



UKSS NL 1/25

UKSS Newsletter – End of Year 2025

Dear Members,

As the year draws to a close, it is a pleasure to reflect on the events, publications, and milestones that have shaped the UK Systems Society over the past twelve months, and to share news of new initiatives that will carry us forward.

Workshops and Gatherings

In November 2024, many of us gathered in Southampton for a workshop on the theme “*Move over GP! Welcome Dr AI...*” The discussion focused on the growing use of AI in general practice and stimulated lively debate and valuable exchanges, setting the tone for a strong period of activity within the Society.

In September 2025, our annual conference successfully returned to a face-to-face format under the theme “*Making Systems Work – Breaking Down the Silos.*” With presentations from across the UK, Norway, and Poland, alongside international participation via Zoom, the conference showed that in-person gatherings can flourish again while still welcoming colleagues from overseas. The event was well attended and highlighted the continuing value of meeting face to face.

Developments in *Systemist*

The journal *Systemist* has marked several significant milestones:

- In Winter 2024, Issue 45(2), the journal celebrated its 50th anniversary with a special collection of invited contributions. Senior members of our community, including Nigel, Daune, Ian, and Andy, reflected on how systems thinking has shaped their professional and personal lives. This retrospective issue offered both a celebration of the Society’s history and a reaffirmation of the enduring value of systems ideas.
- Christine has been improving the face of *Systemist*, and we feel very happy with the preliminary results (<https://systemist.uk/>). The Summer 2025 edition, Issue 46(1), is soon ready to be published here.
- Despite strong and well-funded commercial competition, *Systemist* remains distinctive. As an independent, open-access journal owned by the UKSS, it is free to authors and readers, indexed in the British Library (both digital and print), and committed to a personal and collegial editorial process that values direct communication with contributors.

Contributions to the Wider Systems Field

Before or soon after Christmas, we expect the publication of a special issue of *Systemic Practice and Action Research (SPAR)* on *Soft Systems; Theory and Practice*, edited by our UKSS President, Professor Frank Stowell. This issue gathers diverse perspectives on the continuing evolution of Soft Systems Methodology and its application across domains.

Supporting the Next Generation

We are delighted to report the establishment of the Peter Checkland Scholarship at Lancaster University. This £5,000 annual scholarship, donated by a former student in honour of Professor Checkland, will support emerging systems thinkers and ensure that his legacy continues to inspire future generations.

Systems Thinking in Academia

Although approaches to systems thinking vary across institutions, its ideas continue to inform teaching and research in a number of programmes within the wider sector. UKSS wants to provide a space where colleagues can share updates on the development of systems-related modules, courses, and research initiatives. Contributions such as those presented at this year's conference—highlighting student engagement with systems concepts—illustrate the ongoing relevance of systems thinking in higher education. We warmly encourage members to send brief news items or reflections that may be of interest to the community.

Looking Ahead

Following the success of this year's conference, we invite members to suggest themes and preferred dates for the 2026 UKSS Conference. *In addition, we would very much welcome expressions of interest from members who may be willing to chair or host the conference.* The continued vitality of UKSS conferences depends on the active engagement of the Society's membership, and we are keen to explore ideas and possibilities with those prepared to take on such a role.

Please send your ideas, suggestions, or indications of interest to the Secretariat (pamhearneUKSS@gmail.com) or directly to Frank, Christine, or myself.

Thank you all for your continued support and engagement. We wish you an enjoyable festive season and a happy and successful 2026.

With best wishes,
Petter

ukssnewsletter@gmail.com