn about best practice for supporting young people while they are in care so that they feel more confident and better prepared for the transition to leaving care.

The workshop will also explain how Become's Services Team provides advice, guidance and support to care-experienced children and young people across the country, and how the organisation works alongside social care professionals, including social workers, to support them in their roles.



3.00 - 3.40
Room: Innovate

Using social media safely as a social worker

Vicki Shevlin, Trainer, COMPASS

Social media is part of everyday life – but how can you use it without putting your registration at risk?

This interactive session will help you navigate professional guidelines with confidence, showing you how to share online safely, responsibly and authentically. You'll explore the opportunities social media offers for social workers, while learning practical strategies to avoid common pitfalls.

Join Vicki to discover how to protect yourself, your career and the people you work with, and to understand the growing role of social media in the future of social work.



3.00 - 3.40
Room: Collaborate

Conscious leadership in social work practice

Joe Z Mairura, Independent Social Worker and Leadership Coach

What does it really mean to lead consciously in today's complex and pressured social work environment? This thought-provoking seminar invites practitioners, managers and aspiring leaders to explore the deeper layers of leadership that shape practice, culture and outcomes for people who use services.



3.10 - 3.50
Room: Connect

Responding to male victims of domestic abuse and other forms of harm: What professionals need to know

Linda Halliday & Sobia Sultana, Founders, Parallel Lives CIC

Male victimisation is often under-identified due to gender stereotypes, societal expectations, and professional assumptions about masculinity, risk, and vulnerability. As a result, men may be mislabelled, minimised, or excluded from support and safeguarding processes.

The session will examine how these assumptions can influence assessment, decision-making, and intervention, sometimes leading to unsafe or ineffective outcomes for adults and children. It will consider common barriers to disclosure for men, including shame, fear of not being believed, and concerns about the impact on their children or contact arrangements.



3.20 - 4.00
Room: Discover

Keeping stress at bay

Dr Neil Thompson, Independent Writer, Educator and Adviser

Stress can prove hugely costly in both human and financial terms. Despite this, it has become 'normalised' in many organisations – that is, people have come to expect to have to face unreasonable levels of pressure. This seminar clears up some of the myths and misunderstandings around stress – including the fallacy that it is inevitable. It examines the harm it can do and explores ways of keeping pressures within manageable levels to prevent stress; responding appropriately when stress does arise; and supporting people through the aftermath of a stress episode.

Dr Neil Thompson has been writing, teaching and training about stress management for many years. He has had considerable success in helping individuals, teams and whole organisations to rise to the challenges presented by stress.



3.20 - 4.00
Room: Imagine

Decision-making and interventions with adults in legal frameworks

Sandra Wilkinson, Senior Lecturer and CPD Mental Health Courses Lead, University of Wolverhampton

This seminar will provide an overview of the practical and legally-grounded CPD course for decision-making and interventions with adults, which focuses on the key statutory frameworks that underpin social work practice.

Sandra will explore the values and principles of the law to reinforce good decision-making and empower professionals working with adults in health, social work and social care, to develop a working knowledge of the Mental Health Act (1983), the Mental Capacity Act (2005) and improve practice where capacity and/or mental disorder are significant considerations.



Social Work Cinema

Room: Inspire

As an innovative way of extending our free programme, The Social Work Show offers a selection of short films covering a wide range of topics.

AI Klaxons – AI deciding elderly care and the fake space selfie 10.00am
Digital Care Hub

Five Myths About Mental Capacity 11.30am
Mental Capacity Law and Policy

Release from Detention: Mental Health Act 1983 and Court of Protection 1.00pm
Garden Court Chambers

Facing the Impact: a restorative justice film from Southwark Youth Justice Service 2.40pm
Restorative Justice Council

March 2026 Mental Capacity Report and walkthrough 3.20pm
Mental Capacity Law and Policy

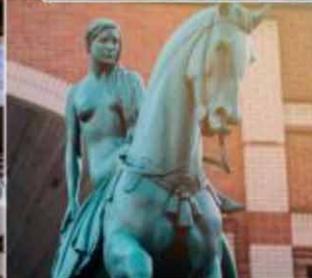
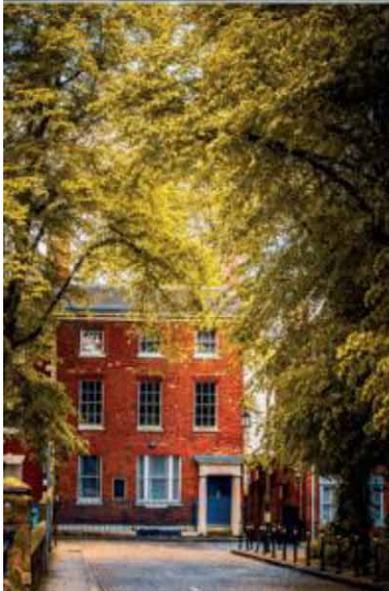
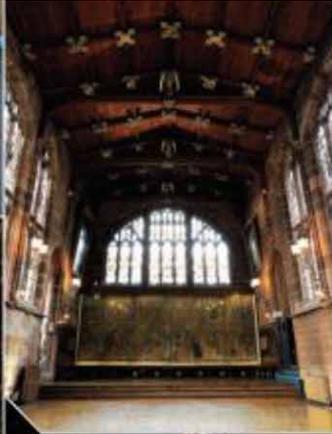


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 - Opportunity to buy up to 10 days annual leave and up to 5 unpaid days per year
 - Professional Support Service offering admin support to practitioners
 - Opportunity for Salary Match and Pay progression
 - Salary Sacrifice Schemes; Car Scheme, Cycle to work and more
 - Payroll giving scheme
 - Lifestyle savings
 - Access to Research in Practice and the West Midlands Teaching Partnership
 - Learning & Development with access to certified courses
 - Access to an award-winning Occupational Health Team
 - Vibrant employee networks • Wellbeing Weeks throughout the year that offers team activities and individual sessions
 - Practice Week, full of seminars and workshops with leading practice professionals
- ...and many more**

