

TCTC NEWSLETTER

Dates for the diary

The TCTC Lived Experience Network (LEN)
Thursday 27th Feb 10.30 -12 – drop-in session

International Group
Friday 7th March 11.00 - 12.30

TC Values
Monday 10th March 1.00 - 3.00

The Children's Network: The Children's Network:
Lasting Relationships
Wednesday 26th March 9.30 - 12.00

Wrexham University / TCTC Therapeutic
Childcare Annual Conference
Friday 2nd May 2025 8.30 - 16.30. In Person

TC Competencies (Pt.1) The Why
Thursday 22nd May 2025 9.30-12noon

TC Competencies (Pt.2) The How
Thursday 29th May 2025 13.00 - 15.30

Virtual Conference: Theme Relational Practice
4th June 8.45 - 1.15 GMT
and
5th June 12.45 - 5.00 GMT

Annual Autumn Conference September 2025:
More details to follow

*For all training and the most up to date training
please see:*

*<https://therapeuticcommunities.org/training> or
email admin@therapeuticcommunities.org*

Welcome to our first Newsletter of 2025!

We are thrilled to kick off the new year by sharing updates, insights and highlights from within The Consortium of Therapeutic Communities. This newsletter aims to connect you with the diverse individuals, events and networks that collectively form our membership.

Feature Your Community or Event

Do you have an upcoming event or would like to showcase your community in our newsletter or social media platforms? We encourage you to reach out to us at tctc.comms@gmail.com

Your contributions help us to enrich our collective knowledge and foster meaningful connections within The Consortium.

In this issue, we'll be covering a range of topics including recent events, member spotlights and upcoming opportunities. Stay tuned for insightful articles and updates on the latest developments in therapeutic communities.

Thank you for being a part of The Consortium of Therapeutic Communities. Together, we can continue to create positive change and support each other in our shared mission.

Warm regards,

The Comms Group

Meet a Member Community: Ashburn Clinic



Ashburn Clinic is a not-for-profit, democratic therapeutic community and psychiatric hospital in Dunedin, New Zealand offering a professional and supportive environment for diagnosis, treatment and recovery from mental illness and addiction. Established in 1882 as an alternative to state hospital care, Ashburn has operated as a therapeutic community for more than 50 years, providing funded and private residential services. Adults come from all over New Zealand to access care here. Dr Megan Bryan (Medical Director) is the 15th hospital manager in Ashburn's 142-year history, and the second female medical director. Dr Bryan has many years of relevant experience and knowledge as a Consultant Psychiatrist and also trained in psychotherapy.

Ashburn Clinic has made significant investments in its facilities in the last few years - the completion of the new Gwen Wilson Wing in 2020 and the refurbishment of Alexander House (transitional living facility) in 2024. The Gwen Wilson Wing took 15 months to build beginning with the demolition of an old Wing dating back to the late 19th century (due to earthquake risk). The building design reflects a more modern approach to treatment, incorporating modern bedrooms, ensuites, Sensory Modulation Room, community meeting room, kitchen/dining, lounge, and Art/OT spaces. Alexander House now provides space for 16 residents to transition from inpatient care to independent living in the community and increased the overall capacity of the Therapeutic Community to 60 residents. A recent quality initiative has been to develop online Whānau* Information Sessions, delivered by Ashburn staff that family and support people can join remotely, to provide information and answer questions about the therapeutic community model and patient journey, which is very different than other mental health inpatient settings in NZ. Whānau understanding and support of the treatment model is critical as residents often have complex and long-standing mental health difficulties and may stay at Ashburn Clinic for up to two years.

* Māori word for family, friends, significant relationships

Find out more: <https://www.ashburn.co.nz/>

PEER REVIEW EXPERIENCE

Recently, I shared the privilege of being part of a peer review for another therapeutic community. After attending the training, I was eager to participate in the process to learn more about the whole 'therapeutic community' idea and how it translates to other providers. Due to my personal background being in Education, the whole experience with Amberleigh has been a significant but amazing learning curve.

