

Year of impact
2025 to 2026

2025
2026

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Year of impact 2025 to 2026

The British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy is the professional association for members of the counselling professions in the UK.

We've taken this opportunity to outline some of our key achievements during 2025 to 2026.

British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy

15 St John's Business Park
Lutterworth, Leicestershire, LE17 4HB

bacp@bacp.co.uk
Call 01455 883300

www.bacp.co.uk

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Welcome from our CEO

This year we've connected with members for conversation and CPD in Cardiff, campaigned with partners, politicians and therapists at the launch of a suicide prevention inquiry in Northern Ireland, and inspired new mums walking in a London park to seek counselling if they need it.

We've supported networking meetings in Glasgow, Cornwall, and Surrey, showcased groundbreaking research in Manchester, and spoken to employers about counselling in the workplace at a huge event in Birmingham.

We've reached beyond the UK's borders as members of the International Association for Counselling, and with our *Counselling and Psychotherapy Research* journal increasingly downloaded by academics internationally.

It's exciting to see how our impact and activities stretch far and wide. But the most crucial element is the people we've spoken with along the way. It's how we listen and learn from them and how we translate that into a positive impact on their lives. Not just as an Association, but as a profession as well. It's the human impact.

It can be easy to fill a report like this with a list of activities and numbers. But it's people's experiences that tell a crucial story about the positive impact and how counselling changes lives. That's why it's fantastic to see some of those client and member stories highlighted in these pages.

I'm immensely proud of all the work we do to support our members and the profession, and you'll see in this report that it's been another busy and productive year.

But I also can't reflect on the past 12 months without acknowledging that there've been some challenging times as well.

We announced changes to the leadership of our Board of Trustees and our commitment to secure a future for BACP defined by new ethical, accountable and responsible leadership.

The launch of Your voice, your BACP is part of our work to improve how we rebuild trust and make sure every member feels valued, heard and involved.

And that's an important impact that I'll be excited to share updates on in the months and years ahead.

As ever, none of the activities and impacts we've reported this year would have happened without the hard work, passion and expertise of our staff, volunteers, members and partners.

I'd like to say a huge thank you to all of you for your contribution and support throughout the past 12 months. And I'm looking forward to continuing to work with you in the years ahead.

Dr Phil James
CEO



Our year in numbers

76%
of people



who've had counselling would recommend it to someone else, our 2026 Public Perceptions Survey found

46



events held for members throughout the year

98



core training courses are accredited by us, with five new courses achieving accreditation status in 2025

9,376



new membership applications processed

1,020 delegates

attended our 61 network meetings during the year, a 40% increase on the previous 12 months





595,892
views of our register



36%

of therapists described demand at their practice as overcapacity, resulting in a waiting list or referral of clients to other services, according to our 2025 Mindometer survey



94%

of members rated their customer services experience as good or excellent

37



member blogs published on our website



5,157

Certificate of Proficiency assessments took place



Better pay and recognition for NHS therapists

There's a damaging pay inequity in NHS England that's not just harmful to individual therapists, but to the whole profession.

Some counsellors and psychotherapists working for NHS Talking Therapies for Anxiety and Depression services are paid less than other psychological therapists working in the same services – even though they're seeing people from the same waiting lists who have the same complexity of issues.

They're classed as being at Agenda for Change pay band 6 – which refers to being 'in training' – rather than at band 7 – which properly recognises their training and expertise.

Matt Smith-Lilley, our Policy and Engagement Lead (Mental Health) has been working with BACP members in about 40 NHS Talking therapy services in England who've reached out for support to help address this.

Matt produced a [resource pack](#) to support members in challenging pay inequity locally – bringing together key documents, policy analysis and evidence. He's met groups of members to support their efforts to secure pay equity in their service. And he's worked with services directly, making the case to NHS Trusts and care boards on why pay equity is needed. He's also worked with unions to share knowledge so they can provide direct employment support to members.

About 20 services have now brought pay in line with Agenda for Change, worth around £10,000 per full-time role each year.

Daisy Minton, is one of a group of BACP members at Northpoint Wellbeing who successfully campaigned for pay equity, with Matt and BACP's support.



She says: "The process turned out to be a long and challenging two and a half years, during which time we regularly called upon Matt for knowledge and support. His help navigating this complex process was immeasurable, providing essential statistical information, shedding light on the national picture and bringing into focus the most pertinent aspects of our case."

Another success at a large trust resulted in 50 therapists receiving salary increases.

This work isn't about providing employment support for individual members, as that's the role of a union. For us, it's about how pay equity has broader positive consequences for the profession.

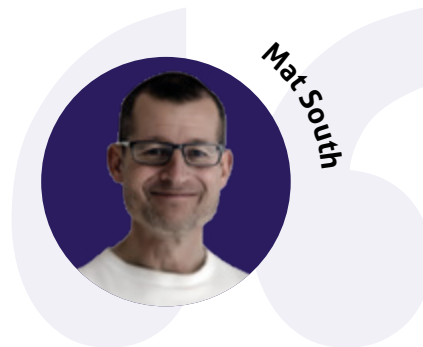


Matt says:

"This is vital in making the NHS an appealing place to work for counsellors and psychotherapists, vital for ensuring counselling and psychotherapy get the professional recognition they merit, and vital for making sure the public still have access to counselling through the NHS."

He adds:

"Over the longer term this is helping to build momentum to ensure that all counsellors in NHS Talking Therapies services are paid appropriately and valued fully. We must demonstrate the value, impact and quality the counselling professions bring to the NHS."



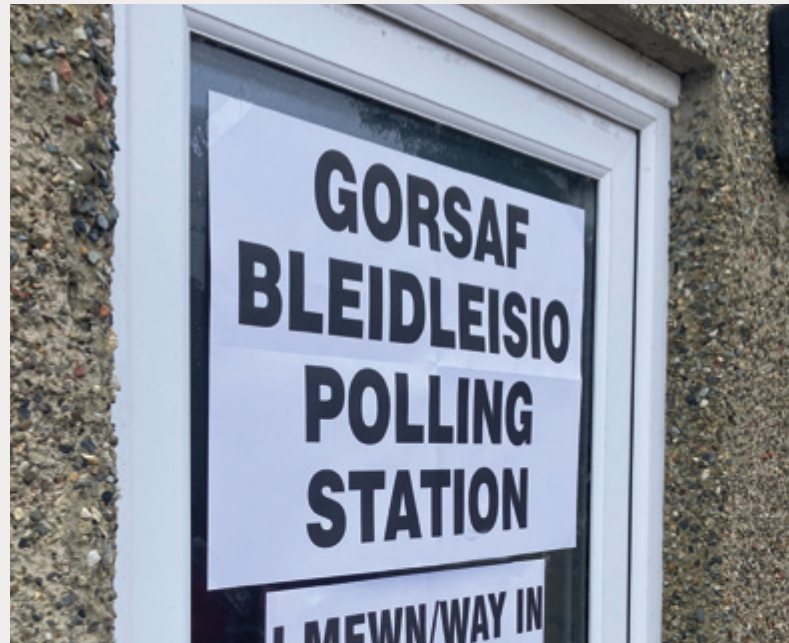
Mat South is a BACP member who's part of a group which has been in a 10-year battle to be properly recognised.

