

Statement in support of UKCP chair nomination Sue Parker Hall

It's time to lead with purpose and to restore stability, transparency, and focus to the UKCP

Sue Parker Hall UKCP

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

Since November 2022 we've had seven board resignations and there's been an important court case, and a number of other legal cases that have threatened to be immensely costly. We have not had an elected Chair or Vice Chair for months. Nor have we had a treasurer, a proper Company Secretary or a Head of Policy. At a time when 'The Guardian' was railing against the abuses of Psychotherapy and demanding statutory regulation, no one from the board or the office stood up. When we needed it; when they could have made a difference, they failed to be your voice to the media or the government. This turbulence and lack of continuity has left our leadership drifting and mission unclear. Enough is enough. With your help I am going to change that, for this moment is not just a challenge. It's an opportunity.

If elected as Chair, I will work to bring stability, restore transparency, and refocus our organisation on the values that have guided psychotherapy for decades.

Your choice: transparency or smoke and mirrors?

Resignations, unanswered questions, accusations of collusion and concerns about unelected outside influence, have left many members uneasy. Let's face it, we have been kept in the dark. I will establish a Truth and Reconciliation Committee and within three months of taking office, the board will publish a comprehensive report, shared openly with members. We will interview the trustees and employees who walked away and, with their permission, we will share their stories. We cannot continue like this. Transparency and accountability are not optional, they are essential if we are to recover and grow.

Diversity - celebrating psychotherapy's richness

Psychotherapy thrives on diversity; not just diversity of people, but of thought, philosophy, and practice. It's what makes UKCP unique, with ten Colleges offering high-quality psychotherapy rooted in distinct approaches to the human experience. This kind of diversity is a strength I want to nurture. That is why I firmly believe that each Organisational Member should have the autonomy to articulate its own stance on EDI-BIIDE matters. This will empower our training schools to reflect their values, and also ensure that every member, trainee, and client can choose a school that aligns with their principles. We can not mandate politics from the centre. I will represent every single college without fear or favour.

Safeguarding children: a clear responsibility

Our commitment to safeguarding children must be unwavering. When UKCP withdrew from the Memorandum of Understanding in April 2024, I supported that decision. Why?

Because decisions about children should be made in conjunction with those with expertise, not activists or external groups. Our Child and Family Colleges are the experts in this field. As Chair, I will ensure they are front and centre in any conversation regarding policies affecting children. Safeguarding the vulnerable is not just a responsibility, it's a moral imperative.

Expanding access to training in challenging times

We live in difficult financial times, and the cost of training threatens to close doors for many. For this reason, I believe it is crucial to make our trainings more affordable. I propose that we work with our colleges and OM's to innovate training models, that may extend over a longer period of time, to enable earn-as-you-learn options, and the harnessing of new technologies, to make high-quality psychotherapy training accessible to more people. Inclusivity doesn't mean lowering standards; we simply have to find smarter ways to invite more people into our profession.

Introducing myself

I've dedicated 28 years to psychotherapy and its transformational power. I see it's profound impact on people's lives in my therapy room, and hear about it daily from colleagues, supervisees, participants in my training sessions, and in my professional networks. My journey began with a Diploma in Counselling in 1997. Since then, I've earned a Masters in Counselling Training and Supervision from the University of Bristol (2005) and became a Certified Transactional Analyst and UKCP member in 2010. My book, *Anger, Rage, and Relationship: An Empathic Approach to Anger Management* (2009, Routledge), continues to inspire trainees, fellow professionals and clients. Researching and teaching relational approaches to anger, rage, shame, and grief remains a passion.

My leadership pledge

As Chair, I will not only lead—I will listen. My pledge is simple:

- **to ensure stability:** Build a forward-thinking board that restores trust and addresses the organisation's challenges.
- **to lead with authority and shared purpose:** Carry the responsibility of Chair with responsiveness and reflection, collaborating with Colleges and members to advance psychotherapy.
- **to model reflective practice:** Uphold empathy, transparency, and ethical integrity in all deliberations.
- **to empower Colleges, Organisational Members and Individual members:** trusting their wisdom and commitment to quality and inclusivity.
- **re-focus on psychotherapy:** Safeguard therapeutic relationships, support practitioners, and promote our profession's core values.
- **communication:** ensuring prompt responses to all member calls, messages, and emails.
- **to ensure balance in *The New Psychotherapist*:** Advocate for a publication that reflects the diversity of our members' voices.

A vision for the future

As I see it, the UKCP's mission is clear: to support, promote, and regulate psychotherapy for individuals, families, and communities across the UK. To do this, we must refocus our efforts on the core purpose of psychotherapy: fostering psychological

development, personal responsibility, resilience, and meaningful change. By prioritising practice-based evidence, cultivating authentic therapeutic relationships, and upholding ethical standards, we can strengthen the UKCP for years to come.

This is a time for unity and courage

I cannot do this without you. Together, we can restore stability, rebuild trust, and refocus on what matters most—the transformational power of psychotherapy. Let us honour our past, embrace innovation, and build a brighter future for our profession.

The best days of the UKCP are still ahead. Let's walk this path together.

Sue Parker Hall