



## CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL

FRIDAY, 29 JANUARY 2021

10.00 AM, COMMITTEE ROOM, COUNTY HALL, LEWES

**++Please note that this meeting will be taking place remotely++**

MEMBERSHIP - Councillors Charles Clark, Chris Dowling, Kathryn Field, Jim Sheppard, Colin Swansborough, Sylvia Tidy (Chair) and Francis Whetstone

### A G E N D A

- 1 Minutes of the meeting held on 30 October 2020 (*Pages 3 - 8*)
- 2 Apologies for absence
- 3 Disclosure of Interests  
  
Disclosure by all members present of personal interests in matters on the agenda, the nature of any interest and whether the member regards the interest as prejudicial under the terms of the Code of Conduct.
- 4 Urgent items  
  
Notification of items which the Chair considers to be urgent and proposes to take at the end of the appropriate part of the agenda. Any members who wish to raise urgent items are asked, wherever possible, to notify the Chair before the start of the meeting. In so doing, they must state the special circumstances which they consider justify the matter being considered urgently.
- 5 Annual Report of the East Sussex Foster Care Association (ESFCA) 2019 - 2020 (*Pages 9 - 62*)  
  
Report by ESFCA
- 6 Looked After Children (LAC) Statistics (*Pages 63 - 66*)  
  
Report by Director of Children's Services.
- 7 Exclusion of Press and Public  
  
To consider excluding the public and press from the meeting for the next two agenda items on the grounds that if the public and press were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information as specified in Category 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), namely information relating to any individual.
- 8 Ofsted Inspection reports for the following: The Bungalow, Lansdowne Secure Unit and Acorns (*Pages 67 - 110*)
- 9 Children's Home Regulations 2015, Regulation 44: Inspection reports for October 2020 - January 2021
- 9a Acorns at Dorset Road (*Pages 111 - 180*)

- 9b Brodrick House (*Pages 181 - 306*)
- 9c Hazel Lodge (*Pages 307 - 384*)
- 9d Homefield Cottage (*Pages 385 - 464*)
- 9e Lansdowne Secure Unit (*Pages 465 - 584*)
- 9f The Bungalow, Sorrel Drive (*Pages 585 - 698*)
- 10 Any other exempt items considered urgent by the Chair.
- 11 Any other non-exempt items considered urgent by the Chair.

PHILIP BAKER  
Assistant Chief Executive  
County Hall, St Anne's Crescent  
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21 January 2021

#### Contact

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**NOTE:** *As part of the County Council's drive to increase accessibility to its public meetings, this meeting will be broadcast live on its website. The live broadcast is accessible at:*  
[www.eastsussex.gov.uk/yourcouncil/webcasts/default.htm](http://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/yourcouncil/webcasts/default.htm)

# Agenda Item 1

## CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL

MINUTES of a meeting of the Corporate Parenting Panel held at CC1, County Hall, Lewes on 30 October 2020.

PRESENT Councillors Charles Clark, Chris Dowling, Kathryn Field, Jim Sheppard, Colin Swansborough, Sylvia Tidy and Francis Whetstone

ALSO PRESENT

Liz Rugg – Assistant Director, Early Help and Social Care  
Sally Carnie – Head of LAC Services  
Teresa Lavelle-Hill – Head of LAC Services  
Fiona Lewis – Operations Manager, Safeguarding Unit  
Sally Williams – Operations Manager  
Mandy Lewis – Head of Virtual School  
Beverley Moores – Strategic Lead, Children’s Disability Social Care ISEND  
Nicola Scott – Operations Manager, Residential LAC Services  
Dawn Siddens – Designated Nurse for LAC  
Ian Williams – Registered Homes Manager, Hazel Lodge  
Charlotte de Retuerto - Registered Homes Manager, Sorrel Drive  
Helen Simmons - Registered Homes Manager, Lansdowne Secure Children’s Home  
Roy Noble – Deputy Manager, Homefield Cottage  
Steven Crowe – Deputy Manager, Brodrick House  
Aaron Sams – Democratic Services Officer

52 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 24 JULY 2020

52.1 RESOLVED: to agree as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 24 July 2020.

## 53 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

53.1 There were none.

54 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

54.1 There were none.

## 55 URGENT ITEMS

55.1 There were none.

56 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

56.1 The Panel agreed to exclude the press and public for the next agenda item on the basis that if they were present there would be disclosure to them of information considered exempt by virtue of Category 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12 A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), namely information relating to an individual.

57 CHILDREN'S HOME REGULATIONS 2015, REGULATION 44: INSPECTION REPORTS FOR JULY 2020 - SEPTEMBER 2020

57.1 The Panel considered Regulation 44 Reports for the period July 2020 to September 2020 for the following Children's Homes:

- Acorns
- Brodrick House
- Hazel Lodge
- Homefield Cottage
- Lansdowne Secure Unit
- The Bungalow

57.2 Each Registered Homes Manager (RHM) gave a verbal update on the activity at the homes covering the period since the last meeting.

57.3 The Panel discussed the impact of Covid-19 on Children's Homes and how the service coped with the challenges posed by the pandemic. In particular, and where a child or young person was suspected to have been exposed to the virus, Members wanted to understand more about the procedures in place for self-isolation. In response the Panel were informed that in order to ensure the safety of children and young people and staff, individuals who might have been exposed to the virus self-isolated for 14 days. The Panel also heard that enhanced cleaning procedures are in place, and where appropriate staff are using Personal Protective Equipment.

57.4 The Panel gave thanks to the Registered Homes Managers and their colleagues for their exemplary service in response to the pandemic and for the support they have provided in difficult circumstances to the children and young people in the Council's care.

57.5 RESOLVED: to note the reports.

58 ANY OTHER EXEMPT ITEMS CONSIDERED URGENT BY THE CHAIR.

58.1 There were none.

59 ANNUAL REPORT OF SERVICES FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN 2019-20

59.1 The Panel considered a report by the Director of Children's Services which provided an update on the annual performance of the Looked After Children (LAC) Service for 2019-20.

59.2 The update provided detail about the achievements of the LAC service and the ongoing challenges it faces. The Panel were also provided with current figures for LAC in 2019/20, including:

- **Looked After Children:** The rate of Looked After Children (LAC) in ESCC per 10,000 of the population under 18 years of age reduced from 56.6% in 18/19 to 55.7%. The national rate for England is 65%.



- **Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC):** In 19/20 there were 32 UASC under 18 years of age in the care of East Sussex and ESCC has also retained responsibility for 48 young people as they turn 18 and become care leavers. The Panel also heard that, amongst other developments, there has been specific training delivered to UASC to help support their adjustment to life in the UK.
- **Children with disabilities:** The number of LAC with disabilities remains similar to previous years, at 27 children. The Panel were informed of plans going forward to create more capacity and flexibility in the structure of the Children's Homes to safely manage the needs of disabled children requiring accommodation or respite.
- **Recruitment and retention of Fosters:** 22 foster households were approved in 19/20 which means that East Sussex remains in a favourable position in the context of a national shortage of foster carers.

