

OCTOBER 2026



Ellesmere Counselling and Psychotherapy Training

NEWSLETTER



AY2/3 Weekend Group

A Note from the Editor

Hello everyone!

It's been a busy few weeks and I'm currently navigating my own psychotherapy accreditation journey, which is proving to involve plenty of reflection and the absolute horror of having to listen back to recordings of my own voice! But as Ted Lasso reminds us, "Be curious, not judgmental"...something I'm trying to remember along the way.

In this edition, we've got some lovely contributions, including reflections from Kathie, Anita and Candice following their visit to the Living Equalities course and a personal piece from student Vanessa exploring her experiences through the lens of intersectionality. There's also plenty of upcoming CPD and all things conference - Tickets for March 2027 are now on sale!

Ben Bradshaw - Newsletter Editor

Why We've Paused AI Note-Takers in Clinical Work

Some students have started using AI recording and note-taking tools in client sessions. ECPT has asked everyone to pause their use while we review them. Here is why.

A pause, not a ban

These tools can genuinely ease the burden of note-taking, and we are not ruling them out for good. But a therapy session holds some of the most sensitive information there is. Most of these services upload audio to company servers, often outside the UK and often built around US rather than UK law. Some keep recordings or use them to improve their AI.

Before that can be safe, several things need to be in place:

- permission from whoever is responsible for the client records, usually the placement provider
- a Data Protection Impact Assessment
- the right contract with the supplier
- openness with clients, who should be free to say no

A student signing up to an app can't put those in place alone.

What the wider field is saying:

Our review found others taking a similarly careful line.

- NHS England allows AI scribes only under organisational governance. Its registry lists around 25 suppliers that have self-certified against NHS standards, but it endorses none of them. In August, the Health Services Safety Investigations Body opened an investigation into AI scribes in hospitals.
- The MHRA clarified in July that tools that only transcribe or summarise for a clinician to review are not medical devices. That makes them simpler to bring in, but not automatically safe.
- The ICO expects a Data Protection Impact Assessment before AI is used with health information. It is also preparing a statutory code on AI.
- BACP's Ethical Framework 2026 becomes mandatory on 3 November and includes new guidance on AI and digital technology. It is reported to ask for informed consent before client data goes into any AI tool. If you are a BACP member, please read it.
- UKCP has not yet published specific guidance on AI note-takers.

What happens next

We are reviewing specific tools against clear conditions and checking new guidance every month. If we approve particular tools, or ways of using them, we will tell everyone.

If you rely on transcription or dictation because of a disability or neurodivergence, please contact the EDI Committee. If you have already used one of these tools, please get in touch.

CPD Volunteer Host Opportunity for Students

We are pleased to introduce a new opportunity for current students to get involved in the ECPT CPD Programme as a Volunteer Host.

This role offers a meaningful way to support the delivery of our CPD workshops while being part of the learning experience yourself. Volunteer Hosts play a key part in helping sessions run smoothly, whether online or in person, by welcoming participants, supporting trainers, and holding the practical aspects of the space.

The Volunteer Host will be on a rotating basis, so there will be opportunities throughout the year.

Below are the terms, responsibilities and the host benefits.

Host Benefits

- Online Zoom Sessions: Free place at the session as host/participant.
- In-Person Training Days: 50% discounted ticket as host/participant.

Host Responsibilities

Outlined below are your duties for each session format:

Online Zoom Sessions (Free Place)

Before the Session:

- Join the Zoom room 15–20 minutes early to check setup.
- Ensure the speaker is supported and can share screen/audio.
- Confirm recording and trainer consent.
- Review housekeeping points with trainer.
- Opening the Session:
- Welcome participants and introduce the session and speaker.
- Outline recording status, camera/mute etiquette, and ground rules.
- During the Session:
- Monitor chat for technical/support queries.
- Flag safeguarding concerns discreetly.
- Assist with breakout rooms if needed.
- Provide time prompts to trainer

At the End:

- Thank speaker and attendees.
- Share follow-up links and feedback form link/QR.
- Remain online until all attendees leave.

