

**British Association of Play Therapists
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
Minutes of the meeting held 17th May 2025**

PRESENT

In attendance{1}

Jacqui Clarke Business Manager (Non-Member)

Board of Directors (10)

Sarah Hickson	Board Member – Chair
Jeanne McLaughlin	Board Member – Vice Chair
Andrew O’Mahony	Board Member - Lay
Jo Hill	Board Member
Sandra Boyle	Board Member
Maggie Fearn	Board Member
Sonia Murray	Board Member
Esther Schencks	Board Member
Tracy Lanigan	Board Member
Alex Machon	Board Member

Full Members (53)

Sarah Zehetmayr-McCall	Bernadette Letchford	Clare Brown
Hayley Camp	Fiona Chunnnett	Elise Cuschieri
Cindy Davie	Hillary Dumbrell	Hannah Dunford
Rio Dunsdon-Fry	Claire Eady	Liliana Ghilardi
Eilidh Grant	Alexandra Halamish	Laura Hanks
Liz Hill	Jennifer Holland	Jackie Horne
Catriona Irvine	Leah Jones	Sally Hanson
Beth Joy	Rachael McCabe	Shuna Mercer
Anna Neal	Victoria Niles	Gina Obertelli
Lindsay Paterson	Kathy Riley	Katy Routledge
Renate Ruddock	Helen Rufus	Betty Skeet
Rosemary Stone	Jo Thomas	James Tolerton
Sue Topping	Anne White	Eleanor Clark
Helen Forrester	Chloe Mack	Sharni Wardle
Jenny Reid	Mary Thornton	
Wai Ching Fanny Lo		
Emma Dobson	Tracey Giles	Merran Kay
Ella Manning	Angharad Rees	Kate Matthews
Gillan Catling	Lisa Gordon Clark	

Student Members (non-voting) (6)

Zea Arcillas	Lucy Carreck	Francesca Lynch
Prima Pavarokit	Mwape Kalumba	Katie Purnell

Postal Proxy Form (4)

Simon Kerr-Edwards, Shirley Fenwick, Gillian Catling, Helen Forrester (Gillian Catling and Helen Forrester was in attendance to listen to the AGM but voted as per their postal forms).

Apologies:

Paul Kilgallon, Audrey Lee, Julie McCann, Nina Rye, Toni Martin, Linda St. Louis, Julie Bingham, Rosie Dymond, Karen Hammond, Amanda Barrass, Julie Miller, Robyn Fuller, Tracie Faa-Thompson, Ann Greenwood.

The meeting started at 10.35am.

1. Welcome and Apologies

Sarah Hickson welcomed members to the meeting and expressed thanks to Sonia Murray for her powerful training which has run prior and which many members had attended. Sarah noted the excellent turn out at this year's AGM and thanked members for their support.

Jacqui Clarke gave the apologies received.

The Board members, Jacqui Clarke & Sarah Zehetmayr-McCall introduced themselves:

Sarah Hickson - had been involved in the Board for some time since being a student member and is currently chair since Donna Benson stood down in October 2024.

Jacqui Clarke – is not a BAPT Director but employed as the BAPT Business Manager and joined the team in September 2024.

Sarah Zehetmayr-McCall – is the Chair of the Professional Conduct Panel since November 2024 following Linda St Louis' retirement. Sarah is not a BAPT Director, but is a member, and the PCP operate on behalf of BAPT dealing with complaints, conduct and concerns.

Jeanne McLaughlin – Vice Chair of the BAPT Board and Chair of the Supervisors Subcommittee.

Alex Mahon – Part of the small Membership Team which also involves Tracey Trevorrow and Jacqui Clarke.

Sandra Boyle – has been a Board Member for a couple of years and is the Board representative for the Training & Education Committee.

Jo Hill – has been a Board member for many years. She will be taking on a new role within the BAPT Board going forward and is developing what that will look like.