Mat says:

"Our exhausting dispute was initially about pay but has since become more about the fight for the profession of counselling to once and for all be fully nationally recognised by all NHS Talking Therapy services for what it is."

Influencing policy and working with employers

Key achievements



Stronger school counselling support

- Lynne Neagle, Cabinet Secretary for Education in Wales, asked us to lead a review of school-based counselling. Drawing on the expertise of our members in Wales, we advised on best practice and published recommendations to help improve support across the country. With Senedd Elections in May and the expectation of a change of Government, this shows a strengthened model of provision for children and young people in Wales and provides an important legacy for the outgoing administration.

Shaping the future

- The Partnership of Counselling and Psychotherapy Bodies (PCPB) asked us to lead on the launch of a new commission to help influence the future of the therapy sector. Launched in October 2025, the commission includes four evidence sessions featuring expert witnesses. We've also managed an open call for evidence, which has received more than 2,500 responses. A report featuring recommendations is due to be published in summer 2026.

About 20

NHS services areas have now seen changes to their pay agreements

100%

of people who had therapy through the NEST scheme would recommend the service to others

Keeping clients safe

- We helped influence significant changes to the law regarding the protection of therapists' notes as part of the Keep Counselling Confidential campaign. Following campaigning by us and our partners, the UK Government accepted an amendment to the Victims and Prisoners Bill, now an Act of Parliament. This means police are now only able to request counselling notes if they have reason to believe the information sought is likely to have 'substantiative and probative value to a reasonable line of enquiry which is being pursued'. This change particularly protects victims and survivors seeking therapy following sexual violence offences.



Supporting emergency service workers

- A project that provides specialist trauma-informed counselling provision for emergency services personnel was evaluated. We were project partners in the Network of Emergency Services Therapists (NEST) helping to design, implement and evidence the effectiveness of the service which launched in 2023. An evaluation of the scheme carried out last year found 100% of clients would recommend the service to others, 100% had confidence in their therapist, and 92% rated therapy sessions as excellent. The service was funded by the Royal Foundation and delivered by Police Care UK, alongside other partners.



Making the most of mentoring

Counselling and psychotherapy students from diverse, marginalised and underrepresented communities can face a range of challenges during their training.

Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) can often be missed off the curriculum, recent research has found training is Eurocentric, and theories are predominantly written by white, heterosexual men.

Trainees have told us they want support from mentors who understand their perspective and provide a safe environment for discussion.

Following a successful pilot project in 2022, our EDI mentoring scheme was launched in September 2025, with 50 pairs of mentors and mentees successfully matched.

There was a huge demand when we opened for applications a few months before, prompting us to double the number of places from 50 to 100 participants.

Among the mentees is Fiona Rickson, who's in the final year of an advanced diploma in Integrative Counselling at Iron Mill College in Exeter.



“Because I have been so well matched, I feel that I have been able to show up authentically and be truly understood,”

says Fiona, who was diagnosed as autistic as an adult and has hearing loss.



She adds:

“Our way of working has been collaboratively designed and suits my way of thinking and processing. I think working with my mentor has already had an impact on my confidence in myself which will help me personally and professionally.

“My mentor has expertise which I don't, and she has supplied me with many starting points for my learning and development.

“Thanks to her I have begun to grow a network which will support my development and working practices going forward.”

Fiona has met her mentor monthly and spends time in between sessions exploring the resources shared and reflecting on the discussions the pair have had.

She adds:

“It's a daunting prospect beginning a new career and this programme has really helped me to begin to navigate some of what's out there, which will help my practice. I'm so grateful for this initiative and for all the hard work that has gone into setting it up as well as to my excellent mentor for her hard work and support.”

More than 50% of participants represented communities from minority ethnic backgrounds. Some 26% of our mentors and 44% of our mentees identify as LGBTQIA+.

And more than 250 hours of mentoring sessions have been completed so far as part of the programme.

Improving access to all

Key achievements

Accredited courses criteria

- Following an EDI review, we developed new criteria for our accredited courses. This embeds anti-oppressive, inclusive and culturally attuned practice into all elements of the scheme. The criteria support core training courses that we accredit to increase accessibility for marginalised and disadvantaged students and raise standards for working with diverse client groups. The next steps are to create comprehensive guidance documentation on how these criteria should be embedded across the training providers, which will pave the way for their implementation later in 2026.



Bursary graduates

- A total of 10 students completed their courses after being awarded bursaries. Our pilot bursary scheme was launched in 2022 to encourage underrepresented groups into the counselling and psychotherapy professions by providing financial support for training. Six students have completed entry level courses, two have graduated as fully qualified practitioners and the remaining two students will become registered therapists by the end of the programme. An evaluation of the pilot scheme will take place later in 2026.

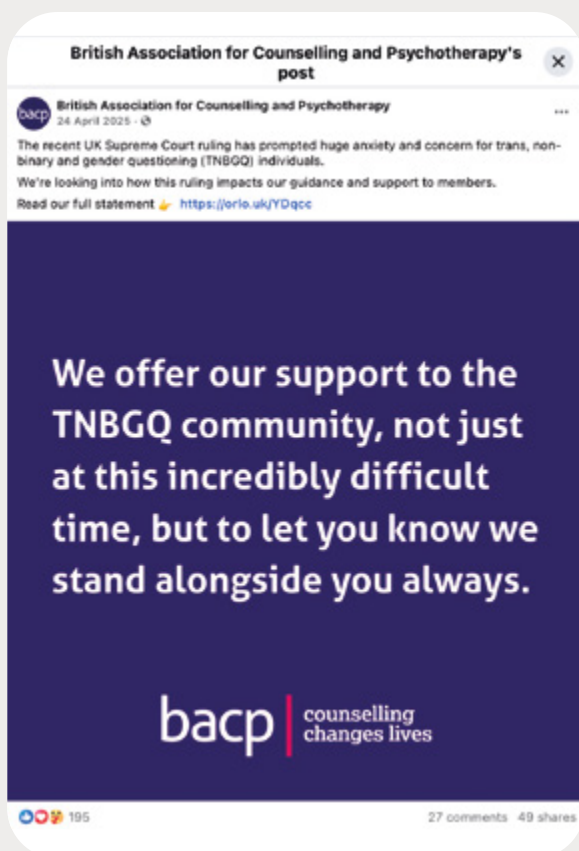
Grants for third sector counselling

- More than 650 hours of counselling sessions were provided by our members to clients from underrepresented and marginalised communities under our Third Sector Grant Scheme. Third sector counselling services are known to increase access to therapy for the communities they serve. But significant barriers to access still exist. Our grants scheme has funded six organisational members, with grants of between £10,000 and £20,000, to deliver projects to improve access to therapy for people from racialised communities.