If you are interested in being a host email [**mike@ellesmerecentre.co.uk**](mailto:mike@ellesmerecentre.co.uk)

(Socially Produced) Power: How we collude with power imbalances in our clinical work



Power is often a challenging topic for us to consider, as often shame and oppression also show up alongside it. It is possible for us to oversimplify this in our clinical work- rushing to give the client the power, or attempt to disavow our own power.

In this workshop we will explore some of the ways we unconsciously support the current power structures, how we can account for our power in ways that can support the therapeutic process.



Trainer: Ben Groves

Date: Thursday 22nd October

Time: 6:00-9:00pm

Price: £35 + optional donation to our Access Fund

Further information and booking [HERE](#)

Keeping Our Newsletter Community-Focused

The ECPT newsletter is, of course, a place to keep students updated on organisational news, qualification developments and other important information. But it is also there to reflect and celebrate our students and wider community, in keeping with the ethos of the Ellesmere Centre.

Recently, the newsletter has become quite heavily focused on promotional material. Although we have previously asked for a discounted fee to feature adverts, we have decided that we will no longer include advertising for private therapy, supervision or privately delivered CPD.

Instead, we would like to create more space for contributions that offer something of value to our readers, sharing experiences, insights and learning from across our community, rather than standalone promotional adverts. We will continue to share ECPT Deep Dives, as well as additional training that is relevant to the student journey and aligned with SCoPEd criteria. We will also continue to promote free community events and events offered by donation.

If you are a student or graduate and would like to share something about your practice, a project or your training journey, we would really like to hear from you. This could include the challenges you have faced, the successes you have experienced or the work you are doing. We would welcome a short article for the newsletter or website. Authors are also welcome to include their website address and details of any current availability for therapy or supervision at the end of their article.

This way, we can continue to support and showcase the work of our students and graduates, while keeping the focus on sharing something meaningful with our readers. We hope this will create more room for student and graduate voices, experiences and achievements.

ECPT Team

Members Site and Handbook Updates

A few updates to be aware of:

- **Student handbooks and assignment guidelines:** The latest versions are now available on the members' site. We'd encourage you to take a little time to look through these and familiarise yourself with any changes.
- **Useful Documents:** We've also updated some important paperwork, so it's always worth checking the Useful Documents section for the most up-to-date versions, rather than relying on previously saved or downloaded copies.
- **Members' directories:** We've made some improvements to the directories, and entries that include a profile photograph will now appear first. If you're listed in one of the directories and haven't yet added a photo, now might be a good time!

Humber Counselling and Psychotherapy Conference



Who Are We Becoming? Psychotherapy, identity and the future of the profession.

We're delighted to announce that tickets are now on sale for the 2027 Humber Counselling & Psychotherapy Conference, taking place at the University of Hull!

This year's keynote speaker is Susie Hewitt, Founder and Director of the Psychotherapy Institute in Greater Manchester. In her keynote, Susie will explore professional identity and the future of psychotherapy, inviting us to consider what we want to protect, what we might need to let go of, and how we can help shape the future of our profession.

Alongside the keynote, we'll have a fantastic programme of workshops delivered by professionals from across counselling and psychotherapy, offering opportunities to learn, reflect and connect with others in the field.

Date: Saturday 13 March 2027

Venue: Canham Turner Building, University of Hull

Time: 9.15am–5.30pm (registration from 8.45am)

Tickets: £100 - Earlybird price until end of 2026! | Standard price: £115 including lunch, refreshments and a conference pack.

Once you've purchased your ticket, you'll receive a link and access code to select your workshops. We recommend making your selections early to avoid disappointment!

Explore the speakers, workshops and book at www.humbertherapyconference.co.uk.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

**Saturday
13 March 2027**
Canham Turner,
University of Hull

ECPT 
Humber Counselling and Psychotherapy Training

Underneath Her Smile: A Story Through the Lens of Intersectionality - By Student Vanessa Newby Demetrius

Thinking of race, culture, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, migration, nationality and citizenship.

The vivacious one, full of life and energy. She has a voice that's not subtle or soft but strong, raspy, and powerful. This is her story, from Little Vanessa, a Jamaican who started out in a lower socioeconomic class to a budding Psychotherapist. Some are curious and ask, "why did she leave Jamaica" the land of wood and water? Come along and take a seat on her rollercoaster, yes Chicketa's second daughter.

