



# social WORKER OF THE YEAR AWARDS

2023  
WINNERS



# We are proud to be headline sponsor of the Social Worker of the Year Awards.

The level of passion and commitment shown in this profession is something to celebrate and we will do all we can to help social workers gain the recognition they deserve.

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## Contents

**06**

Student Social  
Worker of the Year

**07**

University Social Work  
Lecturer of the Year

**08**

NQ Adult Social Adult Social  
Worker of the Year

**09**

NQ Children's Social  
Worker of the Year

**10**

Practice Educator  
of the Year

**11**

Team Leader of the  
Year, Adult Services

**12**

Team Leader of the Year,  
Children's Services

**13**

Supportive Social  
Work Employer  
of the Year

**14**

Team of the Year,  
Adult Services  
(including MDTs)

**15**

Team of the Year,  
Children's Services  
(including MDTs)

**16**

Mental Health  
Social Worker  
of the Year

**17**

Approved Mental  
Health Professional  
(AMHP) of the Year

**18**

Digital Transformation  
in Social Work Award

**19**

Supporting Children in  
Education Award

**20**

Social Justice  
Advocate Award

**21**

Adult Social Worker  
of the Year

**22**

Children's Social  
Worker of the Year

**23**

Lifetime Achievement  
Award

**24**

Overall Social Worker  
of the Year

**25**

Trustee  
comments

**26**

Finalists  
2023

**28**

Our Judging  
Panel

**32**

Our  
Sponsors



## Congratulations to all finalists of the Social Worker of the Year Awards 2023

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work and social workers – the ethical home of social work.



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## Gold Award Winner

**Aravind Satheesh**  
University of East Anglia

While still only in his final year of his MA in Social Work at the University of East Anglia, Aravind has already shown so much tenacity and commitment to the profession.

Within the People from Abroad Team, he worked to support families arriving under the Refugee Settlement Programmes, as well as those under the Homes for Ukraine initiative.

An Indian national with clear aspirations of working with asylum families, he has also worked one day a week with the charity 'The Matthew Project' in Norwich, where he has supported youngsters with vulnerabilities or substance misuse issues.

It was thanks to Aravind that a very successful fundraising event was held in the city of Norwich to support those impacted by the Syrian and Turkish earthquake. This one-off occasion raised over £5,000 and brought together more than 250 people.

Aravind is very keen on supporting his fellow students and has consistently shared his learnings, as well as providing shadowing opportunities.

A true 'hands on' player, he actively travelled to Heathrow to meet families arriving on the resettlement scheme and was responsible for a carefully planned timetable.

Colleagues refer to his 'outstanding potential' within the world of social work.

Supported by:



## Silver Award Winner

Lloyd Haskins, University of Plymouth

## Gold Award Winner

**Bridget Caffrey**  
University of Chester

Lecturer, researcher, author and role model, Bridget is regarded as an exceptionally talented academic who inspires and enthuses others.

Bridget trained as a registered general nurse before studying for a master's degree in social work in 1995 and subsequently entering posts for local authorities, working in hospital and community settings.

She completed her Practice Teacher Award in 2007 and worked as an independent practice educator before joining the University of Chester as a senior lecturer in 2015.

It is in this position that Bridget has continually attracted praise and support for her teaching approach.

She teaches several modules on the BA social work programme, as well as on the MA social work programme, while also being a personal academic tutor for a number of students.

Bridget achieved a Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy in recognition of her teaching role and has recently applied for a Senior Fellowship role in recognition of her skills as a social work lecturer.

She is passionate about encouraging students to get involved in projects of benefit to their community and was, for example, instrumental in assisting her students to fundraise to the benefit of those affected by the situation in Afghanistan.

Within her department and the social work arena, she remains keen to raise the issue of barriers faced by social work students from Black, Asian and other minority ethnic backgrounds.

Her teaching sessions are said to be creative and continually evidencing her real-world experience.

Supported by:



## Joint Silver Award Winners

Lynda Hughes, University of Sheffield  
and Kate Küken, Anglia Ruskin University

# Gold Award Winner

**Victoria Veale**  
Suffolk County Council

By colleagues and by those she supports, Victoria has been consistently admired and applauded for the level of trust and empathy she demonstrates throughout her work.

Showing her great dedication to her career path, she successfully obtained a First-Class honours degree in social work, while working full time on the apprenticeship programme and managing her own learning disability.

She has now been with the Adult and Community Services Learning Disability and Autism Specialist Support Team since September 2022, and during that period has played a significant role in supporting individuals through highly complex areas.

Her work record has seen her achieve a number of hospital discharges and become a member of several practice steering groups.

She is a member of the All-Age Autism Strategy, the Suffolk County Council (SCC) ASYE Adult Steering Group, the Race Equality Champions Network and is co-chair of the SCC Neurodivergent Network.