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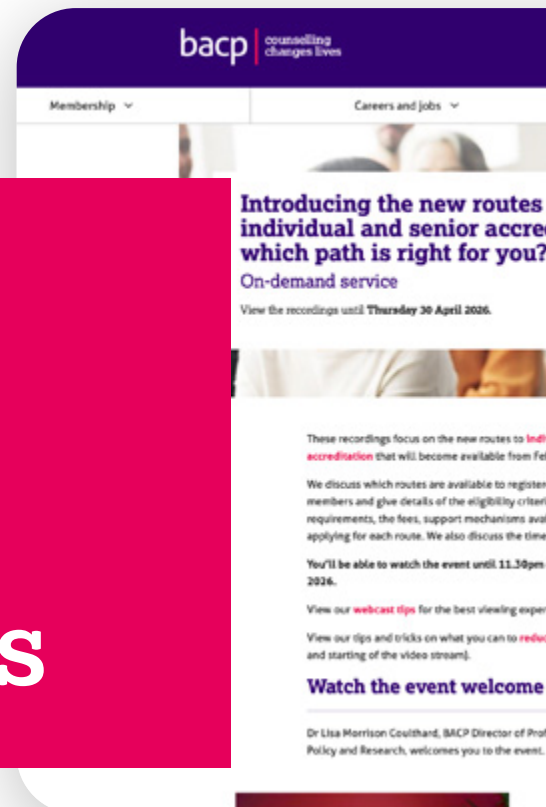
Statement of support

- We issued a statement of support for the trans community following a Supreme Court ruling on gender in April 2025. The statement highlighted that we're committed to serving trans, non-binary and gender questioning (TNBGQ) communities to the best of our ability, considering lived experience with the aim of removing barriers, and developing improved services, guidance and resources. More than 2,100 people read the statement online. We're also developing further guidance on gender, sex and relationship diversity, informed by research evidence, therapists' expertise and lived experience.

10

students have completed their courses after we awarded them bursaries

SCoPEd implementation and new accreditation routes



“I’ve been a member for over 20 years and this feels like a truly transformative moment for our profession,”

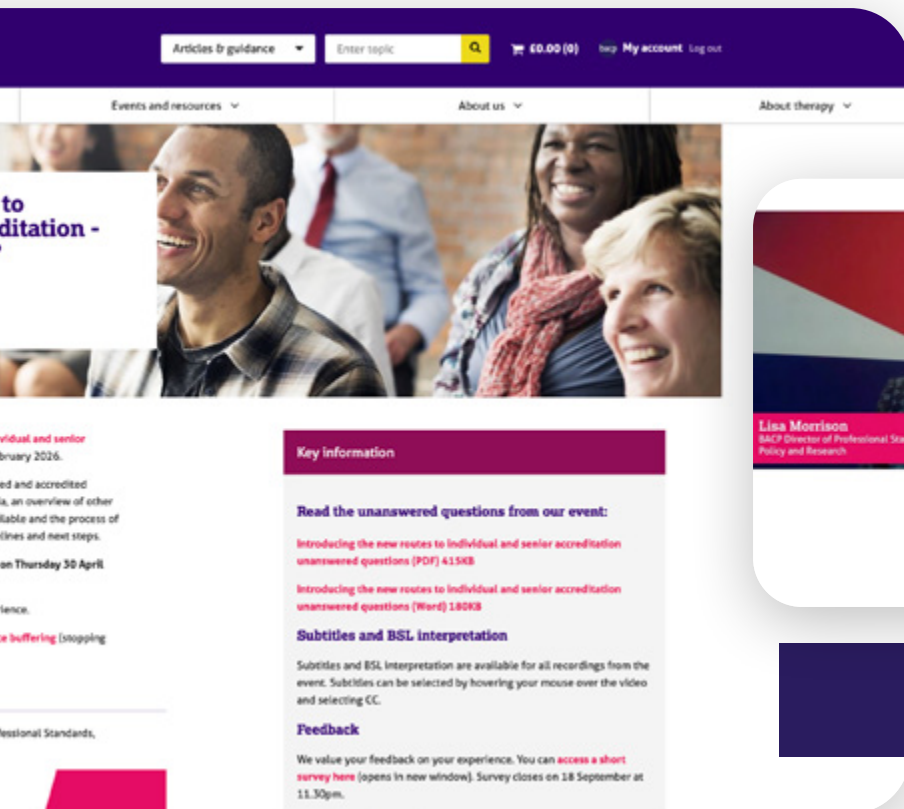
says our Accreditation Lead Sarah Watson.

She’s talking about the implementation of the Scope of Practice and Education (SCoPEd) framework and the launch of 13 new accreditation routes.

SCoPEd outlines the core training, practice and competency requirements for working with adults and has been developed and adopted by six Professional Standards Authority accredited bodies. The framework is the first time there’s been something to unify standards within the profession to help the public, employers and commissioners better understand the skills, knowledge, experience and training of practitioners.

As part of the preparation for the implementation of SCoPEd, we aligned our membership categories to the framework’s columns. During a two-year transition period we also supported eligible members to move membership category using temporary routes.

We also developed 13 new accreditation routes, launched in February 2026, that recognise the wide variety of training pathways by which our members enter the profession and continue to develop post-qualification. We’ve ensured the routes and processes are fair, transparent, and inclusive, increasing accessibility and creating progression opportunities for members.



More than 1,300 members attended an online event in August to help them understand which routes might be suitable for them. All members have been able to access information on our website, view guidance documents, FAQs and animations about each of the new routes.

Sarah adds:

“Members now have the flexibility to choose the path that’s right for them, at a time that suits them. These new accreditation routes recognise the hard work that goes into training, CPD and client work, and represent the biggest change we’ve seen in accreditation for many years.”

