



## London and Home Counties Branch

Newsletter – January 2021



### Welcome to 2021 and your London and Home Counties newsletter

Welcome to your first L&HC newsletter of 2021. May I take this opportunity to wish everyone a happy new year, and we are certainly happy to see a new year! 2020 will be a year that is ruminated upon for decades and maybe centuries to come. However, as we look forward to 2021, we can sift through the debris and extract some green shoots which hopefully we can nurture so that they grow into lush green orchards of bountiful fruit.

2020 was a year of introspection where we were forced to spend time with ourselves and we discovered who our friends and allies were. We also had the opportunity to get to know our loved ones that little bit better.

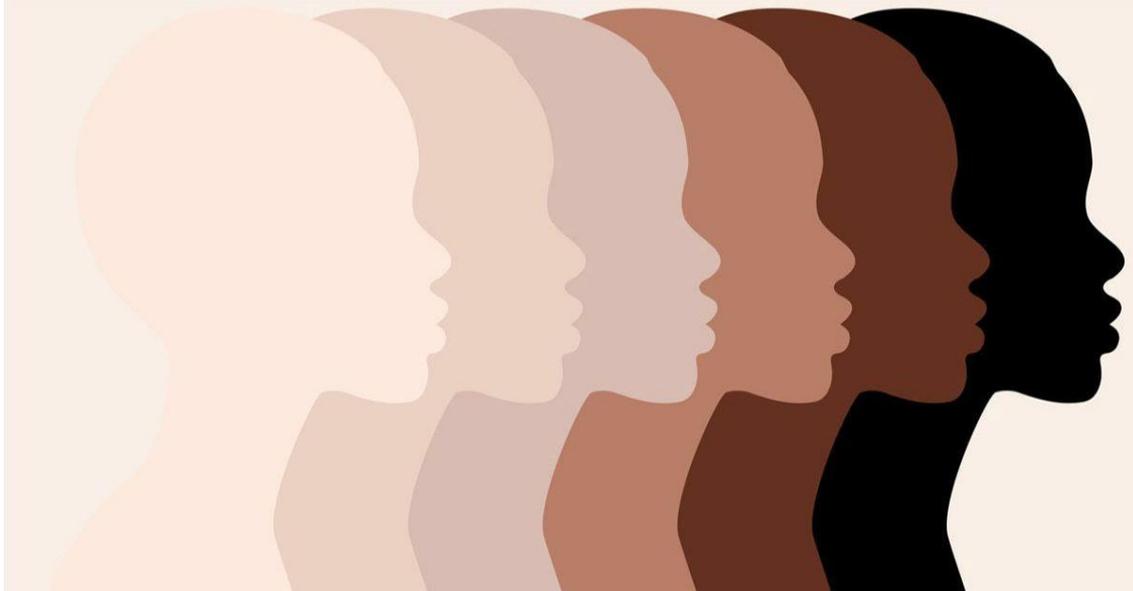
With these new insights, we hope that we are able to reset the dial and use our creativity and talents and we will get back into the driving seat. We hope that 2021 will be a year where we continue to embrace new ways of communicating, working, socialising and playing and where we can build on the old and look forward to the new, letting go of the things we did 'just because we always have'.

We hope that we are able to use this new platform to develop ourselves, our families, our communities and our society so that we are even more ready and resilient when faced with the challenges and opportunities 2021 has in store for us.

So from the BPS L&HC committee, we wish you a happy, healthy and prosperous 2021.

**Verena West**  
**L&HC Honorary Secretary**

---



## **Diversity, equality and inclusion**

The last few months have been very active for the L&HC committee as we organised, and continue to organise, activities and events for 2021. We welcome your feedback on previous current and future events as this enables us to improve our service to you, our members.

Various events around the world during 2020 highlighted the ongoing issues that surround diversity, equality and inclusion. Many of these issues have existed within society for centuries, and further dialogue and action is urgently required to witness the changes that we want to see in future.

It is appropriate therefore to focus on diversity, equality and inclusion as the theme for our first newsletter of this year. As a committee our intention is to continue to work internally and with other organisations by listening, sharing, reflecting and most importantly acting against inequality, discrimination and injustice in all of its forms.

We hope you will engage with our events pertaining to this and work with us to move this agenda forward. In the meantime, here are a few quotes from members of the BPS L&HC committee outlining what diversity and inclusion means to them.

**Olga Cecilia Farach**  
L&HC Committee Member



**Silvia Gereá**

"I strongly believe that to be engaged you must feel included and valued. With a holistic approach we can create an inclusive culture where difference is valued, encouraged and supported."



**Olga Cecilia Farach**

"All of us are holistically and universally equal, your person is the same as my person, my person is the same as your person."



**Meryem M Cilaci**

"As one year comes to an end, a virus, Covid-19, has put humanity at risk without discrimination. It has shown us that we are all equal and can only survive if we join hands and work together. I hope that after the pandemic, as we look forward to 2021 and beyond, we will be more sensitive and mindful about equality and diversity."



**Sean O'Connell**

"Equality and diversity should allow individuals to flourish on the basis of their merit, rather than the allocation of talent due to factors unrelated to competence."

**Michelle Williams**



"By valuing equality and diversity in our teams we have greater strength and innovation, and are better able to tackle mental ill-health and other social and clinical issues."