Andrew O'Mahoney – one of BAPT's Lay Director of the Board who has been on Board for over for 10 years and is a member of the Finance Committee.

Maggie Fearn – International representative role for BAPT whose main role has been representing BAPT on the IC-PTA Board.

Esther Schencks – Chair for Communications & PR who works with her team to promote BAPT via social media, website and published communications.

Tracy Lanigan – Scottish BAPT representative who works closely with Scottish members and the Queen Mary University (QMU) members.

Sarah also thanked Paul Kilgallon and Ann Greenwood who are also Board directors but could not attend the meeting. Thanks were also relayed to Linda St Louis who was the BAPT PCP Chair until November but has continued to support work on PCP until very recently.

2. Approval of Minutes of AGM – 18th May 2024

Sarah advised that the draft minutes have been on the website for much of the year and were circulated with this year's AGM pack for consideration.

The minutes of the 2024 AGM were approved.

3. Matters arising

No matters were raised and updates on most matters will be covered in the Chair and Subcommittee leads reports.

4. Membership Fees 2025/26

The finance committee has considered membership fees and recommends no increase to fees for this coming year considering cost-of-living increases. The members are asked to consider this proposal.

Proposal: To keep membership fees at current rate for 2025/6 year. There were no objections and this was passed.

5. Report from the Finance Team

Sarah advised that the Finance Committee was made up of herself, Jeanne, Andrew and until recently Sonia, as well as Jacqui Clarke and Tracey Trevorrow.

Sarah explained that the Trustees Annual Report and Annual Accounts had been approved by the Board and were circulated with the AGM papers for consideration.

The members are asked to state in the chat if they approve, decline or abstain the following proposals.

Proposal 1: A vote to approve the annual accounts and report. There were no objections received so the vote was passed (approvals =55).

Proposal 2: A vote to reappoint Cottons Group as BAPTs accountants and for the Finance Committee to agree and approve their remuneration for next year. There were no objections received so the vote was passed (approvals =55).

6. Report from Chair – Sarah Hickson

Sarah advised that the AGM pack provided to members provided written updates from herself, Sarah Zehetmayr-McCall and all Subcommittee Leads, so they would only be doing a quick mention here of the most pertinent issues.

Sarah explained that summarising actions since last AGM had been a difficult task due to the sheer pace of activities. There have been many structural changes which the members will be aware of, such as minimum standard of supervision hours and online membership renewals. Whilst BAPT recognise that change can often feel burdensome, all changes are done to improve

the quality and robustness of BAPT and Play Therapy generally. All BAPT Directors are volunteers, and members, and sincere thanks is expressed to all the Directors, and members working on Subcommittees who work tirelessly to make BAPT what it is.

Major areas of work for BAPT this year continue to be the Membership Renewals which are now online and open again in October. The 2024 Conference which took place in November and was a great success delivering informative and thought-provoking content. The coming Conference will be back in Aston again with a focus on 'Unifying Play Therapy'. Thanks so much to Ella Manning, Rosie Dymond and Jenny Reid who have come forward to help on putting on this year's conference.

The PSA Annual Check took place in February, and whilst not a full revaluation, still results in a lot of work and the team will now be working on introducing the new recommendations made by the PSA.

In recent months members will be aware that we have had two major concerns that BAPT have been closely involved with – the planned closure of the University of South Wales MSc Play Therapy programme and ongoing work on Adoption Support. On the former, thankfully the decision to close the course was overturned following the strength of support for it from students, alumni and staff. BAPT sent formal responses to USW and Welsh Government members and will continue to ambassador for this course, and others, as Universities navigate difficult times. Thank you for all the member support given – to BAPT, to the staff, to the students. It was an upsetting time, and your support was appreciated beyond measure.