59.3 The Panel discussed accommodation options for Care Leavers aged 19-21. In particular, the Panel noted the small reduction in the percentage of young people living in suitable accommodation (a decrease of 1.1% when compared to the data from 18/19). As a result, the Panel sought reassurance that this specific issue is being addressed. In response, Members were informed of the ongoing work with local housing authorities to ensure that there is a sufficient supply of suitable accommodation. The Panel were also informed about the Department's collaborative work with the Adult Social Care and Health Department. This work aims to help improve the understanding of the needs of an individual young person and therefore help find accommodation which is better suited to their circumstances.

59.4 RESOLVED: to note the report.

## 60 INDEPENDENT REVIEWING SERVICE ANNUAL REPORT

60.1 The Panel considered the Independent Reviewing Service (IRS) Annual report for the period 2019/20. Fiona Lewis, Operations Manager – Safeguarding Unit, introduced the report by providing an update on a number of issues including: the statutory obligations of the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO), the management of caseloads and Looked After Children Reviews.

60.2 The Panel were informed about progress against the key priorities for 2019/20 for the Service. In particular the Panel noted the positive progress being made with regard to the participation of individual children in the review. For example, the Panel heard how the LAC reviewing process has, since the beginning of 2020, been renamed 'My Voice Matters', a name which was chosen by the children and young people in care. The Panel discussed this development and were also informed a 'My Voice Matters' page is now included within a child's review document; that each child now also receives a letter from their IRO after their meetings. The letter aims to ensure the views of each child are captured and then taken into account as a key part of their review. With the same aim in mind, the letter is also shared with the social work team around the child.

60.3 RESOLVED: to note the report.

## 61 VIRTUAL SCHOOL ANNUAL REPORT - 1 APRIL 2019 - 31 MARCH 2020

61.1 The Panel considered a report by the Director of Children's Services which highlighted the work of the Virtual School for the period 1 April 2019 - 31 March 2020.

61.2 The Panel were informed that due to the impact of Covid-19 the DfE (Department for Education) announced that performance data based on summer 2020 tests and assessments

would not be published. Therefore, trend comparisons with previous years as well as performance comparisons with statistical neighbours and national data could not be provided.

61.3 That Panel were briefed on the work of the East Sussex Virtual School, which included: supporting 358 children who were looked after (LAC), and a total of 606 children and young people including Care Leavers (CL), continued development of the Springboard project with Bede's School which provided four students with residential places and one student with a day place which started in September 2020, the appointment of two Personal Advisers (PA's) one to work with young people who were not in education, employment or training (NEET) and one to support the education of Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC).

61.4 The Panel discussed feedback from children that described decreased levels of anxiety during the period of home learning while the schools were closed during the Covid-19 lockdown. The Panel questioned whether there would be consideration given for increased home learning, in particular for those children for whom anxiety is an issue. The Panel were assured that the issue of anxiety around school attendance was a key part of the ongoing development plan and this will include discussions around different ways of providing education. Although physical school attendance remains fundamental, the utilization of technology for supplementing this is being investigated as a development moving forward.

61.5 RESOLVED: to note the report.

## 62 LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN HEALTH REPORT

62.1 The Panel considered a report by the Director of Children's Services which provide an update on the Health of Looked After Children (LAC). Alongside this report the Panel also considered the Pan-Sussex Report on the Health of LAC, and the East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust (ESHT) report on the Health of LAC in East Sussex.

62.2 The Panel were provided with an overview of the key developments and work undertaken to support the health of LAC in East Sussex, including:

- improvements in meeting the statutory timescales for carrying out Initial Health Assessments (IHS);
- a Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI) which found IHS and Review Health Assessments (RHA) to be of high quality;
- the ongoing development work to help young people as they move on from the support provided by the Children's Services Department. For example, a Personal Health Summary document has been developed which provides key health facts, information about the health service and guidance on staying healthy.

62.3 The Panel discussed the importance of support for the emotional wellbeing and mental health of LAC and Care Leavers, specifically given the mental health impacts of Covid-19. In response, the Panel were informed that a need for clear pathways and reporting for mental health have been identified following the East Sussex Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI) and that a new lead officer has been appointed to take this work forward.

62.4 RESOLVED: to note the report.

## 63 LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN (LAC) STATISTICS

63.1 The Panel considered a report by the Director of Children's Services which provided an update on Looked After Children (LAC) statistics.

63.2 The Panel were informed by Liz Rugg, Assistant Director for Early Help and Social Care on the current figures and trends for LAC in East Sussex.

63.3 RESOLVED: to note the report.

64 ANY OTHER NON-EXEMPT ITEMS CONSIDERED URGENT BY THE CHAIR.

64.1 There were none.

The meeting ended at 12:05pm

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**Report to:** Corporate Parenting Panel

**Date of meeting:** 29 January 2021

**By:** East Sussex Foster Care Association

**Title:** Annual Report of the East Sussex Foster Care Association 2019 - 2020 (ESFCA)

**Purpose:** To inform the panel of the Annual Report of the ESFCA

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***RECOMMENDATIONS:***

**The Panel is recommended to comment on and note the Annual Report**

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**1 Background**

1.1 East Sussex Foster Care Association (ESFCA) is an independent charity. It was launched in March 1993 in a direct response to the needs of the children/young people in public care across the county and the demands this place on their foster families.

1.2 Since its introduction, carers have designed a range of support, advice, advocacy, activities and training services for their fellow carers, families and the children in foster care throughout East Sussex.

**2 Supporting information**

2.1 The Annual Report of the East Sussex Foster Care Association 2019/20 is attached at Appendix 1.

**3 Conclusion and recommendations**

3.1 The Corporate Parenting Panel is recommended to comment on and note the contents of the report.

**SUSANNE BEESLEY**

Chair of the East Sussex Foster Care Association

Appendices

Appendix 1 - The Annual Report of the East Sussex Foster Care Association 2019/20

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The Queen's Award  
for Voluntary Service