In recent times, she even played a role as part of the interview panel for the recruitment of a Deputy Chief Executive – something which led to positive feedback from management.

Victoria is known for supporting fellow professionals across different teams. She is appreciated and recognised for always finding time to stop and chat with colleagues about their day, or offering a gem of support and compassion wherever it's needed.

Colleagues value her warmth, positivity and empathy – and her exceptional baking skills!

Supported by:



# Gold Award Winner

**Clare Burnett**  
Cafcass

A doctor in engineering, Clare qualified as a social worker as recently as the summer of 2022.

She has a complex workload which sees dozens of families and children at the centre of issues such as step-parent adoption, surrogacy and discharge of care orders.

Passionate about parental alienating behaviours (the topic on which she chose to write her master's degree dissertation), Clare was an ambassador of Cafcass Child Impact Assessment Framework throughout her studies.

Her mentor and her colleagues talk of her determination toward self-development and her advocacy for the importance of writing, both to and for children.

She is seen as someone who is calm under pressure, puts everyone at ease, and is eager to promote the world of social work at all times.

Clare has already proven herself to be a competent presenter, someone who participates fully in practice hubs, and who has had three files audited, with all work being graded as 'good'.

Families have reported with great enthusiasm about Clare's ability to assess their situation fully, and her capacity to provide children with a much-needed voice.

One manager said: 'I am proud to be her manager. Clare is a respected member of the team, and her contributions are welcomed and valued'.

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**Silver Award Winner**  
Norton Dhlwayo, Achieving for Children

**Silver Award Winner**  
Angell Phoenix, Worcestershire County Council



## Gold Award Winner

**Gwen Bryan**  
University of East London

With unique perspective and extensive experience, Gwen is considered to be someone who empowers others, encourages growth and development, and is always nurturing those around her to help them achieve to the best of their ability.

A black British woman with disabilities, she is said to create 'remarkable' impact on students, and to be particularly effective at helping others navigating bias or challenge.

Ever the proactive educator, she has invested significant time in weekly supervisions and facilitated mini seminars to help students talk in a more open forum about issues around the ethics of social work.

Her dynamic and engaged approach has also been shown in how she organised an educational outing to the Royal Court of Justice, where students had the privilege of observing real cases and engaging in post-observation discussions.

Students refer to her 'inspirational qualities' and say they draw huge benefit and reassurance from her honest and tough feedback, her sound support and guidance, and her constant desire to help others aspire for excellence in the world of social work.

Colleagues say what sets Gwen apart is her 'relentless pursuit of innovative methods to engage and empower students'.

She is considered selfless, exceptionally committed, empathetic, and an 'extraordinary practice educator'.

Supported by:



## Gold Award Winner

**Wendy Kirkman**  
Derbyshire County Council

Considered by so many colleagues to be an inspiration and a champion for her team, Wendy's nomination stood out for the exceptional comment and praise from others.

Having completed her social work degree just under 10 years ago, while bringing up two young children, she had already had considerable experience as a Domiciliary Service Organiser, and a Care Manager.

Her career progression has been rapid, and well deserved.

Throughout the pandemic she was continuously prioritising team wellbeing, instigating such touchpoints as Time to Talk Tuesdays, quizzes on Wednesdays, CPD sessions on Thursdays and a peer drop-in on Fridays.

Repeatedly, the nomination talks of the way in which she has effectively and selflessly supported others in their work and assisted them in seeking progress through their various social work roles.

Innovative in how she approaches her work, she is the Occupational Therapist Lead for the area and has recently made changes to the way cases are allocated – all with the intention of making processes smoother and more effective. As a net result, waiting lists are said to have fallen dramatically under this new methodology.

One colleague summarises the outstanding contribution of Wendy, by saying: 'Wendy has the ability to open people's eyes to the world of social work and champions people's human rights'.

Supported by:



## Joint Silver Award Winners

Janette Ledbrook, Wokingham Borough Council  
and Charlie Mason, Plymouth City Council

## Silver Award Winner

Suzanne Smith, Hull City Council

## Gold Award Winner

### Jane Dunne Coventry Local Authority

Two decades after qualifying in social work, Jane has become a respected colleague and team leader who has really grasped the arena of Family Drugs and Alcohol Court (FDAC) and sought to create a positive impact for her community at every turn.

Having applied for the FDAC post in 2016 when it was an incredibly fledgling service, she proved to be a highly effective manager, and was continuously looking for opportunities to progress the delivery and benefit others more broadly.

It was little wonder that, following the success of Coventry FDAC, there was an approach by Warwickshire local authority, which subsequently led to the formation of Coventry and Warwickshire FDAC.