Similarly, BAPT has been working tirelessly to support members on the ongoing changes regarding Adoption Support, and particularly the cuts to ASGSF. Legal advice on general adoption support was provided earlier in the year and an open letter on the ASGSF has been prepared. BAPT are now seeking legal advice for members on the most recently changes to the ASGSF and working with Adoption Support Agencies. BAPT also attended the march against ASGSF cuts which took place early in the month, alongside fellow organisations like Adoption UK.

Going forward BAPT will be looking at how it can increase support for students, course expansion and the development of more training. We will continue to work on raising the profile of Play Therapy and advocating for our members.

As always, the work in BAPT is a massive group effort. Thanks again to all the volunteer Board Directors and Subcommittee members. Thanks also to BAPT two part time staff Tracey Trevorrow and Jacqui Clarke. Additional personal thanks to Jeanne McLaughlin, Sonia Murray, Sarah Zhytomyr-McCall and Linda St Louis.

And special thanks to Ann Greenwood who is retiring from the Board and Tracie Faa Thompson who in standing down after five years as Chair of the Training & Education Committee.

Members thanked the entire BAPT Board, Sub-committee members, staff and noted all the hard work taking place in front and behind the scenes.

7. Report from Professional Conduct Panel – Sarah Zehetmayr-McCall

Sarah ZM referred members to her comprehensive written report. She explained that the purpose of the PCP was to uphold and promote the highest ethical standards and professional practice amongst members and is responsible for considering and responding to concerns and complaints.

She explained that Sonia Murray had joined the team as Vice Chair of the PCP in March this year which was most welcome addition and the panel itself is made up of 3 BAPT members and 3 Lay members. She urged members to come forward to join the panel and consider anyone they know of who may be appropriate and interested in becoming a Lay member.

Sarah explained that there are very few concerns and complaints from the public generally which reflects the high standards of Play Therapy that members are providing. One large areas of work going forward will be the PCP Policy and Procedure Review which is being taken forward by Field Fisher solicitors and will ensure the PCP procedures are robust and fit for purpose.

Another will be the ongoing support to members on the Adoption Support agenda and sourcing legal advice for members on the potential of alternative funding and how members can continue to ensure they are best fulfilling their contracts with ASA's.

Online members expressed overwhelming thanks to Sarah ZM, Sonia Murray and the PCP team for all the work that has been done.

8. Report on Professional Standards Authority - Sonia Murray

Sonia gave a detailed presentation on BAPT's relationship with the PSA and the history behind it. Members were informed that the HCPC (Health & Care Professionals Council) only regulates certain professions by law and that there is no legal framework for Play Therapists. HCPC stopped taking applications in 2011 and the PSA was set up. In 2012 BAPT members agreed at the AGM to proceed with the application to join the Accreditation of Voluntary Register and work towards this end was further approved in the 2013 AGM.

The PSA requires regular re-accreditation and annual reviews of policies and procedures. The most recent review took place in February with a particular emphasis on complaints.

Sonia advised that the benefits of being part of the PSA are; increased credibility and trust, public protection, recognition by employers and commissioners, professional accountability, distinction from unregulated practitioners and influence and voice in the wider professional community.

Sonia was thanked by members for her presentation and questions were invited.

A question was asked on what does the 'united front' referred to as a HCPC requirement look like? Sonia confirmed that that would be a united approach between all play therapy associations.

A question was asked that, rather than HCPC, whether BAPT could look at raising profile with insurers and the NHS about the values and assurances PSA accreditation gives BAPT therapists. It was agreed that profile raising of Play Therapy generally needs to be more prominent and noted the suggestion that more education on the strength of PSA regulation with organisations would be valuable. It was further explained that the PSA are accountable to UK Parliament.

A question was asked on whether BAPT has ever become a member of the UKCP (UK Council for Psychotherapy) or BACP (British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy). It was confirmed that BAPT does have organisational membership with BACP. Organisational membership demonstrates that you're committed to providing safe, ethical and professional counselling and psychotherapy services and training.

BACP have an expectation that PT's will be registered with a PT professional body, even if also registered with BACP. It was agreed that BAPT would circulate some more information on the benefits of being an organisational member as a reasonable fee is paid for being one.