In addition, we’ve developed new course accreditation and qualification schemes, all aligned to the SCoPEd framework columns.

The accreditation team has directly supported more than 100 members each month with their enquiries about the changes to accreditation. And in 12 months, our Support and Inclusion service handled 1,181 phone calls and 4,348 emails from members seeking support.

Our Head of Professional Standards Caroline Jesper says:

“We’ve continued to work on removing barriers to accreditation to increase accessibility to the schemes, recruiting an additional Support and Inclusion Officer, and continuing to offer an audio submission option, financial support mechanisms and resources for marginalised groups.”

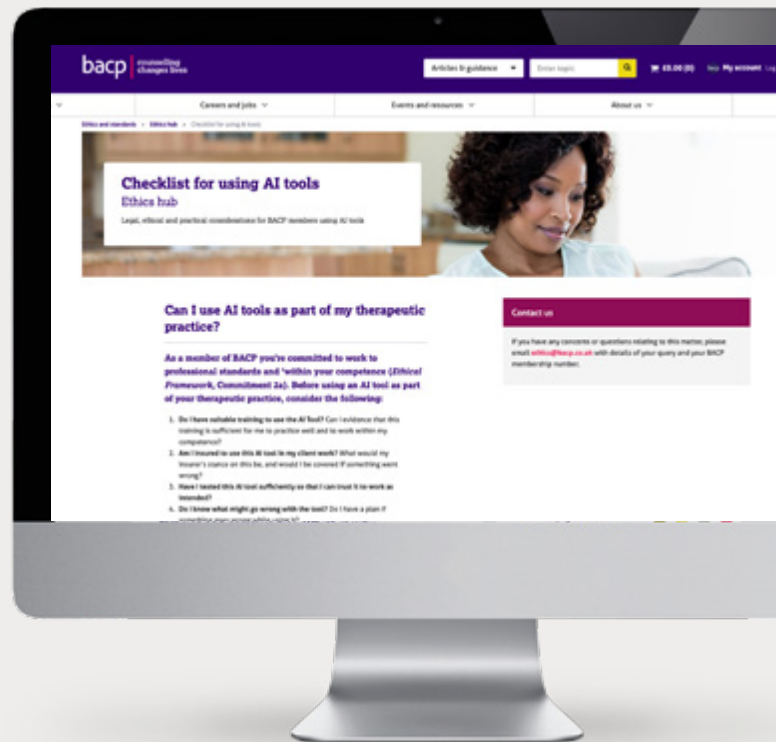
More than 2,400 members applied for accreditation and moved membership categories during the transition period. Since the opening of the new accreditation routes, we’ve received more than 100 applications.

Setting the standard

Key achievements

Lived experience advisory panel

- We worked with a lived experience advisory panel on the development of a counselling competence framework for working with adults who've experienced trauma. The group all have experience of trauma counselling and have contributed through meetings and discussions. Members of the panel have spoken about important competencies which aren't represented in research literature, including working with connections between trauma and social class and intersectional marginalisations. Their insight has helped shape the framework due to be published in summer 2026.



Artificial Intelligence (AI) checklist

- AI is evolving rapidly and is increasingly being used for mental health support. In response to the rise in demands for members needing ethical support relating to AI, we developed a new resource. This checklist outlines legal, ethical and practical considerations for using AI tools. It's been viewed 1,051 times since it was published in April 2025. It's part of our ongoing work to develop resources in response to themes of queries coming into our ethics service from members.



Our nine competence frameworks have been downloaded more than

24,000 times



Clear competences

- Our competence frameworks are used by practitioners, trainers, supervisors and services to ensure they have the skills and knowledge needed to work in particular settings or with groups of clients. These nine documents were downloaded more than 24,000 times during the past year. The most popular three frameworks were online and phone therapy, children and young people, and supervision.



Ethics service

- Our ethics officers responded to 12,740 queries in the past year, offering support through both emails and our callback service. We helped guide members on topics as diverse as confidentiality, fees and the use of AI in international working. Some 86% of members who received emails from the team said they had a positive experience of the ethics service. There were also more than 21,000 visits to our online ethics hub.

Our ethics officers responded to
12,740 queries

Counselling changes lives - Deb's story

**'A safe space where I
could unpack the weight
I had been carrying'**



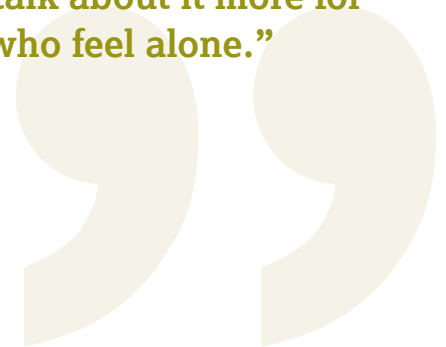
Deb Williams is a mum of three from London. She had postnatal depression after each of her children were born and received counselling from BACP-accredited service MumsAid. Deb was part of our Positive Steps campaign and featured in media coverage talking about how therapy helped her.

“In the past seven years, I’ve started my own business and had three children. It’s been such a busy time and somewhere along the way I started shutting down my emotions so I could do everything that was required of me as a mum and business owner. I wasn’t able to have maternity leave after giving birth and I felt extreme mum guilt and had postnatal depression.

“I didn’t get any real support until my third child was born, when a midwife referred me to counselling charity MumsAid. In my first session with MumsAid I went in feeling apprehensive, but once I let my guard down, I realised it was a safe space where I could unpack the weight I had been carrying.

“I’m genuinely grateful for the support I received from MumsAid that has helped to add clarity and perspective at a time where I was still trying to figure out the balance of motherhood, work and life.

“Therapy is one of the best things I’ve done. It was great to be able to share how it has made a difference to me and my family as part of the Positive Steps campaign. I know it’s important to talk about it more for other mums who feel alone.”