The service saw rapid uptake and, alongside this, Jane secured funding to bring into place a specialist domestic abuse worker from the West Midlands Crime Commission.

Jane prioritises the reputation of her team, while setting high standards and supporting all of her colleagues as they progress their own professional journey with FDAC.

Notably, Jane also values the professional relationship created with various partner agencies in the region. She co-ordinates a local practice development forum and ensures regular meetings and dialogue.

Jane has also taken a personal role in the development of a peer mentor programme, which is the first of its kind within FDAC teams.

Supported by:



## Silver Award Winner

Nirvana Curley, Portsmouth City Council

## Gold Award Winner

### Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council

Providing for a population of some 200,000 people, Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council employs just under 200 social workers, covering children and adult services.

The organisation pivots on the central belief that to support its community, it must consistently and innovatively support its social work staff, such that they are able to live up to the values of delivering for the wider community. Outcomes-focused, the Council ensures most new adult referrals are contacted within 48 hours, and that a maximum wait of two weeks is achieved.

The social work team work highly effectively with hospitals in the area, enabling a discharge process which now sees local facilities recording among the lowest rates for delayed discharge. Focusing on children's services, the council's social work team are implementing Relationship Based Practice, which is helping them overcome any initial scepticism among families and is creating positive relationships blossoming through trust and empathy.

An annual festival of learning event is one aspect of the team's ongoing development, helping to aid self-reflection and professional practice. In addition, the Council commits to staging a number of events during Social Work Week, celebrating success and encouraging recognition from the highest level.

Employees speak of feeling valued and supported and being given the opportunity to progress through their career at the appropriate pace, and with necessary peer support.

They value that the balance of their working and home lives is well understood, and that they are able to fulfil their duties in their chosen profession to the best of their abilities, while also being able to adopt flexible and fair structures around time spent at or away from their place of work.

Supported by:



## Silver Award Winner

Cafcass

## Gold Award Winner

### Mental Health and Wellbeing Team Essex County Council

Essex County Council's Mental Health and Wellbeing Team operates as a team of 13, comprising social workers, community support workers, a targeted employment officer and an occupational therapist – among others.

They work county-wide and are focused on early intervention and preventative support work for adults. Their impressive and impactful work is seen not only through work they carry out with individuals, but also on a more 'community-wide' level.

They actively engage around the county, raising awareness of mental health and wellbeing, joining events and festivals, and ensuring businesses and community groups are well informed.

Viewed also as a team of great educators and collaborators, they are in the process of setting up a Domestic Abuse group, which will utilise outdoor space to support women most in need. This follows on from existing group work, which sees them running a closed Men's Mental Health Group.

Referral rates for the team's support have risen significantly since the start of the pandemic, and the professional collective has responded impressively. They work collaboratively, using their various skills to meet the needs of the individual, and are rewarded with great feedback from individuals in terms of confidence gained, and greater resilience.

Notable outcomes for adults who have been in receipt of their care include: gaining support with neurodiversity, both for accessing a diagnosis and subsequent services; addressing root causes such as trauma; return to work or education; and feeling empowered to support others as a result of their experience.

Supported by:



### Silver Award Winner

Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) Team,  
Suffolk County Council

## Gold Award Winner

### Bridges Devon County Council

A multi-disciplinary service of 45 practitioners working across Devon, Bridges was created just three years ago to support families and their young people, aged 11 to 18.

Each member of the team is focused on ensuring that the 'whole family' is heard and understood, and that time is given to provide thorough and empathetic support for all. As well as adolescent and family workers, the team also consists of specialists such as clinical psychologists, speech and language therapists and adult inclusion workers.

Weekly multi-disciplinary group supervision underpins the approach, led by a locality Team Manager and including all practitioners.

Such has been the outcome of Bridges so far, that 86% of young people receiving support from the team have been able to remain living with their families since the inception in 2020.

Not only has this been of enormous emotional and wellbeing benefit for families, but it has also resulted in a saving of £1.48m.

Understandably proud of its early accomplishments, particularly in an era post-Covid, the team say they work collaboratively with partner services and prioritise clear communication with all concerned, ensuring all activities are family-led and meaningful.

Staff are encouraged and supported with ongoing professional development, to the extent that every practitioner has completed level 1 Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy training.

Families and individuals have happily endorsed the team's work, commending them on being 'easy to talk to', 'giving confidence', and 'making home life better' and families 'closer'.

Supported by:



### Joint Silver Award Winners

Make a Change, Suffolk County Council and  
North Lincolnshire Council Fostering Team



# Gold Award Winner

**Hannah Dawson**  
Northumberland County Council

Shining through in Hannah's category entry is a clear record of having been so determined and committed to supporting the most vulnerable, throughout every stage of her career history to date.