Members expressed that the presentation and explanations provided really useful content. Thank you Sonia.

Sonia advised that as she had taken on the PCP Vice Chair role she was unfortunately stepping down from the BAPT Board, which had not been her intention. However, she will continue working closely with the BAPT Board on Training & Education, PSA matters and business planning.

9. Report from Subcommittee Chairs

The Chairs gave a brief run through of their written reports circulated previously.

- Communications & PR

Esther explained the team structure and thanked all in her committee for their ongoing dedication and hard work raising the profile of PT.

BAPT currently has accounts with Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, YouTube, & Pinterest. An account has been set up with Blue Sky as an alternative for X (Twitter) in the last month. BAPT also have a TikTok account which is currently not in use.

In addition, there is the non BAPT managed closed Facebook forum for members.

Throughout the year the team also work on the Christmas advent, the Events Calander and BAPT conference as well as E-projects on the BAPT website. It was noted that the website hosts a lot of useful information and is regularly accessed, including international viewing from the US, Ireland and Australia.

Esther explained that Jacqui Clarke is working on the new newsletter and Lisa Gordon Clark on the BAPT Journal which will be circulated shortly. Lisa confirmed it is a bumper edition!

A member described the C&PR Subcommittee as fun and mutually supportive. Anyone who is interested in supporting the team, or with an interest in social media, is encouraged to get in touch as more help is needed.

Members commended the tremendous work and fabulous posts that the team provide and expressed thanks for all the hard work. The Facebook posts particularly were described as motivating and expressive and members mentioned how much they enjoy receiving the Journal each year.

- Membership

Alex thanked Tracey Trevor for all the work she has done on membership and supervision checks this year. She feedback that there are currently 644 members and that online renewal would be open again towards the end of the year. She thanked members for their support in the changes made in recently and explained that there would be ongoing work to improve and update this area of the website. Feedback is always welcome, as is any offers of assistance to support the small team.

Alex informed members that CPD can now be logged on the website throughout the year and reminded all of the required evidence for membership renewals in advance.

Members noted the improvements and thanked Alex for her hard work in making things as user friendly and useful as possible, noting the large membership numbers and the small team.

- **Supervisors**

Jeanne thanked her team for all the work on the Supervision Committee this last year. The team have successfully managed to approve 18 Supervisors across the UK since its inception in May 2024. Jeanne explained that there is still a demand for supervisors and urged anyone thinking about becoming a BAPT Approved supervisor to get in touch.

The recent Supervisors Audit undertaken went very well and the standard on applications has been very impressive.

Going forward the team are working on the development of courses, Co-ordinating a supervisor's forum, reviewing the BAPT Supervision framework; Maintaining the integrity of Supervision provided by our members and working towards creating a BAPT Supervision Manual. The team also plan to look at Supervision CPD and invited members suggestions on what is needed and what this may look like.

Jeanne reminded members that supervision is so very important as we need to take care of ourselves given the demanding area of work we do for families.

Jeanne and the team were thanked for all their work supporting supervisors and the entire membership.

- **Training & Education**

In the absence of Tracie Faa Thompson, Liz Hill presented the T&E Update.

The T&E team are a hard-working bank of volunteers who have carried out a range of activities over the last year. A particular thanks was given to the University Course Directors and the Uni-Links. Members were informed that there is a vacancy for a Uni-Link member for Roehampton University and members are invited to get in touch if they are interested in this.

Over the year the team have worked on CPD endorsements and directory. In response to a query Jeanne confirmed that the CPD logs would be online for 2026.

Twice a year the team meet with the Course Directors from the three universities to discuss developments and challenges. All courses are currently oversubscribed.

Thanks were expressed to Fiona Edwards who is standing down as course director for QMU after 8 years. It was also noted that Liz Hill and Sonia Murray will be leading on the reaccreditation of Roehampton University this year. Liz also updated on course development opportunities.