East Sussex Foster Care Association

2019-2020





*"IT IS EASIER TO BUILD  
STRONG CHILDREN  
THAN TO REPAIR  
BROKEN MEN."*

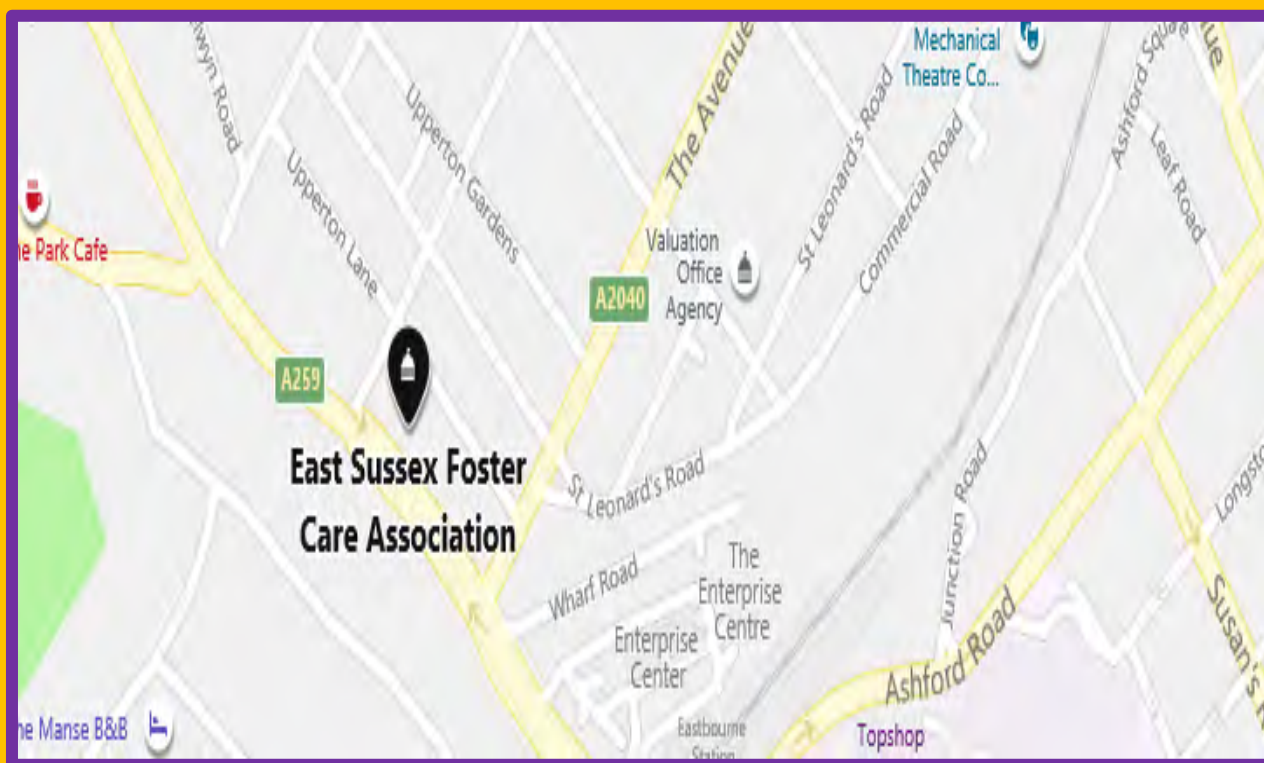


# **ESFCA OFFICES:**

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# Aims and objectives

The objectives of East Sussex Foster Care Association as set out in the Memorandum of Association are, to promote all or any charitable purposes for the benefit of the community mainly but not exclusively within the County of East Sussex and in particular the advancement of the education of the public in matters relating to substitute care. In particular the education, training and support of foster carers and their families, the relief of Looked After Children, their Carers and their Carers' families by providing facilities and services in the interests of social welfare with a view to improving their conditions of life.

The Associations aim is to support East Sussex Foster Carers and their families in their efforts to achieve the best possible outcomes for the children in their care by working in partnership with all appropriate statutory and voluntary agencies. It undertakes this task by offering a range of events, advocacy, training and support for the both the families and the children they care for. Its membership comprises of East Sussex Local Authority registered Foster Carers. The management group is formed from elected Trustees/Directors', largely from within that membership but not exclusively as the board benefits from the ongoing support of others with backgrounds in childrens services.



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# Letter

## From The Chair

### Susanne Beesley



Dear All

It is now just over 26 years since the East Sussex Foster Care Association was set up. Many thanks to the steadfast commitment of our team and the loyal support of our funders (including ESCC), children and carers in East Sussex have enjoyed another fruitful and fun packed year. Importantly, I want us to keep at the forefront of our minds that all of this is made possible by the shared vision and dedicated community partnership we are privileged to be part of. Though we have been through many changes over the years including a carefully revised framework in 16/17, the reason why we are here has not changed and our mission statement remains as relevant today and it was when our founders launched ESFCA in 1993, which is:

**"to provide support, advice, advocacy, activities and training services for our fellow carers, families and the children in foster care throughout East Sussex".**

As we look back and celebrate all we have achieved in this financial year April 2019 through to March 2020 I can report a stable and efficient financial year and a real team spirit among the committee with no resignations. Credit goes to our board of trustees who are mainly registered foster carers and despite their very busy lives provide the time and commitment ESFCA needs to thrive. However, I'm thrilled to welcome three new trustees who joined us in November 2019, Ruma, Christine and Anne. This brings our team up to 11 and with our new trustees bringing teaching, SEN education and social work to the table, it also means our knowledge base and skills set increases for the good of the charity.

My sincere gratitude goes out to all of the trustees including Mark Thornborough - vice chair, Lysette Grosvenor -Treasurer, Ann Holder MBE, Tina Henderson, Ru Petraitis-Williams, Anja Leeves, Sandra Maylam, Ruma Smith, Christine Phillips and Anne Buchan. All of whom work hard wearing various different hats and are unpaid, all generously giving their time and skill alongside our other much valued volunteers and community partners to keep our charity functioning efficiently.

Special thanks go to our dedicated treasurer Lysette, for the endless hours she has spent ensuring all aspects of our financial management are in order and also working closely with the team to safeguard ESFCA finances. We recognise that we are very fortunate to have such capable and dedicated people who work together for the good of the children and families in our County. Another essential member of the team is our administrator Nigel Berry, who the trustees are all indebted to for his support, but more than that Nigel has proved to be a real 'ideas man' whose humble nature and work ethic is second to none. Nigel has been instrumental

in tying together many complex events, working closely with all 11 Trustees.

The highlight of this particular year is our proudest achievement to date, when we received the Queens Award for Voluntary Service, which is the Charities equivalent to an MBE. The award was presented to us by the Lord Lieutenant Peter Field and other esteemed dignitaries. We held a fabulous celebration at Eastbourne Town Hall with both our patrons Jane Torvill OBE and Dame Jacqueline Wilson in attendance, as well as over 100 invited guests, including Senior Managers from East Sussex County Council, friends of ESFCA, and previous members of the committee.

Our much-loved annual events took place, this included the three residential PGL trips for three different groups of children. A special mention to Mark Thornborough and our PGL Queen Tina Henderson who worked tirelessly alongside Nigel to reproduce and fine tune these favourite events for the benefit of our children. We obtained a very generous grant from the Hastings Round Table for the PGL for young people who foster, and my sincere thanks goes out to them.