Formerly a care manager, and prior to that a carer in various settings, Hannah became a social worker in July 2020. Since that time, she has excelled in forging relationships with other professional partners, and has been identified by her colleagues as someone of great positivity and self-motivation.

As well as achieving her Adult Safeguarding Professional Qualification – the substance of which she was able to confidently and helpfully share with her colleagues to aid their knowledge – she has also trained as a sensory worker in the team and is leading a multi-agency forum on this subject.

Hannah's caseload has persistently been one encompassing many complex and sensitive cases. These have included individuals in crisis, and those who are subject to multiple safeguarding issues.

All contact with individuals has been carried out with great compassion and care, and has, to her credit, resulted in positive outcomes.

Fellow colleagues speak highly of Hannah's reliability, fairness and her ability to serve as a positive role model to all who come into contact with her – be that in working alongside her, or as part of a vulnerable client group.

She is seen as someone who fosters a supportive and inclusive work environment, while always being quick to help others find innovative solutions or to navigate their own cases with a new perspective.

Determined to continue with her own career progression, Hannah now plans to study and qualify as a practice educator.

Supported by:



# Gold Award Winner

**Kirsten Bingham**  
Humber Teaching NHS Foundation Trust

Having taken up the brand new role of AMHP Service lead in 2021, Kirsten has been described by colleagues as being both supportive and empowering.

Hailing from roots as a healthcare assistant in residential and nursing care settings, she has worked as an AMHP and a Mental Health Social Worker for the last 16 years.

Her nomination clearly demonstrated her desire to improve the experiences of those who come into contact with AMHPs, and those who work in these roles and face challenges around resource and case complexity.

She is said to value the ability to remain connected to colleagues and patients through front line delivery, while also developing and influencing as a practitioner.

Across the Humber region, Kirsten is actively involved in raising the profile of AMHPs and social work, and is seen to be a positive influence, always sharing ideas, supporting peers, and representing the regional group at the National AMHP Leaders Forum.

While there are many pressures facing those involved in the world of AMHPs, Kirsten is seen as having been a great enabler, re-designing services and implementing structures which achieve the best outcomes for all.

Colleagues refer to her having 'shone a light' on prevention and enablement, while being a knowledgeable champion for the profession and someone to inspire all current and future staff in this field.

Supported by:



# Silver Award Winner

Sara Galvin, Coventry & Warwickshire Partnership NHS Trust

# Silver Award Winner

Rob Marsden, Hertfordshire Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust

## Gold Award Winner

### Specialist Support Service Gateshead Council

Based within the Children's Social Care and Lifelong Learning Directorate, this powerful support service is a collective, made up of Youth Justice, Domestic Abuse, Family Group Conferencing, Support for Children and Young People who are Reported Missing and Family Support Teams.

Specifically, The Youth Justice Service was recently inspected and rated "Good" overall. The inspection report highlights the use of digital media to showcase young people's experiences of accessing services. Meanwhile, the Domestic Abuse Team has been developed to provide support to those impacted by domestic abuse including adults, children and young people and services for perpetrators. In the last year alone, the Domestic Abuse Team has worked with 851 people.

The service shines out in this entry for two commissioned DigitalMe projects. These were carried out with Digital Voice for Communities, a Gateshead-based Community Interest Company.

The first project worked with children affected by domestic abuse and the second project worked with children and young people who have experience of Gateshead's Youth Justice Service.

DigitalMe is a programme giving disadvantaged communities the opportunity to tell their stories and enact change within the services they use.

Participants create their own avatar to tell their story in their own voices.

The outcome of this work has been enormously impactful, and the films are being widely used to aid training and to help in one-to-one sessions.

Supported by:



### Silver Award Winner

Buckinghamshire Council Children's Services

## Gold Award Winner

### Christina Addenbrooke Essex County Council

Hailing from a role as an English and History teacher in a diverse London high school, Christina brings this, and her time teaching in Hong Kong, to her busy and important role as part of Essex Virtual School.

Following the introduction of Virtual School Heads in late 2021, Christina was selected to become the Lead for Children with a Social Worker.

Christina took on the role with great enthusiasm, insight, creativity and determination.

She took control of the budget, led on the strategy planning, and implemented it too. Alongside this, she has successfully funded pilot projects and commissioned researchers from the University of Sussex to build a better understanding of this cohort of children in the county of Essex.

With a growing team, Christina is held in high esteem by colleagues and continues to develop approaches which lead to positive impact, and which serve the outcome of profiling social work in an education setting through the Virtual School approach.

In recent months she has impressed senior education colleagues, members of the Corporate Parenting Panel and the DfE Attendance Advisor, to whom she has had cause to present.

Those who work alongside her say she is 'driven by social justice' and that she brings people along together to 'change and disrupt the system'.