Championing our members

Key achievements

“ It helped me with the transition back to work after giving birth.”
Charlotte, mum of one



114

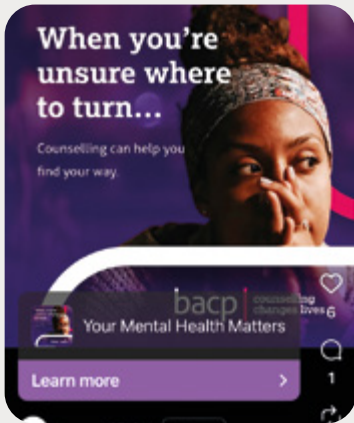
pieces of media coverage for our Positive Steps campaign

Positive steps

- Powerful, personal messages detailing the challenges faced by new mums – and how therapy helped them – were painted onto the paths of a popular park in London for the launch of Positive Steps. The PR campaign aimed to highlight the benefits of therapy – helping new mums to see it as an act of self-care, and a judgement-free zone. We wanted to encourage anyone struggling with the pressures of new parenthood to consider seeking help from a registered therapist. The campaign resulted in 114 pieces of coverage, including on the BBC website, BBC Radio 4's *Woman's Hour*, in the Independent and on a host of local radio stations. We measured a sample of reactions to content created as part of the campaign – and found that respondents were five times more likely to seek therapy via BACP after learning about the campaign.

Digital marketing

- Our online and social media adverts generated more than 23,000 enquiries to members listed on our Therapist Directory. The digital marketing campaigns run across Google AdWords, Facebook, Instagram and an array of websites. They aim to raise awareness of BACP, highlight the benefits of therapy and ultimately, signpost those in need to a BACP member. The adverts were seen more than nine million times in 2025 to 2026.



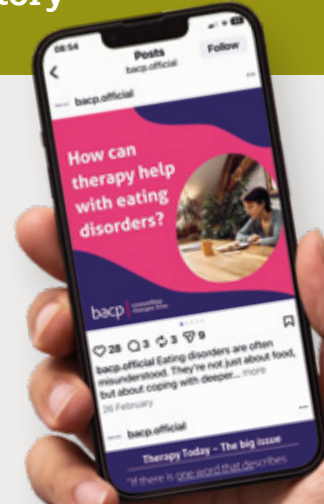
Tailored communications

- We recognise that, as the UK's largest professional association for therapists, our members work in a variety of settings, sectors and locations. We're always looking for ways to create a better, more personalised experience. In 2025, we introduced a tailored monthly mailing for our organisational members, accredited courses and service providers, which focuses on updates most relevant to their sector. This is in addition to our fortnightly eBulletin to individual members, and our quarterly emails to student and divisional members. As a result of this change, we've seen an increase in recipients rating our email content as good or excellent.



23,000

Our online and social media adverts generated more than 23,000 enquiries to members listed on our Therapist Directory



Growing Instagram

- More than 7,000 people now follow us on Instagram, after we launched on the platform in spring 2025. Our Instagram content aims to educate the public about therapy, share our members' expertise on the vast range of topics they deal with in the therapy room, and gather support and engagement with our key policy calls. Posts about counselling training, what happens in therapy and how counselling isn't just for people with a mental health diagnosis have been our most shared and reacted to content.



Counselling changes lives - Chris's story

**'Therapy allowed me to process
my dad's death ... and make sense
of the grief I'd carried for decades'**



Chris Spurden is a retired firefighter from Scarborough, North Yorkshire, who has had eye movement desensitisation reprocessing (EMDR) therapy from a BACP member.

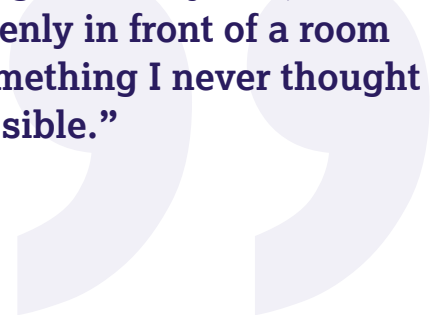
“I began EMDR therapy with my therapist, Stephen Robling, following a depressive episode that ultimately led to my retirement from a profession I had dedicated almost 25 years of my life to. It was during this period, whilst seeking help, that an associate of mine who was ex-forces mentioned a type of therapy that had worked for him which used lights. I looked into it and searched locally for someone to help.

“For decades I had struggled to talk about my dad, who died in my arms almost 30 years ago. Losing him so suddenly and in such traumatic circumstances had a profound impact on me, though I had carried it largely unspoken throughout 25 years as a firefighter.

“EMDR was transformative in ways I never expected. It allowed me to process my dad’s death specifically, something Dr Susan E Bradbury, my psychiatrist, confirmed I had worked through incredibly well. For the first time in almost 30 years, I could speak openly about his passing and make sense of the grief I had carried for decades. However, I want to be honest that EMDR is not a cure for everything. The anxiety and depression rooted in my experiences at work remain something I continue to work through.

“Last year I gave a talk at my local GP surgery about EMDR and received amazing feedback, which encouraged me to share my experience more widely.

“To think, I once couldn’t even breathe talking about my dad, now I can speak openly in front of a room of people, something I never thought would be possible.”



Supporting our members

Key achievements

Insurance savings

- Therapists face an array of outgoing professional costs that can be a struggle to cover. Our members often tell us about how challenging this is for them - and so our member services team wanted to see what they could do to help. Knowing that all members need to pay insurance, they contacted various insurers to see what they could arrange. And they were able to negotiate a reduced rate for BACP members from insurance provider Balens. The policy currently costs £57.35 for qualified practitioners and £23.70 for student therapists – which could be saving some members up to 50% on their annual insurance fees. More than 3,000 members have benefited from the low-cost policy since it was launched in July 2025.



More than **3,000**

members benefited from a low-cost insurance policy after our member services team negotiated a reduced rate with provider Balens

CPD hub change

- We restructured our CPD hub and Learning centre into one platform, with an added CPD hub+ subscription for members who wish to access additional resources. As part of the relaunch, we also refreshed the branding to ensure it remained modern, engaging and reflective of our varied content. This restructure and rebrand have made it easier for members to navigate these resources and find the CPD they need. We now have 18,608 CPD hub+ subscribers and 34,599 CPD hub licence holders.



Journal joy

- There are more than 131,994 subscriptions to our online journals. Among the most popular open access online articles were: CAMHS into the wild, from the *BACP Children, Young People and Families journal*, Ethical integrated practice, from *Coaching Today*, and Domestic abuse; a model for recovery, which was featured in *Healthcare*. The online journals are *BACP Children, Young People and Families*, *Coaching Today*, *Healthcare*, *Private Practice*, *Thresholds*, *University and College Counselling* and *BACP Workplace*.