Yet again the Christmas Party was very well attended with 120 children plus carers. We were truly grateful to see the Lady Soroptimists who offered children the 6<sup>th</sup> consecutive year an opportunity to choose and wrap a gift for their carers. For the first time we included an optional professional photo service for families to take advantage of. The Christmas pantomime in January 2020 was also very popular with over Yet again the Christmas party was very well attended with 120 children plus carers. We were truly 200 taking up the discounted tickets.

During this financial year the trustees decided that it was time to give something back to our community and we were able to do this through More Radio Child of Sussex Awards which was held on the 6<sup>th</sup> of December at the Brighton Hilton Metropole. Of the 13 worthwhile categories ESFCA chose to sponsor the 'child of courage award'. The black-tie event attracted 250 guests and was promoted by More Radio. Sponsors of these awards also benefited from the More radio marketing campaign which helped raise awareness and our profile.

This year we had the most heartfelt donations of toys and funds from several donors including, More radio, The Widows Sons Masonic Bikers Association. Gifts4Kiz, who raised funds for us with the Eastbourne Motorcycle ride out group. Not to mention the numerous private donations we received. We have been able to support the through care team to provide some fun and exciting adventures for 16-to 25-year-old care leavers.

Just after Christmas 2019 we received sad news from John McCutchen of his dear wife Carolyn's passing. Carolyn, alongside her husband John had thought up the idea of opening up Beaton's Wood for the Bluebell walk at Arlington in 1972, the very same walk, now with a tearoom we know and love today. This idyllic place encompasses a very successful social business enterprise model and attracts thousands of visitors every year that numerous Charites all benefit from.

Indeed, last April 2019 over two gloriously sunny days we raised £3.7k at this event. I am grateful to Anja who led this event for us with our teams of volunteers, foster carers, trustees and friends of the association who helped bake cakes, ticket office, organise the mobility scooters, run the tea rooms, clear and wash up and shop and clean for two long days.

In February the Corona Virus hit the nation and like many other organisations it seriously affected all aspects of our work. Fundraising had to be cancelled and in particular the precious

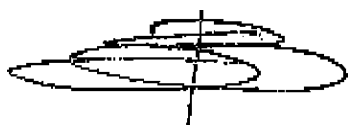


Bluebell walk at Arlington (for May 2020). Therefore, we look forward to the event in 2021 where we will join John McCutchen and his family again and importantly where memories of Carolyn and her legacy lives on.

I am so grateful to so many generous individuals and organisations for their ongoing support. The list of fund- raising events and projects that ESFCA have put on is endless. However, we must not forget the other very important work that is carried out by ESFCA such as our active engagement with other organisations, networking and raising the profile of our association. Our trustees are involved in lobbying of Government and acting as a voice for our fellow carers and the children they care for. ESFCA is involved in supporting carers to seek solutions to particular issues they may face, setting up meetings with senior managers to ensure the carer feels heard and enable timely resolutions. Furthermore, ESFCA also assist in the event that carers are subject to an allegation or where there are concerns around standards of care to ensure carers are given the right information and most importantly that they feel supported.

Finally, if you want to learn more about our work and perhaps get involved with our fantastic team please sign up for our newsletter.

Yours faithfully



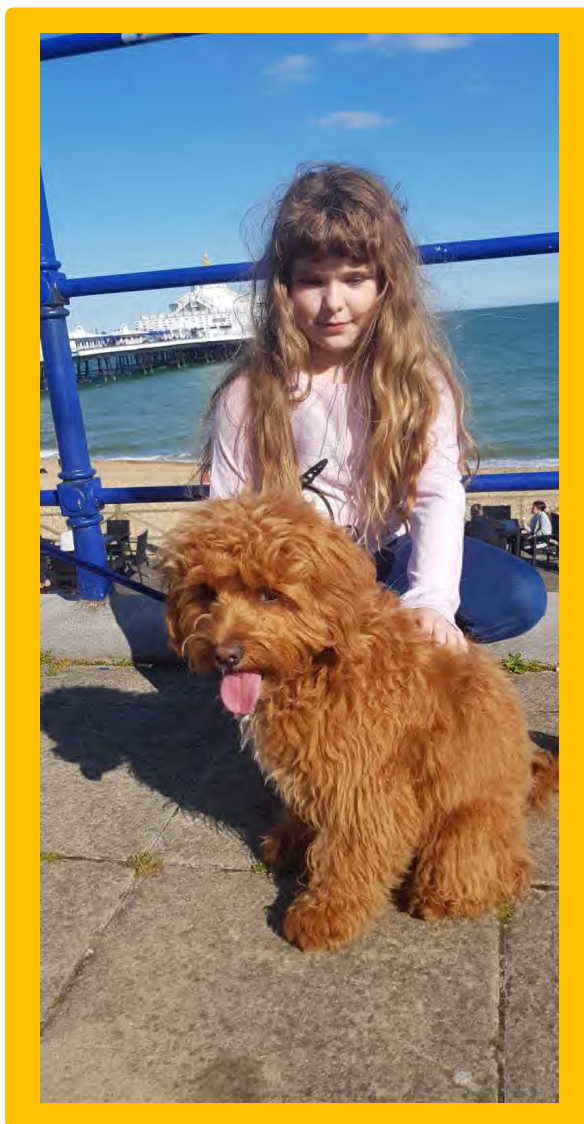
Susanne Beesley- Chair ESFCA

If you would like to contact Susanne Beesley regarding ESFCA please email;

[Susanne.beesley@esfca.co.uk](mailto:Susanne.beesley@esfca.co.uk)

Or visit

[www.esfca.co.uk](http://www.esfca.co.uk)



“Willow”, (ESFCA unofficial mascot) making friends at her guest appearance on the

WAGATHON

# Welcome to the ESFCA

East Sussex Foster Care Associations aim is to 'build brighter futures' for children in care and to support foster families in their role including recognising the contribution our own children make (Young People Who Foster). This continues to be done through active fundraising so that we can deliver a number of activities and services.

Over the last 26 years ESFCA has grown from the Uckfield support group to an association covering the whole of East Sussex and over 280 foster families.

ESFCA has always remained proudly independent of the East Sussex County Council, but it is also very proud of the very special relationship it has created with the department and social workers. The association started and continues to run surgeries for foster carers to attend and work through issues with the department and is often asked to provide feedback for policies and practices. Social workers take part and join the children on the PGL residential trips and volunteer to help on some of the activities the association run throughout each year.

Another area that ESFCA feels strongly about is training and education. The association has always put the foster families first and that includes providing training seminars and conferences for the carers, social workers and the various different child services across East Sussex.

Our Trustees are actively engaged with other organisations in networking, debating, promoting and raising the profile of Foster Carers in East Sussex. We lobby government departments and attend any meetings or debates that enable us to speak up for our members and our Looked After Children (LAC).