The Beginning

Living in Arnette Gardens, Cobral Way to be exact, it was a literal warzone. A garrison with gunmen and great violence/domestic abuse. The violence was both inside and outside her home. She had a grandad who everyone loved but they failed to see the truth. The man who got so drunk he couldn't stand straight, who hit her grandma or swore at her in rage. The man who switched the light off and left his family in a dark house or threatened to put out his daughter and grandchildren on the street. They loved him but they didn't really know him.

It's strange that with so much violence the family was rarely sad, all smiles no tears, our culture, "just get on with it", my dear.

She couldn't afford university, hence was sponsored and given free accommodation and food. At the end of 3 years she was left with a degree but didn't secure a sustainable job to pay the bills. She earned \$25000 (jmd) and that only covered the rent. By this time she had two young children with most days no money to buy food. The family car got stolen with the baby car seats. The only option left was for them to use their feet. They walked to and fro to drop the children to school then at the end of the day they were exhausted like little mules.



Underneath Her Smile - A Story Through the Lens of Intersectionality

The Shift

There was change in the air. She got a good paying job, life improved but her "Almost" script wanted more and didn't allow her to settle. She decided to migrate.

Why? Better opportunities

The system she knew, back home, had exorbitant school fees and taxes, no form of aid from the government, if you don't earn your family won't eat, costly healthcare, and no such thing as "benefits". So yes, that's the system she chose to be free from. To migrate to a land with better opportunities.

Remember we are on a rollercoaster so that was a high, now let's experience the fall. Migration has its own challenges that many don't know of. To come here she paid her way through Leeds Beckett University, having had to find thousands of pounds for fees and supporting funds. She left her husband and young children behind for two years.

She was the main breadwinner and with her being gone, things got difficult. The mortgage went into arrears because as a migrant student in the UK she could only work 20 hours as stipulated by her visa.

She worked in a care home on the night shift and walked 45 minutes to and 45 minutes from work in the dark, in the cold, in the rain, in the heat. Co-workers drove but at 9 pm no one bothered to offer her a lift.

After 2 years she got her family here and for over 5 years they have paid numerous lawyers fees, constantly travelled to another city for biometric tests, and frequently paid visa renewal costs.

Why did she come to the UK?

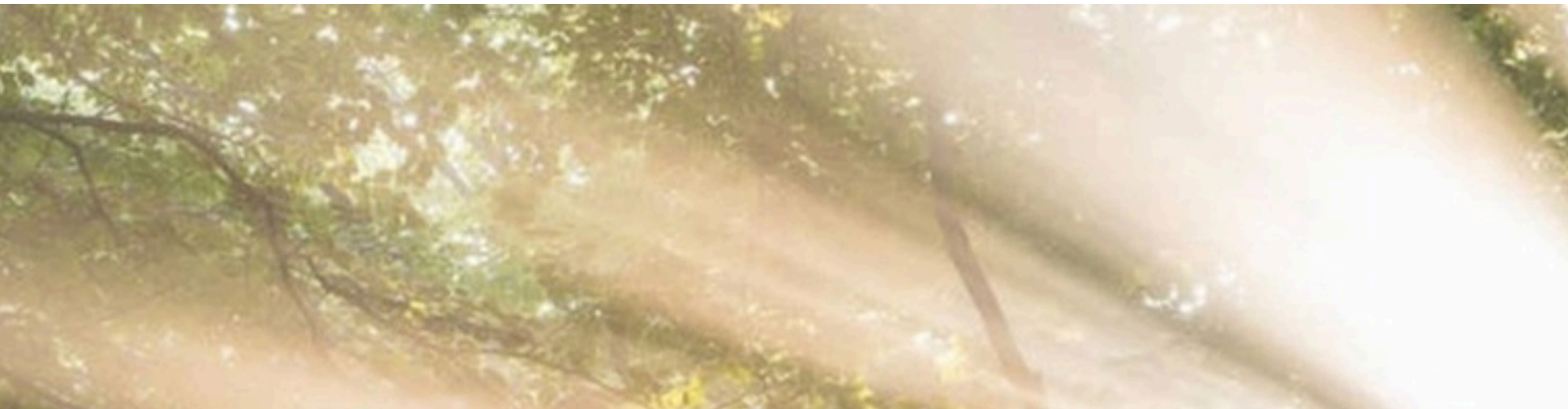
To experience what it feels like to be able to afford food and clothes with no worry. To have constant running water or electricity in a home. To be able to support her family and friends when they need a helping hand. Most importantly to broaden her view of the world and be able to create the balance she craves.