There are more than
131,994
online subscriptions
to our divisional
journals



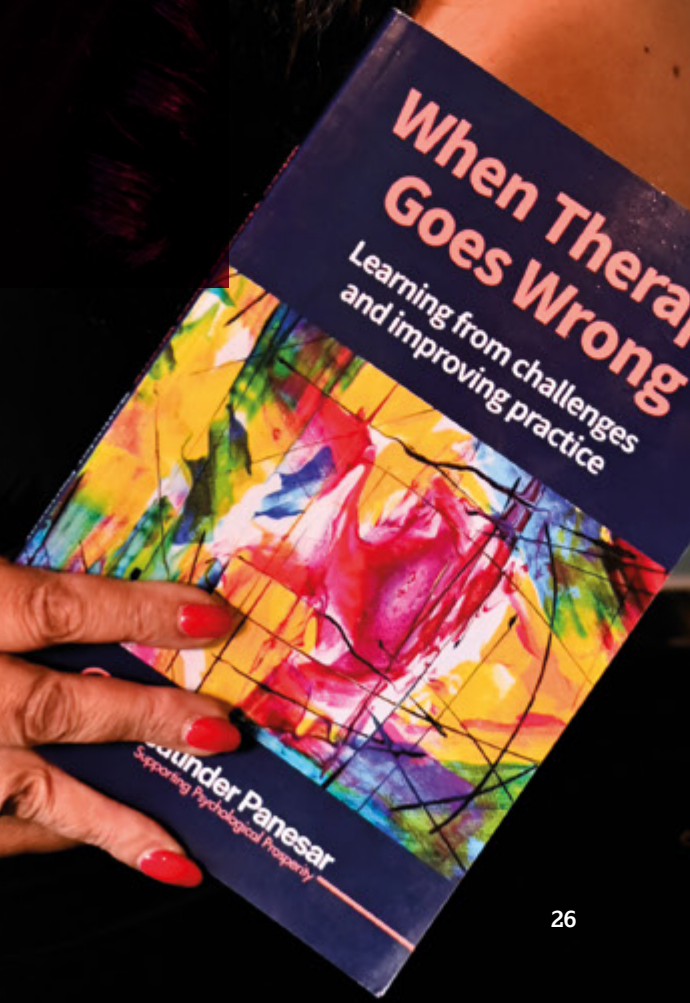
● Completed
Content Type
CPD hub+

Requested resources

- Following requests from members, we commissioned three expert-led CPD video resources on maternity mental health, menopause support, and palliative care and harm in therapy. Three video modules were created for each resource, with panel discussions also filmed for the menopause and palliative care resource. Reflective exercises and practitioner guides went along with the resources. The content received more than 4,000 views within the first three months. Early feedback from members suggested the resources helped improve their confidence, increased their preparedness to support clients, and reduced isolation when managing complex issues.

**‘The day was
stimulating
and inspiring’**

**Working with
our members –
Satinder’s story**





Satinder Panesar is a BACP member, author, integrative psychotherapist, clinical supervisor, clinical consultant and executive coach, with more than 25 years of experience in a variety of settings.

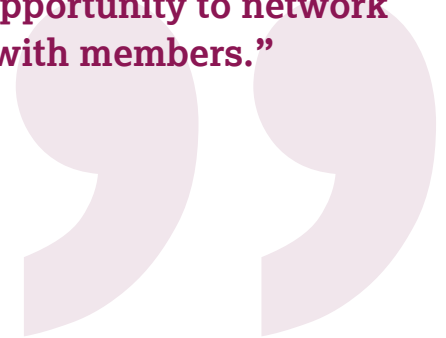
“I was delighted to be part of the working group that organised the sold-out 4th BACP Supervisors event in Leeds. It was such an opportunity to be part of and learn from a working group with such experienced members.

“As one of the organisers, it was incredibly rewarding to speak with attendees and hear how much they valued the space that had been created specifically for clinical supervisors. Many shared that opportunities dedicated solely to supervisors have been limited in recent years, so it felt meaningful to contribute to creating a space where colleagues could come together, reflect, learn and connect.

“It was also a privilege to help shape the conference alongside the speakers involved. Their passion, depth of knowledge and commitment to the field of clinical supervision made the day both stimulating and inspiring.

“I particularly enjoyed being part of the panel discussion exploring the themes of power, challenge and fear, and our shared responsibilities as clinical supervisors to hold these conversations with honesty, curiosity and care. I also really valued facilitating discussions on supervision in the digital age, an area I continue to explore more deeply within my own clinical practice, as well as the complex and thought-provoking topic of politics and supervision.

“As always, the energy in the room was phenomenal, and I thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to network and connect with members.”



A close-up portrait of a Black woman with short, curly dark hair, smiling warmly at the camera. She is wearing a blue and white patterned top and a necklace with blue and white geometric patterns. The background is a light-colored wall with a decorative mirror frame visible on the left.

Working with our members – Kathleen's story

**'It's become a space of connection,
encouragement, and genuine
professional friendship'**

Kathleen Kwakye-Donkor is a BACP member, author, therapist, and ordained minister. She's currently in the second year of her PhD at the University of Salford, where she is exploring *Creative Afrocentric Psychotherapy for Black women who have experienced sexual abuse in UK Pentecostal churches*.

"I'm an active member of the BACP Postgraduate Research (PGR) Forum, an encouraging space where Master's and PhD-level BACP members connect, share ideas, and support one another's research journeys.

"The forum meets online twice a month, on Tuesday lunchtimes and Thursday afternoons, and is led by Anna Kennedy and Jennifer O'Donnell, who regularly invite experienced academic researchers to share their work. Members take part in discussions, offer feedback, and engage in reflective conversations.

"I joined the forum to find a supportive academic community where I could ask questions, receive guidance, and feel less isolated in my research. It's become a space of connection, encouragement, and genuine professional friendship.

"I especially appreciate being able to speak confidently about my research among peers at different stages of their academic and professional journeys, including those working in counselling, psychotherapy, churches, community groups, and other institutions.

"The forum has strengthened my research by giving me opportunities to present my work and receive constructive, thoughtful critique. This feedback has helped refine my ethical approach and data analysis.

"Beyond shaping my study, the forum has eased the sense of academic loneliness, boosted my confidence, and helped me build meaningful professional relationships. The supportive atmosphere, including the reflective end-of-year Christmas gathering, has made the forum particularly valuable.

"I'd strongly encourage other BACP academic researchers to get involved."

Research

Key achievements

Conference bursaries

- Our Annual International Research Conference showcases innovative counselling and psychotherapy research – it's an opportunity for researchers and practitioners to come together to exchange ideas. Like similar not-for-profit research conferences, we have to charge delegates to attend so the event remains financially viable. But we're aware that for some members this can result in a financial barrier to their attendance.

