



'Once there were fields' by David Downes - David Downes Gallery - Manningtree, Essex - <https://www.daviddownes.co.uk/>

Call For Papers

The 47th Annual International
TCTC Conference
28th - 30th September 2026

Submission Deadline

**13th
May
2026**

Theme

*The Cost and the Value: Therapeutic
Communities and Sustainable
Organisations*

Topics for the paper are as follows:

- ✓ Arts and Culture
- ✓ Histories
- ✓ Adventures
- ✓ Narratives and Voices
- ✓ Costs, value, sustainable organisations

Fees

Early Bird prices until 17th June, 2026

Consortium Member:	
Full conference (inc Sunday)	£745 £708
3-day	£585 £556
Day delegate	£99 £94
Non-member:	
Full conference (inc Sunday)	£875 £831
3-day	£685 £651
Day delegate	£160 £152

Important Dates

13th May 2026	27th May 2026	17th June 2026	18th September 2026	28th September 2026
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Call For Papers submission deadline	Acceptance notification	Early bird discount ends	Conference booking deadline	Conference date

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[email admin@therapeuticcommunities.org](mailto:admin@therapeuticcommunities.org)



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Guidance

We invite submissions of proposals and abstracts of no more than 300 words. Keynote presentations, research papers and practice-based and/or experiential workshops should explore this year's title theme in creative and diverse ways. Please share innovative and imaginative practice from your group, community and relational setting.

Since ours is an inclusive event, for practitioners thinking about and sharing their work, for those with lived experience, as well as those presenting new ideas and research, please gear presentations to the widest audience.

We can support contributor's in developing their papers to be developed for inclusion in the Journal or Newsletter. If you wish to discuss your proposal with a member of the conference committee, please include this in your email.

Theme

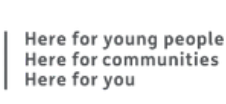
In what way should we value therapeutic communities and therapeutic environments and does this 'valuing' stand up to economic scrutiny? How do we evaluate therapeutic communities and their contribution to society, both therapeutically and politically, as a technology of change – for example – as a form of readjustment and rebalancing of an unfair society, or as places where people and groups can discover a sense of their own value when this has become lost? What is the social return on such an investment?

Sustainable organisations will often face a tension between their internal identity and the external reality, between holding onto cherished tradition and opening up to new ideas and innovation. Where are the values and principals enshrined in psychoanalysis, therapeutic communities and enabling environments heading? Can these be reinvented in non-TC settings: e.g. in psychiatric services, schools, probation, addictions, eating disorders, elderly care, the military or in Government departments?

We can also think about, and perhaps we need to, the cost of the therapeutic community approach? There is the financial cost – e.g. what are Government or commissioners prepared to pay in a contract that delivers a set of medical outcomes? But there is also a different kind of cost: the cost at the human level of requiring professional staff to work at the depth and fullness of their capacity that TCs and EEs require. Is this adequately supported, and how should this be done?

And, importantly, how is it for those who come to use the TC as members; how do they value the experience compared to other modalities and models, and how effective are we in supporting their 'voices' to come through. Finally, are there new and better ways that we can articulate, critically, theoretically, and through compelling, vivid examples of our work, the value of Therapeutic Communities?

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Turning children's lives around

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Possible themes, topics and question for papers or workshops to address:

Costs, value, sustainable organisations:

- In what way should we value therapeutic communities and therapeutic environments?
- What structures, practices and modes of operation lead to a sustainable practice and service?
- What is the social return on an investment in therapeutic community approach, and in long-term therapeutic communities?
- What is the cost at the human level of requiring professional staff to work at the depth and fullness of their capacity that TCs and EEs require? How should staff be supported in their day to day work?
- How do we evaluate therapeutic communities and their contribution to society, both therapeutically and politically, as a technology of change?

Adventures:

- Where are the values and principals enshrined in psychoanalysis, therapeutic communities and enabling environments heading?
- How can we inspire, influence and improve the wider landscape of mental health services?
- What are the exciting the futures for therapeutic communities and enabling environments?
- Critical appraisals of contemporary models and approaches to mental health - Relational Practice; Threat, Power, Meaning; Mentalisation-Based Therapy, THRIVE etc
- Is TC a form of psychotherapy at the social level or just a place where different kinds of therapy happen?

Histories:

- New or critical histories of therapeutic communities
- How is your TC/organisation establishing a narrative identity, to support or replace an absent or distorted family narrative structure for residents/members?
- Non-TC organisations using therapeutic community ideas and approaches

Narratives and Voices:

- How can you tell your own story of therapeutic development? What elements - moments - people - places - were important to you?
- What is your lived-experience? How can your voice be heard?
- Unsung heroes: profiling key people who have not been recognised for their contribution to TCs
- What are the priorities of service commissioners, and government and how can therapeutic communities, enabling environments and other psychologically-informed environments align with this?

Arts and Culture:

- How is art, music, dance, literature, drama used in your community or service?
- How can we understand and articulate our approach in a way that has social and political influence?
- How have therapeutic communities been represented in the arts, film and music?

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