Members expressed support to all impacted by events that took place recently regarding the USW course. A member explained that the consultation period is underway so the picture would evolve over the coming months.

Members noted that the significant amount of work and momentum in the T&E group.

Sarah Hickson informed members that after 5 years Tracie Faa -Thompson – Chair of T&E was unfortunately standing down, although she will remain on the T&E Committee. Tracie was thanked for her report and all she has done for T&E over the years.

- **International Ambassador**

Maggie Fearn explained her role in the IC-PTA (International Consortium of Play Therapist Associates) and that the consortia is growing from strength to strength. BAPT is one of the 6 founding NPTA's since the consortium was inaugurated in October 2022. There are currently 9 operating members (USA, Australia, Taiwan, Italy, UK, Canada, Ireland, Japan & Korea) as well as 176 individual members from 21 different countries.

There is an upcoming social assembly and networking event in Rome this year. In addition, they are looking into time zone networking groups and BAPT could be closely involved and drive forward a European group (other networking groups would be S.E Asia and North America).

BAPT are considering how best for members to get more actively involved in the IC-PTA and are looking at developing a subgroup for members who are interested in collaboration with international colleagues. Any members who are interested are urged to get in touch.

As requested by a member Sonia Murray provided the weblink for individual ICPTA membership. <https://www.ic-pta.com/membership-application-individuals>. It was confirmed that it cost 25CHF (Swiss francs; currently equivalent to around the same in Sterling) to join as a BAPT member.

Maggie and Sarah were thanked for their work on the ICPTA and for being one of the leading lights in this arena.

- **Regional Representatives**
- **Scotland**

Tracy Lanigan explained her role and the activities that have been taking place recently. The Play Therapists and Partners Forum goes from strength to strength with representatives from the world of PT, Art, Drama & Dance meeting quarterly.

Play Therapy has a strong reputation in Scotland with many schools confirming their commitment to having PT's. Whilst there are concerns about the impact of austerity and pressures on school budgets this is currently very successful and with good feedback made.

Members were advised on the ongoing concerns on the closure of the Notre Dame Centre in Glasgow and hopes that the decision will be reversed and funding found to continue the activities that take place there for children and young people.

Tracy also updated on the work of the Scottish Conference working group who are meeting regularly to consider the conference taking place in this region. Thanks, and well wishes, were also expressed to Fiona Evans who is retiring as Course Director for QMU – this position is currently advertised.

Tracy was thanked by members for all the work she does on Scotland. Sarah Hickson also took the opportunity to note the hard work Tracy continues to do on the wider board, noting her ongoing positivity and helpfulness.

- **Wales**

Ann was unable to attend the AGM, but members were referred to her written report.

This made note that PT in Wales is expanding as Local Authorities work on in-house therapeutic teams. There is however a lack of PT's who offer therapy in Welsh which is a concern, particularly

given the increase in children attending Welsh Medium Education. It may be that promoting PT as a career amongst the Welsh speaking community should be considered. The current 'BAPT PT Children's Leaflets is currently available in Welsh.

Of note was the online training for Wales from the NSPCC on Safeguarding Training - specifically for Creative Therapists.

Sarah Hickson explained that Ann was retiring from the BAPT Board at this AGM and thanked her for all the work she has done and best wishes for future endeavours.

Sarah thanked all the Subcommittee Leads for their reports.

10. Directors Retirement – Election of Officers

Members were reminded to state For, Against or Abstain in the chat for each individual nomination.

Re-Election of Board Members

The following Board members are required to be re-elected.

For 1 year

Sarah Hickson	Proposed:	Jeanne McLaughlin	Seconded: Maggie Fearn
For: 55	Against: 0	Abstain: 1	
Jo Hill	Proposed:	Sarah Hickson	Seconded: Tracy Lanigan
For: 56	Against: 0	Abstain: 0	
Andrew O'Mahony	Proposed:	Sonia Murray	Seconded: Alex Machon
For: 56	Against: 0	Abstain: 0	

For 3 Years

Alex Machon	Proposed:	Esther Schencks	Seconded: Paul Kilgallon
For: 55	Against: 0	Abstain: 1	

The following Board members are required to be elected to positions on the Board.