The training broadened my understanding of what it is to be a therapeutic community and the shared concepts, but also availed me of the breadth of facilitators, prisons, hospitals etc.

Upon arrival at the community, we were all made to feel extremely welcome, and the lead reviewer explained everything we needed to know about the day. A detailed timetable was presented, allowing times for the team to confer and discuss any matters arising.

It was delightful to see how many similarities we shared as communities and to be able to suggest possible areas to develop as well as taking certain ideas back to our own setting.

The staff and students were delightful and appeared to be open and honest. We enjoyed a tour, discussions with the community, lunch with SLT, time for reflection and time for feedback.

I thoroughly enjoyed the whole process and feel my ability to embrace therapeutic community practices has improved.

Katrina, from Amberleigh Care

Meet the Board: Mike Staines

What is your favourite image?

Carl Randall
Mr. Kitazawa's Noodle Bar, Tokyo Oil paint on canvas Exhibited at the 2012 BP Portrait Awards, The National Portrait Gallery London.

What is your role on the TCTC board? I am a

board member. I have been focused on inclusion for a while. I was co-chair of the Children's Network. I have been involved in the conference one way or another – small group facilitator, on the committee, hosting the event – for more than ten years.

What do you consider your greatest work life achievement? Any and every time I have helped somebody else to take up their own power (things like children interviewing staff applicants, front line staff interviewing applicants, school council, inclusion work, promoting people who have earned it).

What do you like most about your therapeutic environment or a therapeutic service you have visited? The value placed on really thinking properly about people.

What do you least like about your therapeutic environment or a therapeutic service you have visited? What happens when you start thinking you have the answers other people need.

What is your mood today? I have just finished getting a past resident's file ready to share with them – I'm feeling the full range of emotions and struggling to sit still.





Member Article

Community As Doctor; Including Not Prescribing

Surrey and NE Hants Service User Network (SUN)

Although Rapaport's phrase was written in 1960, the principles, articulated in the book of the same name and inspiring enacted through the work of the Henderson, are continued in the practices of our SUN community in Surrey and North East Hants.

We launched with our first, online SUN support groups, three initially, in January 2020. Due to the pandemic, we needed to radically rethink the original SUN model established in South West London and St Georges in 2004. This allowed us to make the model our own and it continues to evolve and be shaped by its membership.

Co production and respectful partnership are at our core. SUN is delivered by Surrey and Borders Partnership NHS Trust (SABP) in partnership with Mary Frances Trust (MFT) and Catalyst, two voluntary organisations in Surrey.

We now provide six support groups weekly, three online and three face to face. These are the bedrock of our community and offer facilitated peer support to those over 18, registered with a GP in Surrey and NE Hants, who identify with the difficulties associated with a diagnosis of personality disorder.

No diagnosis is required to join and membership is by self-registration. Each group is facilitated by two SUN staff members, a facilitator with a clinical background and a facilitator with lived experience of the difficulties associated with personality disorder.

How do the groups run?

There is no set agenda for SUN groups. Members bring topics for discussion. Each SUN session is broken into three stages, with breaks in between.

- Check in: members talk about how they are feeling and what they are hoping to get from and/or contribute to the group.

- Support forum: members discuss topic or themes raised at the check in.
- Check out: members share how they have experienced the group and what reflections they are taking away with them.

The structure is an important containing element of the groups, as the predictability and consistency is crucial for building trust and maintaining safety. Members are encouraged to both give and receive support in the groups and this hope for reciprocity runs through our community and informs our other activities outside of the support groups.

How do members and staff become involved in other SUN activities?

SUN is more than our offer of support groups. We facilitate monthly community meetings and focus groups to involve members in various aspects of service development. We offer regular socials which are well attended. Members join us to co-present our monthly virtual events, which are open to all to find out more about our service. Outreach presentations are delivered locally to a range of teams to publicise our community. We also facilitate focus groups to produce our quarterly, co-produced newsletters.