Supported by:



### Silver Award Winner

Demi Sherman, North Tyneside Council

## Gold Award Winner

**Elaine James**  
Bradford Council

A passionate advocate for the rights of people in all circumstances and health needs, Elaine is said to have made a 'profound contribution' throughout her time working at both Calderdale and Bradford Council.

Elaine was at the forefront of championing the 'Promote the Vote' initiative in both local authorities and is acknowledged for having significantly increased the likelihood of people participating in an election vote, from within those catchments.

A competent researcher, Elaine has also co-authored a practice book, and insisted that profits from the title go towards a charity which campaigns for people with learning disabilities.

Among her many impactful achievements in social work, she has developed a scheme which saw adult social workers based in town centre shops (rather than headquarter facilities) in order to improve community connection.

She has conceived the idea of a local hospital discharge unit and has also pioneered a digital initiative which was dubbed 'Casserole Club' to reduce loneliness and improve friendships among those with social care needs.

Such is her proactivity, Elaine also set up the first Gateway to Care Service, creating a more 'joined up' approach to delivering for those with health and social care needs.

Colleagues value Elaine's wisdom, knowledge and proactivity. She is admired as a person who repeatedly delivers positive and lasting change for others.

Supported by:

**BASW**  
**England**

The professional association for  
social work and social workers

## Silver Award Winner

Jenni Guthrie, Frontline

## Gold Award Winner

**Ruth Hare**  
Birmingham City Council Adult Social Care

Regarded by colleagues as a dedicated practitioner with a real passion for helping younger peers achieve to their best ability, Ruth is also something of an innovator and a driving force.

Having worked successfully in social work in the Birmingham area for a number of years and advanced her career by taking on a Specialist Practitioner in Education role, Ruth then spotted the opportunity to create an initiative specific to hoarding.

She identified what a very real issue this was in the community and sought permission to establish a team who could focus on this area and work with a voluntary organisation.

Such has been the success of this approach that a business case was submitted to councillors in Birmingham to see the team expanded.

It is now seen as a project which benefits a great number of people across the community, has developed a wonderful partnership with the volunteer organisation, and has created a beneficial focus for practitioners and students assigned to be part of the initiative.

Colleagues talk with great respect and admiration about the way in which Ruth is keen to share knowledge and resources, that she is reflective and supportive, and that she helps others to find their strengths.

Supported by:

 **Havering**  
LONDON BOROUGH

## Silver Award Winner

Jennifer Daines, Wokingham Borough Council

## Gold Award Winner

### Omaid Badar

Kirklees Children's Social Care

'Inspirational' is a word used so often and by so many when describing Omaid.

Born in Afghanistan, he suffered the tragedy of his father being killed when he was one month old, and subsequently saw his brother shot in front of him when he was just six.

Despite spending his early years in a refugee camp and coming to England at the age of 14 unable to speak English, he rapidly embraced his life here, and secured 11 GCSEs.

It was through his experience under the care system in Bradford that he became motivated by the idea of entering social work, and successfully secured a place to study the discipline at university.

Four years since qualifying, he is valued as a hard-working and compassionate member of his team, who is fastidious in his efforts to advocate for children.

He passionately supports the career progression of others as a practice educator and regularly speaks to social students who are nearing the completion of their studies (something for which he is known to attract great applause and appreciation).

Keen to embrace the busy nature of his team's work, Omaid also finds time to sit on the Fostering Panel.

His nomination shone out, with multiple positive comments from fellow colleagues, as well as from families. He is a much valued and respected member of his team.

Supported by:



### Silver Award Winner

Jennifer Daines, Wokingham Borough Council

## Gold Award Winner

### Meera Spillett

With over 35 years' experience as a social worker, and an impressive track record as an author, ambassador, speaker and inspector, Meera's nomination is one which stands out from afar.

Having served in a number of significant roles throughout her career, including as Director of Children's Services and an HMI for the London Region, she is acknowledged as having been instrumental in addressing the underrepresentation of black leaders in the social care sector.

Never afraid to challenge leaders on the role they are playing in creating equality in the social care sector, she has written such books as *Black Leaders Missing in Action*, and *Cultural Competence*.

She has co-led the Leadership in Colour programme commissioned by the All-London Directors of Children's Services, and developed the Black and Asian Initiative for The Staff College.

A visionary leader, Meera has faced adversity in her own personal world, but has always sought to overcome such challenges and use experiences to further enhance her empathy and insight in the world of social work.

Meera is greatly admired by colleagues and seen as someone who inspires, encourages and always challenges for fairness and best practice.

Supported by:



### Silver Award Winner

Sarah Parsons, Cafcass



# Overall Winner

## Omaid Badar Kirklees Children's Social Care

'Remarkable', 'outstanding', 'inspirational' and 'compassionate' are just some of the words used to describe Omaid Badar.