Sarah Hickson as Chair	Proposed:	Andrew O'Mahony	Seconded: Tracy Lanigan
For: 56	Against: 0	Abstain: 0	

Jeanne McLaughlin as Vice Chair	Proposed:	Esther Schencks	Seconded: Alex Machon
For: 54	Against: 0	Abstain: 2	

The following Sub Committee Members were to be elected to the Sub Committees.

For 3 Years

Training & Education

Helen Forrester Proposed: Jeanne McLaughlin Seconded: Sonia Murray
For: 54 Against: 0 Abstain: 2

For 1 Year

Sonia Murray Proposed: Sarah Hickson Seconded: Paul Kilgallon
For: 53 Against: 0 Abstain: 3

Sandra Boyle Proposed: Sonia Murray Seconded: Andrew O'Mahony
For: 53 Against: 0 Abstain: 3

Tracie Faa-Thompson Proposed: Paul Kilgallon Seconded: Sandra Boyle
For: 52 Against: 0 Abstain: 0

(The vote for Tracie Faa-Thompson does not include postal votes (4) as the nomination came in after this time.)

Jacqui Clarke introduced the vote and proposal for all votes relating to Sarah Hickson.

Sarah Hickson thanked everyone for voting.

Nomination by notification for Election

Sarah confirmed that no nominations has been received.

It was confirmed that there are vacancies on Professional Conduct, Training & Education for a Chairperson, Communications & PR and the Board of Directors.

11. Proposals Raised

The following proposal made by Catriona Irvine and seconded by Kate Matthews and Freya Howard was introduced.

I would like to propose that BAPT raise an official query with Ofsted regarding the need to register with Ofsted as an Adoption Support Agency if Play Therapists (or other therapists) wish to work with adopted children outside of the ASGSF.

During discussion the following was noted:

The need to register with Ofsted is a matter of law made by Parliament, rather than set by Ofsted itself. Any legal change would require involvement of many groups, outside of PT.

Whilst mindful that adopted parents may feel that they don't have the same decision-making powers as birth parents, it was also recognised that working therapeutically with adoptive families is a specialism with a need for thorough knowledge on many areas including adoption processes. This is to protect vulnerable families as it is impossible to know when an adoption related matter or trauma can come up during therapy and being an ASA does provide a level of accountability.

A member feedback their experience of being registered as an ASA and informed that, whilst it was a complicated process, it was really thorough and worthwhile. The member received good advice and guidance from a PT who has already been through the process and suggested that support could be given to link up PT's wanting to register or even link up to form a support agency.

There was ongoing discussion about costs and contributions from parents and working premises. BAPT reassured members they would be getting legal advice and guidance for members on these issues given all the mixed messages and misinformation currently taking place.

The PCP team will be meeting with Ofsted and if possible, they will try to get answers and advice on issues such as that raised in the proposal. BAPT were thanked for the work they have done in this area particularly the Open Letter for members and attendance on the march against ASGSF cuts.

As work is currently underway on this matter it was agreed that the proposal would not be taken forward as is, but Catriona and the membership in general, will be updated regularly on any updates and can feedback any concerns to PCP (Sarah Zehetmayr-McCall) or BAPT (Sarah Hickson). Catriona was thanked by members for raising this important topic at the AGM.

It was noted that different rules apply to Scotland and Wales who do not have access to ASGSF; but may be involved in children crossing borders.

12. Date of the next AGM

It was agreed that the date of the next AGM would be Saturday 16th May 2026.

13. Any other business and close

Members gave positive feedback on the AGM and expressed their thanks to all involved. Sarah Hickson thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 12.35.