For over 26 years thousands of looked after children have had a brighter future as a direct result of the East Sussex Foster Care Association and the foster families it has supported, and the association is continuing to grow.

## SURGERIES

ESFCA holds monthly surgeries on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of every month whereby foster carers can bring to the table a difficult, complex or particular issue that needs a fast track resolution from senior managers in Children's and Fostering Services. A trustee will attend the meeting to offer support to the foster carer in presenting their particular problem. This can really help all parties to find a way forward or air complaints in a face to face and professional manner.

Foster carers are encouraged to come and talk through any difficulties in the hope of finding a way of resolving the difficulties quickly and efficiently. If the issue is around Adoption or Education, then ESFCA would seek to bring the relevant manager to the same meeting.

For further information please contact;

[advice@esfca.co.uk](mailto:advice@esfca.co.uk)



# LOBBYING

During 2019 Nus Ghani, MP for Wealden, secured a meeting for the East Sussex Foster Care Association with the then Children's Minister, Nadhim Zahawi MP. The wide-ranging meeting discussed central government spending on foster care, the criteria for taking children into care, the shortage of foster carers, educational and mental health provision for those in care, and care for those children with Special Educational Needs.

The meeting was particularly focussed on the East Sussex area, with the three representatives of ESFCA providing insights gleaned from their decades of fostering experience.

"It was a pleasure to meet with the Children's Minister, Nadhim Zahawi, and to raise such important issues with him. His willingness to listen to us talk 'from the front line' – warts and all – was enormously appreciated. His honesty about the funding issues being faced by local authorities was also refreshing. This meeting was productive, but there is more to be done, and we will be engaging with him further on a wide range of issues: from supporting looked-after children with special educational needs, through to ensuring that foster children's savings are properly protected."

Tina Henderson ESFCA trustee



Left: Nus Ghani MP and Nadhim Zahawi MP, with Susanne, Tina, and Mary Joy from the East Sussex Foster Care Association.

Right:

Nus Ghani MP, and Tina Henderson



## ADVOCACY

ESFCA receives funds from East Sussex County Council as an annual grant which is held in a restricted fund (Allegations Fund). This fund is used to provide independent support as required to assist any of our member foster carers who may be subject to an allegation of concerns around standards of care. These investigations can be complex and lengthy and can feel very isolating to a foster family as they are unable to discuss many of the issues with others due to confidentiality.

ESFCA are aware that if a serious allegation is made against a foster member, then Supervising Social Workers are often unable to support them whilst an investigation is ongoing. ESFCA has worked jointly with the fostering services to provide an extensive Allegation support pack and All foster carers in East Sussex are automatically signed up to The Fostering Network, who provides **free independent legal advice**.

# Trustees

## Chairperson- Susanne Beesley



My family and I have been fostering 28 years, our second son was only a few months old when we began, and our third son was born some years into our fostering journey. Our family grew through the adoption of our 2 daughters and long-term fostering. Our goal has always been to provide longer term stability to the children we have fostered, and we are always delighted to be able to keep in touch with these young people and see them as extended members of our family today.

## Vice Chairman- Mark Thornborough

Mark and his wife Andrea have been fostering for many years, Mark is very active in ESFCA as he runs the very successful PGL trips with Tina and the team of dedicated volunteers. Mark also takes an active part in the administration of ESFCA and manages the staff and office to ensure things run smoothly.



## Treasurer- Lysette Grosvenor



Myself and my husband Gary have been Foster Carers for nearly 5 years. We have looked after about 25 children. We do this full time together. We have done short term care, respite cover, emergency placements and more recently long-term fostering. Every child is different, and it is so rewarding when they learn and develop new skills and accomplishments like reading, swimming and riding a bike. I also enjoy helping them become independent with skills like shopping, saving money and cooking.

## Founder Trustee- Tina Henderson

Hi, my name is Tina Henderson and my family, and I have been foster carers for 27 years. We are also adoptive parents to our wonderful son. My start in life was not the best and I use this experience to try and help other children. We can offer long- and short-term home for children and also enjoy doing assessment placements and respite.



## Founder Trustee- Ann Holder MBE



My family and I have been fostering since 1975 (with a short break when my daughter was born) and we also became adoptive parents. We mainly care for babies which I really enjoy. I also actively get involved with pre-adoptive work and working with families. I received the MBE for services to fostering in 2007.

## Trustee- Ru-Petratis-Williams

Ok, my name is Ru, my husband Kevin and our daughter Blue have been fostering for almost 12 years. Our life has become so very fulfilled and it's a fantastic journey in so many levels.

We have the privilege to have children coming into our home and share the challenges we face and achievements we conquer. The children who come into care are so resilient teaching us so much in how we can appreciate life in general.

We foster children between the ages of 5 to 15 years old and being foster carers is the most rewarding thing we do.



### **Trustee- Anja Leeves**

Anja & Nick (Anja's husband) have been offering foster families respite for over 5 years and Anja has also been an active participant in ESFCA. The Baby & toddler meet ups are arranged between Anja & Ann and Anja also leads the way in foster carer wellbeing by running the Relax, Recharge and Reflect.

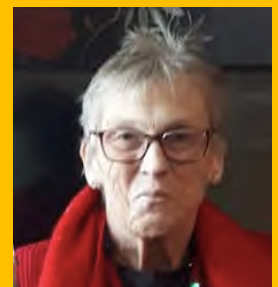


### **Trustee- Sandra Maylam**

Sandra has been instrumental in offering all-round support and is an asset our team. Sandra takes an active role on the Inspire Project and when she isn't with us, she is enjoying a well-deserved break living the dream along the canals in her narrowboat.

### **Anne Buchan**

I was a long serving Social Worker in the fostering service and I was always an avid supporter of the ESFCA. My passion has always been to recognise the important part foster families own children play in the fostering role.



### **Christine Phillips**

During my career as a SEN personal advisor, I became acutely aware of the difficulties faced by looked after children. I was in awe of the foster families love and commitment to these children, many of whom could present significant challenges.

### **Ruma Smith**

My parents have been foster carers for 7 years. I love having a busy house and have been involved in supporting the children they have looked after. It has been amazing to see lots of children reach milestones they may not have reached otherwise.



**Could this be you?**

**If you think you would be  
interested in becoming a trustee,  
please contact;**

**[Susanne.beesley@esfca.co.uk](mailto:Susanne.beesley@esfca.co.uk)**





# Patrons

We are once again immensely proud to have Jayne Torvill OBE and Dame Jacqueline Wilson DBE, two amazing patrons both prepared to donate their time representing and raising the profile of ESFCA.

Jayne Torvill OBE joined ESFCA in 2012 as a patron and over the last 9 years she has generously lent her name and given her time to many events and projects. Jayne is a regular guest of ESFCA at the annual “thank you” event held for the foster families across East Sussex and has joined us at the ESFCA fundraising golf tournaments, where she awarded the prizes.