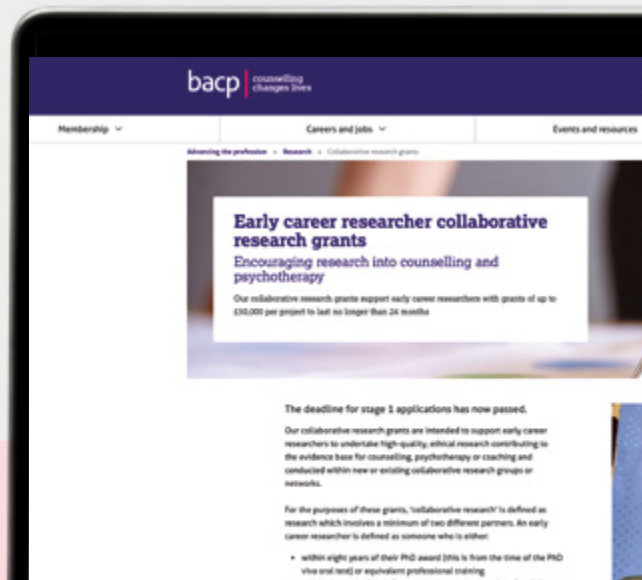
For our 2025 conference, hosted with the University of Manchester, we offered 30 bursaries. These were for early career researchers, members currently in training, or who had recently completed training and a small number for people with lived experience. The bursaries covered the attendance fee for both days of the in-person conference, the dinner, and up to £100 towards travel and accommodation expenses. Those who needed extra financial support due to accessibility requirements also had extra funds made available to them.

Due to high demand, we've increased the number of bursaries to 55 for our 2026 conference and have increased the expenses amount to up to £200.



Research grants

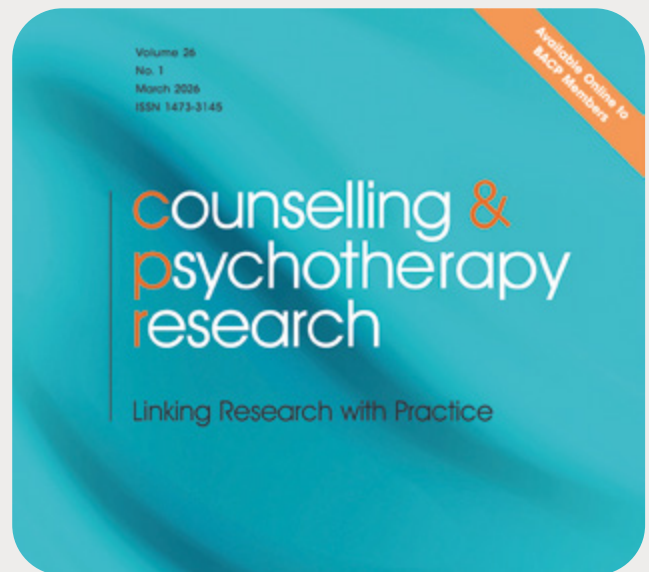
- We received 34 applications for our latest round of research grant funding. There was up to £250,000 on offer to support research in the counselling professions, more than twice the amount that we offered in 2023. The money is intended to support collaborative research projects and secondary data analyses. Funded research projects will be announced and start later in 2026.





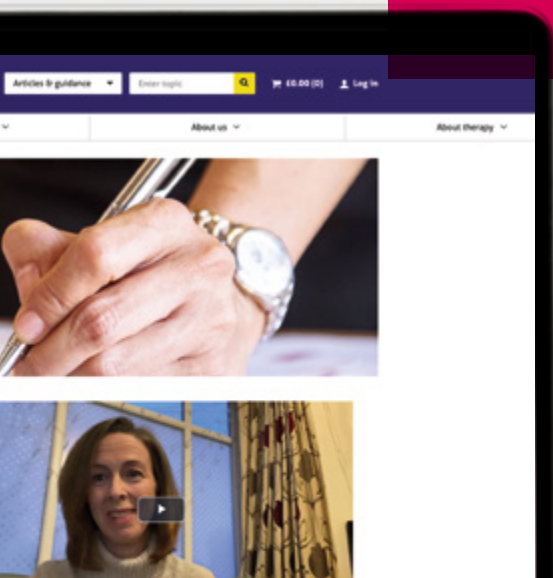
International reach

- The international readership of our *Counselling and Psychotherapy Research* journal has increased steadily since 2020. Some 73% of readers are now from outside the UK, compared to 65% five years ago. In 2025, we received article submissions from 63 countries, compared with 57 the previous year.



Exploring digital lives

- We launched a collaborative project to train therapists about how they can explore and respond to their young clients' digital lives, and how to bring this understanding into their practice to help better support young people. This year, more than 450 members took part in a survey to explore their understanding of young people's digital lives, and 20 counsellors participated in interviews about their experiences. Training for therapists will be available later in 2026. The Digital Lives Framework project is a partnership with Kingston University and is funded by Nuffield Foundation.



30 people

30 people received bursaries to attend our research conference

73%

of readers of our *Counselling and Psychotherapy Research* journal are from outside the UK

Public protection

Key achievements



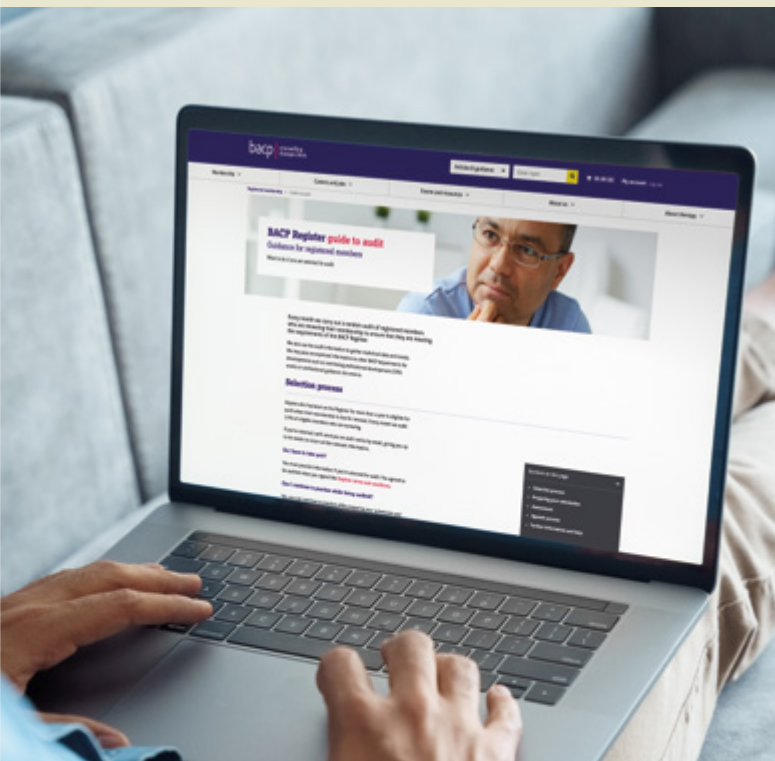
Safeguarding support

- We supported 262 members last year with safeguarding concerns, 80% of which were linked to current client work. Some 56% of concerns focused on adults, while 44% related to child safeguarding concerns. Our Designated Safeguarding Officer started in this role in September. Her work involves supporting stakeholders with safeguarding concerns linked to the counselling profession, and ensuring effective safeguarding and public protection are embedded within our offer to members.