**James Barr**

"What do we mean by equality? It is a fact of life that we all differ across many dimensions, so unless we are clones we can never all be equal. Nor would we want to be. It is the differences that make us interesting, enrich life for all of us and should be appreciated."

"There are many sources of difference, both genetic and environmental (e.g. skin colour, height, weight, neural structures, physical attractiveness, financial status, health, life-history, religion, culture, personality, identity, values etc.) as well as the decisions we make ourselves. The challenge, as a society, is to always be fair, to give a hand-up to those who are disadvantaged, to support everyone to flourish, and to reduce the massive gap between the poor and the wealthy.

"We need to focus on creating equitable outcomes for everyone. That starts with doing much more to create equal opportunities. The factors above have a big impact on us before we even enter higher education or the workplace and affect the rest of our lives. We need to find a way for society to pursue excellence and at the same time not give an unfair advantage to the children of those who have succeeded. If we truly believe in meritocracy we would restrict private education as well as inheritance and family-based financial and social capital advantages. Diversity also means diversity of thought. We need to accept that people can have valid reasons for views that differ from our own and that disagreeing with us does not make someone morally unacceptable.

"We need to take a long, hard look at how organisations make decisions about who is given the chance to succeed, who is not and who is excluded. And that includes the BPS. I look forward to the recommendations of the BPS DEI Taskforce. A good start would be to publish comprehensive demographics about the membership, especially divisions and trainees. If the data is anything like that produced by the Clearing House for Postgraduate Courses in Clinical Psychology, most people will be quite shocked."



## Difference is desired and necessary

Most rational people make decisions based on logic and principles. For me, that means all humans have the same brains, their own talents and passions and their own unique experiences and perspectives. Every human has abilities, knowledge and skill that I do not possess. The above is true regardless of any apparent differences.

In fact, the above superior abilities to mine may come from, or have been developed by, apparent differences. Humans are a social species, we are hard-wired to form and live in groups. Group conformity and all sorts of biases can, and do, lead to exclusion of the other.

People who see their allegiance to their human group rather than to their immediate group seem able to see strength in difference. They welcome difference for what it brings to us all. Some people talk of diversity and inclusion being about tolerance of difference. Tolerance implies putting up with something undesired.

Others talk of inclusion. Inclusion implies bringing into a group someone who is an outsider.

To me, difference is desired and necessary. When difference is seen as desired and necessary inclusion happens automatically. When difference is seen as desired and necessary there is no need for tolerance. When differences are seen as desired and necessary they become something to be harnessed for the benefit of all.

**Dr Nigel MacLennan**  
**L&HC Chair**



## Upcoming events

### 12 January, 6-7pm - Online networking event: thriving in 2021

2020 tested our resilience, ability to cope with uncertainty, and our adaptability to change. As we start a new year we are organising a virtual members networking event focusing on the psychological skills that can be learnt and implemented so we can thrive in the new year under any conditions.

This event will allow members to share the various psychological strategies they endorse which can help anyone to flourish whatever the circumstances. Some of the L&HC committee members will be on the call to welcome you and we look forward to seeing you there.

Further details can be found on the [L&HC website](#).

### 11 February 2021, 6-8pm - Postgraduate meet up

This webinar provides postgraduate students with the opportunity to present their research to peers, obtain constructive feedback and network in an informal environment. [Register via the BPS website](#).

If you are interested in speaking at the event, please contact [Lloyd Emeka via Twitter](#).



## Event review - can Goal Attainment Scaling (GAS) be used to measure Covid-19 pupil interventions?

As part of the BPS Covid-19 programme Dr James Galpin and Verena West hosted a

webinar entitled 'can Goal Attainment Scaling (GAS) be used to measure the impact of Covid-19 related pupil interventions'?

The strengths and limitations of GAS were discussed, as well as how they could be adapted from clinical practice, in the form of Goal Based Outcomes (GBOs), for usage in educational contexts. This was a particularly relevant subject as children and young adults spent a considerable amount of the Spring and Summer school terms at home because of the national lockdown.

Reintegrating them back into school life post lockdown presents some potential challenges which would require additional interventions to enhance their wellbeing and academic progress. GAS and GBOs were proposed as appropriate tools for measuring the impact of such interventions.

Educational settings traditionally adopt universal test criteria to measure academic progress. However, the proposed tools create an opportunity for practitioners and educationalists to utilise qualitative techniques for measurement.

In addition to this event, there are various [Covid-19 free-access publications](#) and webinars available on the BPS website to support practitioners and educationalists with their work.

**Olga Cecilia Farach**  
L&HC Committee Member

---



**Ethics guidelines for internet-mediated research - share your views**

The BPS is calling on members with relevant expertise and experience to contribute to its internal consultation about ethics guidelines for internet-mediated research. The document will look at the BPS Code of Human Research Ethics and how this may be interpreted in the context of internet-mediated research, and what special considerations may apply.

The BPS wants members to share their comments and contribute to the draft document before its publication. [Find out more, and how to get involved via the BPS website.](#)

---



*Copyright © 2021 The British Psychological Society, All rights reserved.*

You are receiving this message as part of your membership of the London and Home Counties Branch.

**Our mailing address is:**

St Andrews House, 48 Princess Road East, Leicester, LE1 7DR

Want to change how you receive these emails? Do not reply to this email.

You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#). You can also read our [Privacy Policy](#).

The British Psychological Society is a charity registered in England and Wales (229642), and Scotland (SC039452). Our VAT Registration number is 283260994.