Dame Jacqueline Wilson DBE became a patron after meeting the trustees at our regular Bluebell Walk event during 2018. One of her first events she joined ESFCA on was the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary barn dance where she met fellow Patron Jayne Torvill and they both danced throughout the night with the fostering families of ESFCA. Jacqueline also attends the annual Christmas Party where she meets the children and during 2018 attended a meet & greet event during the Eastbourne Food & arts festival where over 250 fans queued to meet the creator of Tracy Beaker and many other much loved characters.



# Young People Who Foster



This is a group that represents the birth children of foster families, these children share their parents and their childhood with the children who are fostered with their families. These incredible children help LAC coming into their home adjust to the new environment and as their parents become a foster mum and dad, they in turn become a foster brother or sister.

The YPWF allow these children to have a voice and a place to share their experiences, they also organise events (Halloween discos) and day trips out and regular meet-ups. ESFCA are again able to help finance some of these projects and help out when asked.



Just some of our events we did last year are:

- urban jump
- escape room
- eastbourne carnival
- picnic
- halloween disco
- christmas bash
- circus skills



My parents have been fostering for 8 and a half years. I was 8 years old when my mum first told me that she was getting this new job. I'd never heard of it before, but after some explaining and lists of questions, I got to grips with it. I was so excited and thought it would be so much fun. I wasn't wrong, my mum's decision to become a foster carer was one of the best decisions she's ever made. I've met so many people and I genuinely think it's made me a better person. Although I've enjoyed it, it's definitely not what I was expecting. There have been some hard times and that's why the YPWF has been so helpful. I've been able to share ideas and experiences with people who are in the same position as me and it has been so much fun.

If you are interested in taking part in any of our events  
Please contact [YPWF@eastsussex.gov.uk](mailto:YPWF@eastsussex.gov.uk)

The YPWF council has just started their second year of being a group. We are a small group of young people who foster (our parents are foster carers). Our council was made to make sure that no young person with foster carers as parents feels alone. We meet up regularly with many different types of events





# Children in Care Council (CiCC)



the children in care council

The Children in Care Council is a group of looked after children which represents LAC across East Sussex and allows them to have a voice across the county. They represent LAC at events such as the Children and Young People's Trust conference. The CYPT conference is where they meet other associations that help and support young people in East Sussex. Ideas are shared and contacts were made. The conference is

presented by the children from various different groups and associations and gives insight into their thoughts, concerns and their goals.

CiCC also looks for ways to help in the future, over the last year they have attended first aid and food hygiene courses which will help the children when they are looking for their first job (part/ full time).

A large group of 25 young people and support staff went to see Blood Brothers on the stage. A very poignant story really helped the young people see a different side to life.

They also have an ambition of helping children when they first enter the care system. These amazing children provide a rucksack which is gender and age appropriate, they researched what the children needed and now provide a rucksack with a tooth brush, socks, teddy/soft toy, hair brush, pen, notes and a newsletter explaining who they are. They also attach a label with a very simple message of support from one child to another.

ESFCA is extremely proud of these children and supports them by providing the financial support to run the projects above.

You're in good hands now.  
I know it's hard being taken away from your family, but stay calm, everything will be OK.  
Turn that frown upside down! ☺  
I've been where you are now and I got through it, you can too!  
Life will get better, just believe in yourself and stay strong.  
Love from CiCC xx



Dear Esfca

I am one of the people who received an online food hygiene course. I have just found out that it was you guys who gave me the money to buy the Thankyou so much, this meant I found a job after looking for ages, I appreciate it alot! Im sure this will help alot of teenagers like me who are finding it hard hunting without much to put on their CVs.

from the CICC.

Dear Cicc/Esfca  
I wanted to say thank-you for the money you gave me. So we could be given a food hygiene course. I completed this and have been able to add it to my CV. I haven't found a job yet as I am doing my OESs but I am confident that I will find one in the Summer. I am sure this qualification will help me out to employment as I hope I will be given a job may



Dear Esfca

We wanted to say Thankyou so much for buying our or our blood better. We found it absolutely amazing. Som in a matter. Which way. Some of the CICC we doing this and include so we were able to use this and include it in our evidence.

Dear Esfca,

Thank you for buying of our Blood brothers tickets. I really enjoyed it especially when the boys got separated from his parents and we got to see how other people's lives are different from us.

CICC



Dear Esfca,

Thank you so much for the money you have donated so we can buy more resources to give out to children coming into care for the first time. We think this is a really important project we are hoping it help them through a scary time. Also we know that some children come into care with nothing so they might only have old belongings and this way they will have something they will not need to hide away.

I want to able to put the food hygiene training to good use. I am really grateful for the opportunity to better my CV and better my chances of finding a job.  
Thank you.



The day spent with AutoActive allowed us to come together and focus on mental health, something we feel strongly about. The Bring Creative is the best way to express our feelings and writing a rap about feeling insignificant, difficult and single-out helped us get our voices heard. We want to say a huge thank you for this opportunity. We would not have been able to say a huge thank you without this. The boys appreciated this project and they felt that it is more difficult to communicate their feelings across and this is a worldwide issue too.

From CICC



To Esfca

I think you were so kind when you gave CICC the money to buy more things to help children happy.



# Throughcare Team

The through care team support young people and adults who are leaving the care system and support them to adjust and learn to be independent. Young adults aged 16-25 with varying different needs are supported by key workers to adjust to the big change's adulthood brings and ESFCA is there to help on projects so they can continue to develop self esteem and create positive memories.

The projects include day trips out (London/ Thorpe Park), financial help at Christmas to allow them to receive gifts and support for their Christmas party so they get the chance to engage in the festivities during what can be a very lonely time. ESFCA also uses its contacts at the North Pole to allow a certain jolly fellow to attend the party and help with the fun.

Below is a brief report from John Darling highlighting the trip to London funded by ESFCA.

28 people went on the trip which matched the number of people we had asked for tickets for. Some young people with high needs wanted to come so we took extra staff making the breakdown 17 young people (yp) to 11 staff. One yp with behavioural issues needed 2 members of staff, also 5 young people with learning needs and 2 asylum seekers.

We managed to all get the same train leaving from Hastings to Victoria picking staff and young people up at various stations along the journey. The Through care team paid for a meal deal on arrival at Victoria. We then went to find the bus. We all managed to get upstairs and with the open top really got a sense of being in London; we were also able to enjoy the sunshine. The young people were all very excited and enjoyed the sights, particularly the very expensive cars outside the hotels on Park Lane! The bus went by Hyde Park corner up Park Lane and by Hyde Park, Marble Arch and along by St James' Park. We then all got off the bus at The National Gallery and went to Trafalgar Square (photo attached). We then walked to Covent Garden and looked around at the street artists. Re-joining the bus, we went along Fleet Street past St Pauls over London Bridge past the Shard and then over Tower Bridge to the Tower of London.