In this life we need each other and right now her family needs your helping hand to achieve settlement status.

You can support Vanessa's fundraiser by clicking [HERE](#)

Deep Dive Series

EMDR: A Therapist's Introductory Guide



Recommended by both NICE and the World Health Organization, Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) is an exceptionally effective therapeutic approach developed to target PTSD and a wide range of other presenting issues.

Join us for a practical introductory workshop led by **Dr Lynsey Holmes** where we will explore how EMDR was developed, debunk common myths and examine the eight core phases of treatment.

Includes clinical examples and live demonstrations.



Trainer: Dr Lynsey Holmes

Date: 26th November 2026

Time: 6:00-9:00pm

Price: £35 + optional donation to our Access Fund

Book on our website:

ellesmerecentre.co.uk/cpd-workshops

Living Equalities Training Experience - By Kathie, Anita and Candice

Recently, Kathie Anita and Candice attended the first two days of the Living Equalities programme, it was held in a beautiful setting in Rochdale with Giles Barrow and Anisha Pandya. They brought such a warm and engaging energy to the training room, creating a space that felt both challenging and safe enough to explore some important conversations.

The programme offered rich opportunities to think differently about diversity, difference and intersectionality, inviting us to question our existing frames of reference and consider how identity, culture, social context and lived experience intersect.

As psychotherapists and educators, this led us to reflect on our own psychotherapeutic identity and the professional language and terminology that we can sometimes take for granted. Our training and theoretical frameworks give us valuable ways of understanding human experience, but what happens when we shine a fresh lens on the psychotherapy script? What assumptions might sit within the words we use, and whose experiences might our language unintentionally leave out?

Being in a room predominantly made up of teachers and educators was an important part of this learning. We gained enormously from their perspectives, whilst it was equally encouraging to hear that they valued having psychotherapists in the room and felt they had learnt from our different professional lens. The exchange highlighted the richness that can emerge when different disciplines meet with openness and curiosity.



Giles Barrow and Anisha Pandya



Living Equalities Training Experience - By Kathie, Anita and Candice

Rather than simply learning about difference, the programme gave us an opportunity to learn through difference noticing where our perspectives, language and experiences meet, and where they challenge one another.

These first two days feel like the beginning of a journey that we hope to continue for a long time. We are excited to share more of this with the wider ECPT community and explore how the learning might be thoughtfully woven into our existing training programme, ethos and philosophy.

For us, this is about continuing to develop a psychotherapeutic identity that remains curious, reflective and open to the complexity of human experience, and being willing to look again at what we think we already know.



Advanced Year 3 & 4 (Hull)

It was a rich first weekend back for our Advanced 3rd and 4th years, now joined together as one group. Together they explored field theory and phenomenology through an intersectional lens. They thought about how we're shaped by the worlds and relationships around us, and how we shape them in turn, and about what it means to meet one another in an I-Thou relationship.

We wish you every success as you work towards your counselling or psychotherapy qualification, and we look forward to the year ahead with you. *See Photo on front page!*

Anita & Chris

Core Theory Year Weekends (Hull)

A very warm welcome to our new CTYs! Two weekends in and you've already brought such vibrant energy, curiosity and enthusiasm. It's great to see you getting stuck into the theory and experiential learning, asking thoughtful questions and bringing your own perspectives into the learning. Hayley and I are looking forward to seeing what this year brings for you, especially those moments when the theory clicks and something suddenly makes sense, particularly when it connects with your own experiences and relationships.

Be kind to yourself as you begin this journey which is both academic and experiential, and cherish the connections you make, with yourself and with others, as the training weekends unfold.

We wish you all the very best on this endeavour!

Anita & Hayley