Overcoming many challenges and tragedy in his life, Omaid has used his experiences to enhance the lives of those he supports through his work.

After seeing first-hand the transformative power of good social work, this led Omaid to the profession.

Despite it being just four years since he qualified as a social worker, Omaid is not only progressing well in his career, but he is also encouraging and supporting others through his roles as a practice educator and sitting on the Fostering Panel.

The Overall Social Worker of the Year is chosen by the charity's Board of Trustees, and it was a unanimous decision that Omaid should receive the title this year.

Supported by:



### Rob Mitchell MBE

A truly remarkable and humbling nomination for Omaid, that details the very best of social work and indeed humanity. Omaid is everything that the profession is about when it is at its best. He is described by the families he supports as kind, honest, trusting and a social worker who helps families feel safe. Similarly, he is described by those in the social work profession as 'inspiring, compassionate, engaging, flexible and thoughtful'. Omaid's approach to social work reflects where we all as practitioners aspire to be.

### Ana Popovic

Like a phoenix rising from the ashes, this outstanding individual has triumphed over adversity and emerged as a beacon of hope and resilience. His personal journey is an inspiration and testament to the power of the human spirit and serves as a guiding light for those in need. Through his unwavering determination and unwavering courage, he has not only transformed his own life but is also touching the lives of many others, making a profound difference. Truly, he stands as an inspiration to all, reminding us that no obstacle is insurmountable and that our most challenging moments can become the catalyst for extraordinary change.

### Dr Clenton Farquharson CBE

Omaid, the undisputed overall winner, harnesses the strength of his turbulent childhood to revolutionise lives as a remarkable social worker. He intimately grasps the struggles faced by young individuals, fuelling his unwavering dedication. Championing education and social justice, he sparks a wave of positive change. Beyond his call of duty, he stands firmly by children in crisis, displaying unmatched passion and commitment. Language barriers prove futile against his impactful, relatable writing style that unites families. Leading by example, he fosters efficiency within his team, while nurturing empathy as a mentor for future professionals. Omaid's ultimate mission is to elevate young lives, turning instability into inspiration and leaving an enduring legacy of transformation.

### Sherry Malik

I was blown away by this nomination. That someone is able to live through so much and still have the capacity and resilience to dedicate their lives to helping others was very humbling to read. He has been described by his colleagues and by the people he supports as kind, brilliant, compassionate, dedicated and I can't say it any better than his manager - "I want to bottle what he has and share it with all social workers".

## List of finalists 2023

### Student Social Worker of the Year 2023

#### Supported by Bradford Social Work Teaching Partnership

Alex Cadoux	University of Warwick
Amy Ibbotson	Sunderland University
Aravind Satheesh	University of East Anglia
Charlotte Higgins	Manchester Metropolitan University
Karla Cappendale	West London NHS Trust Inpatient Forensic Service
Lloyd Haskins	University of Plymouth

### University Social Work Lecturer of the Year 2023

#### Supported by Essex County Council

Bridget Caffrey	University of Chester
David Bulmer	Middlesex University / Think Ahead
Gemma Hunt	University of Warwick
Katie Küken	Anglia Ruskin University
Lynda Hughes	University of Sheffield

### Newly Qualified Adult Social Worker of the Year 2023

#### Supported by Suffolk County Council

Angell Phoenix	Worcestershire County Council
James Hussain	Bradford District Care NHS Foundation Trust
Kemela McFarlane	Liverpool City Council
Nicola Harding	Cheshire West and Chester
Patrick Hamilton	Suffolk County Council
Victoria Veale	Suffolk County Council

### Newly Qualified Children's Social Worker of the Year 2023

#### Supported by London Borough of Wandsworth

Clare Burnett	Cafcass
Ellie Taylor	Gloucestershire County Council
Kelly Bentley-Simon	Bradford District Care NHS Foundation Trust
Norton Dhliwayo	Achieving for Children

### Practice Educator of the Year 2023

#### Supported by BASW

Christopher Smith-Whicker	Kirklees Children's Social Care
Gwen Bryan	University of East London
Pat Curtis	Anglia Ruskin University
Sharon Hirshman	Sheffield City Council
Suzanne Smith	Hull City Council

### Team of the Year, Adult Services 2023 (including MDTs)

#### Supported by UNISON

Adult Central Locality Team  
City of Doncaster Council  
Adult Social Care Transformation Team  
Derbyshire County Council  
Adults with Learning Disabilities Team South  
Worcestershire  
Worcestershire County Council  
Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) Team  
Suffolk County Council  
Mental Health and Wellbeing Team  
Essex County Council