After looking around we boarded the boat and sat on top so we could see all the sites on the journey. The boat ride took us to Westminster Pier and provided an interesting commentary of the landmarks from the river. We then split into groups as some wanted another bus ride while others wanted to look around the grounds of the Houses of Parliament and go to Buckingham Palace. We split into three groups and then met back at Victoria Station.

We reconvened at 6.30pm and then bought take away food to eat on the train home.

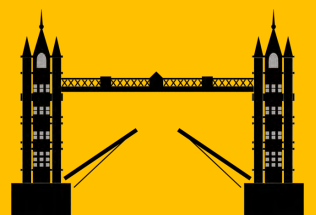
Reece, one of the young people who really like transport though it was the best day ever and said he would write a thank you letter. All the young people really enjoyed the day which went really quickly. The young people were talking about the day all the way home and friendships were made and trust of the workers increased.

They all asked what we will be doing next!

Kind regards

**John Darling**

Personal Adviser





# NO CHILD SHOULD HAVE TO USE A RUBBISH BAG AS LUGGAGE

## SUITCASE INITIATIVE

(SUPPORTED BY TRIPP  
LUGGAGE)



Dignity and self worth are key in the way a looked after child views and values themselves. This can be torn away from a child when they have to leave their home with nothing but a rubbish/bin bag carrying the few possessions and clothes they have.

No child (especially foster children) should have to face the distressing sight of having their belongings packed into black plastic bags, when being moved either from birth family or to new foster placements. Black plastic bags are designed for rubbish and not for children's personal belongings.

ESFCA are proud to run an initiative that can help restore pride to the children entering the care system and have stock of luggage available to social workers and assessment teams and have already distributed over 200 suitcases to children that have had to be moved as an emergency or travelling to respite.

This initiative has also involved supporting the looked after children leaving the care system (16-25). The "Through Care Team", distribute luggage bags, hold-all's, and sports bags to help the leavers enter the community with dignity. Over 50 bags this year have been distributed to care leavers and in turn allowed them to maintain their dignity when moving to assisted lodgings or their own home.

This has been made possible by the amazing generosity from **Tripp Luggage** who has continued to support ESFCA over the last 6 years.





# MAKE IT REEL PROJECT

Most families have Grandparents who spoil and make the children feel special by providing the little extras however looked after children often miss out on this influence. ESFCA recognise this and with a very generous donation from the **Reel Poster Company** (becoming the fairy godparent) has stepped in to fill this role. ESFCA recognises that the East Sussex County Council has the responsibility to provide the needs of its LAC (looked after children) and the “Make it Reel Project” can only be accessed via a foster child’s social worker.

ESFCA would like to thank the Reel Poster Company for their support and below are some examples of how a small amount of money can make a real difference.

- Purchasing Weighted Blankets to aid with anxiety
- Spending money for a 14-year-old teenager who lives in a residential home, who went on her very first holiday with an old foster family she had remained in contact with.
- Football Coaching.
- A necklace for a 16-year-old who was attending her Prom.
- Attendance at a Science club for 10 weeks.
- Providing a birthday present for a teenager who had just been received into care and she had been abandoned by her birth family.

# esfca.co.uk

## East Sussex Foster care association has a new website.

We now own the esfca.co.uk & esfca.org domains and have updated our website. This will be another way of keeping in touch with us and keeping up with all of our activities and fundraising events. We will be updating our Facebook and Twitter accounts and both will be feeding our website with the latest news from ESFCA.

Please take a look at website, sign up for our newsletter and by all means volunteer to help at our events.

[WWW.esfca.co.uk](http://WWW.esfca.co.uk)

[WWW.esfca.org](http://WWW.esfca.org)



## Uckfield Football Rugby Club- April 2019



ESFCA were invited to attend the Uckfield Rugby Football Club for their cup final and represent the association. The invitation was offered by Peter Reeves (Club President) and Margaret Chappell (Membership Secretary).

During the event funds were raised by selling raffle tickets and receiving donations from the family of supporters for all teams taking part. The raffle prize was a signed England Rugby team shirt (signed by the England Squad) donated by friend of ESFCA Joe Marler (England Rugby Squad). ESFCA trustees were also able to discuss the support and projects the association provides for foster families across East Sussex.



## Sussex Sharks Cricket- May 2020



ESFCA trustees and volunteers were invited to help marshal the annual Sussex Sharks vs Gloucestershire cricket match held at the Eastbourne Cricket Ground. ESFCA was asked by Ian Fletcher-Price (Eastbourne Cricket Club President) and Dawn Rowe to marshal the event in return for a generous donation to the association. Over 11 Trustees and volunteers attended the event.



# Sainsbury's Awareness Days- May 2019



Sainsbury's

These events were the last of ESFCA's awareness days at the two Sainsbury's stores that had adopted the association as their charity of the year (2018-19). The Hampden park superstore (Eastbourne) and the Seaside Local store (Eastbourne) invited ESFCA to attend set weekends to raise awareness and receive donations from their customers.

Trustees and volunteers attended and manned a stand to meet and greet visitors to the stores. Throughout the charity year both stores would run their own fundraising activities on behalf of ESFCA.

## ESFCA- Wagathon

This was the first Sponsored dog walk for the association. The event was run by the Staff at Seaside Local Sainsbury's with the aim of raising funds and awareness for ESFCA. The walk started at the Hollywell Tea Chalet (Eastbourne) continued to Eastbourne Pier and finished back at Hollywell.



# Intuitive Horse



ESFCA fund therapy for traumatised children offering one to one session's with specially trained horses that bond with the child and develop trust and emotional connections.

Intuitive Horse is Equine Assisted Personal Development through experiential learning which means working with the horses to help gain insight into areas of life that we feel challenged in.

Horses are experts at helping us in areas of:

- Relationship and connection both with ourselves and others.
- Mastering how to live in a present moment state, what that actually means and why it is beneficial for us.
- Understanding how our past conditioning can hold us back in the present moment



## Baby & Toddler Group 2019-2020



From feedback given by ESFCA members over the last few years it was found that there was one group of looked after children missing out on the activities the association provided. These groups were the under 5's.

There are regular baby and toddler groups that carers can go to, however the nature of fostering means the carer may not look after the child for long before they move onto their next placement. This brings up a security issue for the child and the carer.

Because of these Ann Holder MBE and Anja Leeves (both trustees) decided to set up coffee morning groups for the under 5's and their carer's.

The groups meet regularly and change location to embrace children from across East Sussex.