Conduct proceedings processes

- Conduct cases that follow our disciplinary proceedings track (DPT) cover the most serious allegations of professional misconduct, where there's a possibility of withdrawal or suspension from membership. These can be long and legally complex – but are the most crucial for public protection. This year our hearings team and Associate Solicitor embarked on a project to improve the efficiency and legal robustness of processing these cases through targeted training and enhanced collaboration between those involved. This has already resulted in process improvements following all staff observing hearings at other regulators, and new and improved decision forms. This work will continue in 2026 to deliver further improvements.





We supported

262

members with
safeguarding concerns

2,469

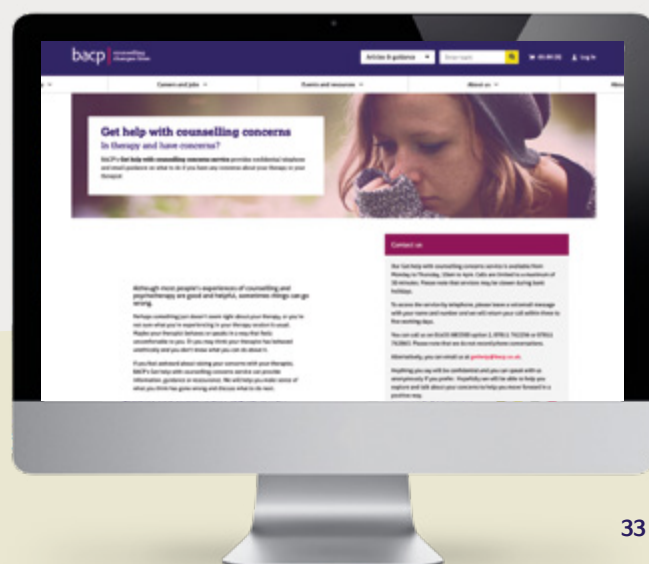
enquiries were responded to
by our Get help with
counselling concerns service

Audit feedback form

- The register audit is a vital part of our public protection remit as it's how we check that members are complying with the terms and conditions of registration. We audit 1.5% of members renewing each year, and review whether they've completed CPD, had supervision and have insurance cover. But while we ask members to provide us with lots of information to support their audit, we'd not sought their feedback on the process itself, until we introduced a feedback form this year. As a result of the response to this, we'll be making changes so the audit process is clearer by supplying more information to them. This includes amending the wording of the letter and reviewing our webpages.

Get help with counselling concerns

- Our Get help with counselling concerns service responded to 2,469 enquiries, with 92% of people surveyed rating the service as good or excellent. Get help is a confidential, frontline service for anyone who has concerns or is worried about their therapist, supervisor, trainer, or any therapeutic relationship where they've received a service. The service is the only one of its kind in the UK. It's an important aspect of our accreditation with the Professional Standards Authority, further demonstrating our commitment to supporting both clients and members.



Road to impact 2025 to 2026

2025

April

Research revealed that targeted community therapy services are better for people with complex mental health needs. The study commissioned by the Talking Therapies Taskforce, of which we're a member, was launched in Parliament.



May



The 31st BACP International Research Conference, held in Manchester, was the biggest on record. A total of 100 presentations were shared during the two days – a 40% increase on the previous year. And the conference recorded its highest attendance since it was first staged in 1995.

June



We launched an evaluation of Scotland's school counselling programme. We met with members, school counsellors, local authority services' leads, school staff, and Scottish Government representatives at the start of the project, which will produce a report to be shared ahead of the 2026 Scottish elections.

September



We held a roundtable event at the Labour Party conference to explore the vital role mental health services play in supporting more people into work. This was in partnership with UK Council for Psychotherapy (UKCP) and the British Psychoanalytic Council (BPC).

August



We called for mental health services to better meet the specific needs of men and boys in our response to a government call for evidence. Our submission to the Department of Health and Social Care's consultation highlighted how internalised gender biases, harmful stereotypes and a failure to address barriers and increased risks for some groups, can prevent some men from reaching out for support.

July



We were shortlisted for best Member Support Service and Best Public Awareness Campaign at the Association Excellence Awards. Our register team were recognised for work to support members going through our professional conduct procedure, and our marketing and engagement team were nominated for the Burst the self-doubt PR campaign.

October



A new draft of our *Ethical Framework* was launched to members – ahead of the final publication of the updated document in 2026. A second consultation opened for members and an online event took place the following month.

November



We launched Your voice, your BACP, a new programme to put our members at the heart of everything we do. Members were invited to take part in a survey and focus groups as part of our commitment to shaping a stronger approach to member engagement.

December

PCPB

The Partnership of Counselling and Psychotherapy Bodies (PCPB), of which we're a member, published its first shared dataset. The data provides a clearer picture of the demographics of counsellors and psychotherapists and will help inform how the PCPB can collectively support greater equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) across the profession.

2026

March



We held the first focus group as part of the consultation on our next Diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging (DEIB) strategy. We've also met with experts and professionals to form a DEIB task and finish group. The group's vision is for BACP to lead the implementation of DEIB initiatives across the counselling professions and for us to be 'big and bold' with this work.

February



Nearly 400 members joined our online Working with AI event, with 90% of them agreeing that the event made them more knowledgeable about working with AI. We also sent out a survey to all members to ask about their experiences of AI.

January



Our No More Stiff Upper Lip campaign resulted in more than 100 pieces of media coverage and a powerful segment on BBC Breakfast TV about how therapy can help women over 50. Articles highlighting our survey data, midlife women's positive experiences of therapy, and signposting to our members, also appeared in national and local press, online and across local radio.

Year of impact 2025 to 2026

**British Association for
Counselling and Psychotherapy**

15 St John's Business Park
Lutterworth, Leicestershire, LE17 4HB

bacp@bacp.co.uk
Call 01455 883300

www.bacp.co.uk

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