### Team of the Year, Children's Services 2023 (including MDTs)

#### Supported by London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham

Bridges  
Devon County Council  
Fair Ways Fostering Team  
Fair Ways  
Make a Change  
Suffolk County Council  
North Lincolnshire Council Fostering Team  
North Lincolnshire Council  
Staying Together Team  
Bexley Council  
Tendring Multidisciplinary Team (MDT)  
Essex County Council

### Supportive Social Work Employer Award 2023

#### Supported by Sanctuary Personnel

Cafcass  
North Lincolnshire Council  
Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council  
Together for Children Sunderland

### Team Leader of the Year, Adult Services 2023

#### Supported by Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council

Charlie Mason  
Corinne Avery  
Janette Ledbrook  
Julie Flynn  
Sandra Mak  
Suzanne Ladlow  
Wendy Kirkman  
Plymouth City Council  
Norfolk County Council  
Wokingham Borough Council  
Birmingham City Council  
Merton Council  
Suffolk County Council  
Derbyshire County Council

### Team Leader of the Year, Children's Services 2023

#### Supported by CSWM (Yorkshire & the Humber)

Belinda Collingwood  
Ben Collins  
Eleanor Hinchliffe  
Jane Dunne  
Nirvana Curley  
Sarah Vardy  
Essex County Council  
Essex County Council  
South West Yorkshire Partnership  
NHS Foundation Trust  
Coventry Local Authority  
Portsmouth City Council  
Derbyshire County Council

### Digital Transformation in Social Work Award 2023

#### Supported by ADASS West Midlands

Buckinghamshire Children's Services  
Buckinghamshire Council Children's Services  
Fostering Together's Team  
Fostering Together - for children with disabilities  
Rachael Carrott  
Adopt South - Hampshire County Council  
Specialist Support Service  
Gateshead Council  
Suffolk County Council Digital Care Team  
Suffolk County Council

### Supporting Children in Education Award 2023

#### Supported by Coventry City Council

Christina Addenbrooke  
Demi Sherman  
Julia Robertson  
Kelly Arrowsmith  
SWIS project - social workers in schools  
Essex County Council  
North Tyneside Council  
Orchard Care  
North Tyneside Council  
Anglia Ruskin University

### Social Justice Advocate Award 2023

#### Supported by BASW

Ade Larigo  
Elaine James  
Jenni Guthrie  
Agency Connection Ltd  
Bradford Council  
Frontline

### Mental Health Social Worker of the Year 2023

#### Supported by Lancashire and South Cumbria NHS Foundation Trust

Edward Lim  
Hannah Dawson  
Kim Cleaver  
Sara Galvin  
Wendy Giovanelli  
South West Yorkshire Partnership  
NHS Foundation Trust  
Northumberland County Council  
Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council  
Coventry & Warwickshire Partnership NHS Trust  
Barnet, Enfield and Haringey Mental Health Trust

### AMHP (Approved Mental Health Professional) Social Worker of the Year 2023

#### Supported by S12 Solutions

Andree Hindmarch  
Katie Anderson  
Kirsten Bingham  
Krista Rathe  
Rob Marsden  
Stephen Roper  
Sunderland Local Authority  
Northumberland County Council  
Humber Teaching NHS Foundation Trust - Hull City Council  
Essex County Council  
Hertfordshire Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust  
Sefton MBC

### Adult Social Worker of the Year 2023

#### Supported by London Borough of Havering

Abby Turk  
Charlotte Spain  
Jennifer Daines  
Louise Gray  
Ruth Hare  
Stacey Wells  
Essex County Council  
North Lincolnshire Council  
Wokingham Borough Council  
Northumberland County Council  
Birmingham City Council Adult Social Care  
Warrington Borough Council

### Children's Social Worker of the Year 2023

#### Supported by Central Bedfordshire Council

Anna Hill  
Barbara Parker  
Ben Chisanga  
Omaid Badar  
Tia Brady-Belle  
Vicky Doolan  
Wiltshire Council  
University Hospitals Dorset NHS Trust/Macmillan Caring Locally  
Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council  
Kirklees Children's Social Care  
Warwickshire County Council  
Kirklees Local Authority

### Lifetime Achievement Award 2023

#### Supported by Cafcass

Amanda Davies  
Mary Helsby  
Meera Spillett  
Sarah Parsons  
Susan Waring  
Families First Fostering  
Sefton Council Adult Social Care  
The Staff College (Associate)  
Cafcass  
Tripod - working at Somerset Council

## Thank you to our judging panel

**Judging for the 2023 Social Worker of the Year Awards took place in August, when judges attended virtual and in-person sessions to decide this year's finalists and winners.**

The independent judging panel was made up of:

- Leading industry professionals; invited to join the panel based upon their expertise within the social work profession.
- Young people and adults who have received support from social workers.
- Peers and colleagues (we invite a select number of winners from the previous year to join our judging panel).