Reaching Out beyond Surrey and NE Hants

We have trained other organisations in our SUN model as well as presenting on "Evolving Through Involving" with members at the national SUN symposium in 2024. We are excited to co-host, with Berkshire SUN, the 2025 SUNposium. In December 2024, we were delighted to gain the Enabling Environments award from the Royal College of Psychiatrists. Through all these activities we are learning and developing.

Testimonial from a SUN member:

"Support from other people who understand what you are going through is second to none."

To find out more, visit [SUN \(Service User Network\) : Surrey and Borders Partnership NHS Foundation Trust](#)

Contact details: Call us: 01372 216700 Email us: sun.admin@sabp.nhs.uk .

Please email if you would like to attend one of our virtual events.



Review as a first time attendee to our in Person Conference

Belonging or Fragmentation? Containing organisations in complex times' High Leigh Conference Centre 3rd - 6th November

When I arrived on the Sunday evening, I was very anxious, and I wasn't sure what to expect. This feeling did not last long as everyone was very welcoming and went out of their way to help me gain a better understanding of what to expect. I was given a welcome pack as well as a programme which was very clear and easy to understand.

By day two of the conference, I was more relaxed and felt comfortable enough to start getting to know other members of the community. The presentations were all informative, I walked away from the conference feeling like I had learnt a lot about myself.

The food was amazing, and the accommodation was great. The venue itself was beautiful, I do wish that I had more time to explore the grounds and would have loved to use that time to process some of the important things I had learnt throughout the conference.

If it is possible next year, could there be more breaks or longer breaks. This would give people time to get to know each other and just to reflect on what we have heard in the presentations. I would absolutely love to attend the next TCTC conference, I feel like I walked away with a real sense of community and belonging.

By Kamilah Valentine from The Mulberry Bush



Are you a member of TCTC?

Sign up for a new TCTC membership or renew your existing membership today.

TCTC is an inclusive organisation supporting, promoting and developing therapeutic practice in a wide variety of settings; from formal large communities, through smaller clusters of therapeutic services and including part-time, day communities and therapeutic enabling environments.

We welcome applications from all individuals and organisations that are committed to the underpinning values and principles of therapeutic community practice as listed below.

Benefits of Membership

1. Membership of a peer and practice network supporting, promoting and developing therapeutic practice to the wider society
2. Free online access to The International Journal of Therapeutic Communities
3. Engagement in the wider external debate with policy makers, decision makers and funders
4. External marketing and promotional activity across client sectors to promote the therapeutic model
5. Preferential access and reduced rates for the Annual Residential Conference
6. Preferential access and reduced rates for Training & CPD Events
7. Organisational members details listed and promoted on our website, www.therapeuticcommunities.org
8. Participation in research and development activity

Join now:

<https://therapeuticcommunities.org/membership/>



The Adult Mental Health Network

The Adult Mental Health TC group is a meeting of people who work, attend or live in therapeutic communities or mental health services with a social and relational therapeutic approach.

Though hosted by TCTC the meeting is open to all, TCTC members and non-members alike. The meeting has two parts: The first part is a one-hour workshop in the form of a presentation followed by a group discussion of the topic raised; the second part is a one-hour reflective group in which the participants can raise any observations or issues that affect them and their services, or TC's or relational practice in general, whether positively or negatively, for group reflection, support and feedback.

In essence, this is a community meeting for people involved in adult mental health TCs or in services with a relational approach. In an earlier group one of the attendees said that what is special and exciting about TCs is that they are a group of people coming together to help each other deal with the real situations that they are facing at the time. Please do join us in creating a group that works for us all..



Next Meeting

Wednesday 30th April 2025 13.00- 15.00
Online Via Zoom



The Children's Network

The children's network is a long established group of individual and organisational members from a wide range of settings working therapeutically and relationally with children. They deliver work with children across different settings including fostering, different shapes and models of residential care, education and supported living/ accommodation.

We meet quarterly, either in person or online for reflective discussion, themed presentations from external guests, good practice presentations shared between the network and a space to reflect on and respond to wider issues across the sector – practice, commissioning, staff support, service development etc. We hope to draw on experiential elements that reflect the lived experience of the sector.

The sessions follow themes that are suggested by the group and draw on a range of learning and engagement activities – its is very welcoming and collegiate. The members are at different stages in their development and share with each other as part of a rich practice support network. The regular meetings are open to non-members who want to explore the content, benefit and connections of the network.

Next Meeting

Wednesday 26th March 2025 9.30- 12.00
Online Via Zoom



The International Group

TCTC has been undergoing an expansion in its members and activities in recent years. One of the extraordinary benefits has been to meet international members in person at our TCTC annual conference and to hear about their work.

This has been so exciting for us that we are eager to develop our international connections and collaborations. International colleagues may not be able to attend so many events because of time geographical differences but TCTC would like to offer something especially for you.

In this light, we are delighted to invite you to join the TCTC International Group on Friday 7th March at 11.00 GMT. You can convert the times to your own time zone here:

<https://www.timeanddate.com/worldclock/convert/er-classic.html>

Next Meeting

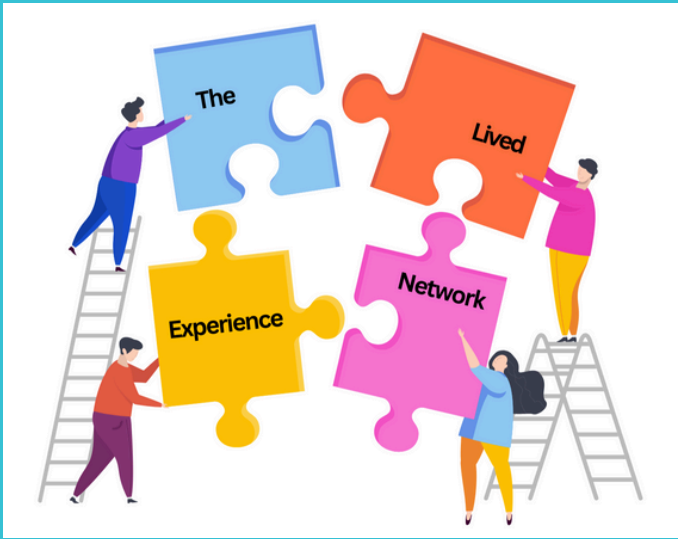
Friday 7th March 2025 11.00- 12.30
Online Via Zoom

The Lived Experience Network

The Lived Experience Network (LEN) host a mixture of online drop-in sessions and themed workshops.

LEN is a space where lived experience is celebrated and highly valued. The network is facilitated by Neels and Vikki.

Together we can build the network, provide peer support and gain a better understanding of ourselves. We can share paid and voluntary opportunities around training, research and publishing, support groups, activities and much more!



To join the LEN please email
admin@therapeuticcommunities.org

Next Meeting

Last Thursday of the month 10.30 - 12.00
Online Via Zoom



UPCOMING CONFERENCES

From Trauma Aware to Therapeutic Child Care : Matching Understanding to Task



A 1-day professional CPD event supporting practitioners to have
"the right tools for the job"



Friday 2nd May 2025
Wrexham University

Keynote Speakers include :

Jo Hopkins from ACE Hub | Dr Tegan Brierley-Sollis | Amberleigh | Colin Maginn
Plus workshops from a Local Authority | Sarah Anderson from Fosterwiki | Ysgol Min Y Ddol

Early Bird offer on until Friday 29th March!

£18 student £99 TCTC members £149 non-members

£20 student £110 TCTC members £165 non-members

Virtual Conference : Building Connections: Relational Practice and Therapeutic Communities in Transformative Care



4th June 2025 8.45am - 1.15pm GMT
5th June 2025 12.45pm - 5.00pm GMT



CALL FOR PAPERS NOW OPEN

Please email admin@therapeuticcommunities.org
with no more than 300 words as an abstract

Early Bird offer on until Friday 28th February!
10% off all tickets

Day Ticket
£45.00 members
£60.00 non-members

Full Conference
£75.00 members
£90.00 non-members

Student / Unwaged
£10.00 members
£15.00 non-members

One ticket for one log in, unlimited groups welcome to join together.