All judges kindly gave up their time on a voluntary basis.

### Thank you to our judging panel

#### **Andrew Reece**

Team of the Year, Adult Services Winner 2022 and Overall Social Worker of the Year 2022

#### **Andrew Willcox**

Family Justice Young People's Board, Cafcass

#### **Annmarie Nero**

Children's Social Worker of the Year Winner 2022

#### **Asmaat Khan**

ASYE Social Worker, Essex County Council

#### **Bethany Erikson Rodrigues**

Independent Senior Social Worker

#### **Bev Williams MBE**

Founding Patron of the Social Worker of the Year Awards

#### **Bhavna Maher**

Adult Social Worker of the Year Winner 2022

#### **Chris Ring**

Supportive Social Work Employer Award Winner 2022

#### **Deb Solomon**

Social Worker, Derbyshire County Council

#### **Diana Harris**

Chair, BASW Coventry and Warwickshire Branch

#### **Dr Krutika Pau**

Deputy CEO/Director of Children's Services, Starlight Children's Foundation

#### **Dr Mark Brookes MBE**

Advocacy Lead, Dimensions

#### **Eddie Dube**

Advanced Practitioner (Learning Disabilities)

#### **Fran Leddra-Chapman**

Former Chief Social Worker for Adults at the Department of Health and Social Care

#### **Helen Southgate**

Newly Qualified Adult Social Worker of the Year Winner 2022

#### **Ian Vinall**

Independent safeguarding consultant and reviewer

#### **Jak Savage**

Independent Employer and Social Care Consultant

#### **Jason Brandon**

Mental Health Social Work Lead, Department of Health and Social Care

#### **Juliana Dinnall**

Signs of Safety - Consultant Social Worker, London Borough of Bexley

#### **Kate Concannon**

Principal Social Worker for Adult Social Care, Southampton City Council

#### **Kirstie Baughan**

Social Justice Advocate Award Winner 2022 and Overall Social Worker of the Year 2022

#### **Laura Fordos**

Family Justice Young People's Board, Cafcass

#### **Louise Jones**

Head of Practice & Principal Social Worker, London Borough of Wandsworth

#### **Louise White**

Service & Operations Manager – Adults & Health Adult Safeguarding, Somerset Council

#### **Lucy Fitzpatrick**

Social Worker, Derbyshire County Council

#### **Maris Stratulis**

National Director, BASW England

#### **Melanie Noel**

Adult Social Worker of the Year Winner 2021

#### **Nadine Boyne**

Founder of Social Work DIScovery

#### **Nikki Rutter**

Teaching Fellow, Durham University

#### **Norah Khan**

Mental Health Social Worker

#### **Patriche Bentick**

Senior Practitioner, London Borough of Camden

#### **Rachael Davies**

Team of the Year, Children's Services Winner 2022

#### **Ryan Cowley-Sharp**

Associate Director Social Work

#### **Sharon Gouda**

Social Worker, Lambeth Adult Social Services

#### **Skerntian Keri**

Newly Qualified Children's Social Worker of the Year Silver Winner 2022

#### **Tara Morgan**

Independent Social Work Practitioner

#### **Val Gant**

University of the Year Winner 2022

#### **Yvonne Frimpong**

Social Worker







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**We're proud to be  
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## Congratulations to all finalists of the Social Worker of the Year Awards 2023

*We're delighted to sponsor the 'Digital Transformation in Social Work' award for the second consecutive year*

# We do more to support our colleagues

In Lancashire and South Cumbria, we do more to recognise, support and develop social workers who are very much a valued part of our workforce, and enable them to strengthen the skills and core values intrinsic to social work.

Start with a good job and end with a great career. Search [lscft.nhs.uk/vacancies](https://lscft.nhs.uk/vacancies) or scan the QR code



## Congratulations to all finalists of the Social Worker of the Year Awards 2023 - from the team at Coventry City Council.

You are all amazing. Here at Coventry, we give social workers the chance to do the job they love in an innovative authority, with children at the heart of everything we do.

We are an Ofsted rated 'good' authority, and our inspirational and caring work was highlighted on the hit Channel 4 TV documentary 'Kids' this year.

The programme showed the strength and determination of young people, and the dedication of the social workers who support them – people like those being honoured today. **Well done everyone!**



## Congratulations to all the finalists of the Social Worker of the Year Awards 2023.

These awards provide the opportunity to recognise and celebrate the inspiring social workers who help transform people's lives.

As the largest employer of children's social workers in England, Cafcass is proud to support this year's Lifetime Achievement Award.

To learn more about the work we do, visit [www.cafcass.gov.uk/working-for-us](https://www.cafcass.gov.uk/working-for-us)





Congratulations to  
all winners, finalists  
and nominees.  
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Pictured: Havering Adults Access Team

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