# BLUEBELL WALK



On April 30th & 1<sup>st</sup> May East Sussex Foster Care Association took over the Arlington Bluebell Walk for its annual two-day fund-raising event. This event plays a major role in the ESFCA calendar as it not only creates a large sum of funding to help support other events throughout the year, but also allows the association to showcase to the public the amazing work it does on behalf of looked after children and their foster families.



ESFCA took control of the tearoom and served a range of light lunches, cream teas as well as tea, coffee and a huge array of handmade cakes donated by members and volunteers.

The two days are always extremely busy, and the association relies heavily on volunteers giving up their time and helping out. ESFCA ran the gatehouse (selling tickets to the visitors) as well as keeping the event clean and tidy.

ESFCA would like to thank all of the volunteers, helpers and cake bakers for their generosity with time, help and donations. Without your continued support at this event

every year we would not be able to sponsor all of the activities.

We would also like to thank John McCutchan and his family for all of the support they continue to give ESFCA every year with their donation of two days at the beautiful Bluebell Walk. John is always happy help with advice always ensures everybody has an enjoyable time at the walk.



This year the volunteers enjoyed an evening at the Walk prior to the two days of hard work (and fun). The walk was open to the volunteers and their families and they were joined by Dame Jacqueline Wilson, who walked her dog "Jackson".

Jacqueline Wilson talked to the families and had photos taken while everyone enjoyed some light refreshments.

The prize draw for the signed England rugby shirt was drawn during the evening and the winner notified.

# Fostering Service Thank You Dinner- June 2019

ESFCA was once again invited to attend the Fostering Service thank you dinner at the Azur Restaurant (Hastings).

The thank you dinner is held by the ESCC for the foster families in recognition of the amazing role they play in the lives of looked after children.

Our patron Jayne Torvill and her husband attended the event and joined the carers for an evening of good food and entertainment.

ESFCA ran a raffle during the evening with the proceeds being put towards future projects.



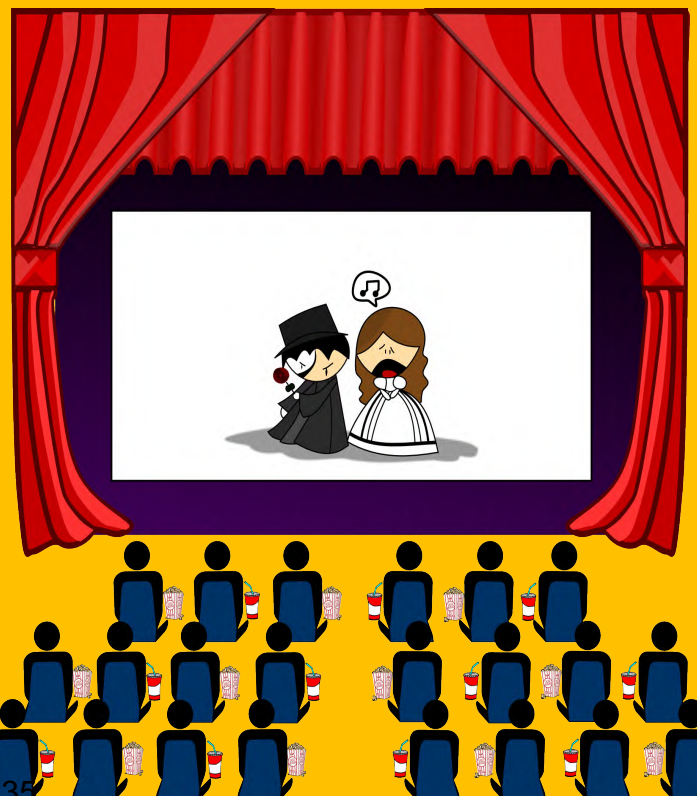
**mouse trap**  
THEATRE PROJECTS  
...inspiring young people

Once again ESFCA members were invited to take part in the Family First Nights theatre offer. This provides subsidised theatre tickets in the west end (and includes children at the proms) for families to experience live performances in all genres for all age groups.

Most children have never seen a live show or travelled to London so a real exciting adventure for those who partook.

25 children and their families took up this offer.

The show Wicked was just that!





# Eastbourne Festival of Food & Arts- July 2019



ESFCA played a major part at the first Eastbourne Festival of Foods & Arts. Dame Jacqueline Wilson (patron) attended and met over 250 excited children, signed books and had photographs taken with her fans. She also spoke about her characters (Hetty Feathers and Tracy Beaker).

ESCC made an appearance with “Vinny” the van and the fostering recruitment team.

*“...I’m very pleased and proud to be one of the ambassadors for the East Sussex Foster Care Association. It’s heart-warming to hear of all the good work done over the year and all the happy times. I certainly enjoyed the book signing day at Eastbourne. It was great to meet so many lovely children there...”* Dame Jacqueline Wilson





# PGL

## PGL DATES 2019-2020

Date	Age	Residential	Children	Adult
10 <sup>th</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup> May	11-17	Windmill Hill (PGL)	29 (LAC)	18
30 <sup>th</sup> Aug- 1 <sup>st</sup> Sept	7-13	Little Canada (PGL)	37 (LAC)	19
1 <sup>st</sup> -3 <sup>rd</sup> November	7-16	Osmington Bay (PGL)	20 (YPWF)	13



### **A SHORT BREAK HOLIDAY, IT'S MORE THAN THAT?**

ESFCA run up to three residential weekends each year using PGL activity centres. (Sponsored by Children in Need).

These are more than a few days holiday though. They help create confidence, resilience and a positive attitude by taking the children through a series of activities and experiences.

These activities take the children out of their comfort zone and make them face their phobias. The child that emerges from the weekend is confident, proud and growing in resilience.

There are three aims of the PGL trips:

- To build self esteem and confidence
- To create positive childhood memories.
- To build a stronger relationship with the children by sharing in the activities and helping each other survive the death-defying activities that team PGL creates.



### **Windmill Hill-May 2019**

*We took 29 Lac aged between 11 to 17 and 18 adult helpers, which was made up of social workers, managers and foster carers to Windmill Hill.*

*The activities they enjoyed included the giant swing, Jacobs ladder and my personal favourite that includes adult helpers, raft building. They all worked very well as a team and individually and many of these children achieved goals they never thought they would do.*

*There were plenty of magic moments that social workers witnessed with their children and these weekends prove to be a fantastic bond between them. My personal magic moment was at the end when giving out certificates; some young people were very emotional as they did not want it all to end. They knew very little about each other on Friday but by Sunday afternoon they were great friends.*



#### Little Canada- Summer 2019

*This trip was the biggest in numbers we have ever taken to any PGL, with 37 Looked after Children and 19 adults made up of senior managers, social workers, support workers and foster carers. We travelled on a 53 seater coach and 2 cars and the kids loved the ferry crossing to Little Canada.*

*All of the children were aged between 7 to 13 years old and there were many needy children. However the children had a fantastic time with some of the new activities PGL have added. Over the course of this weekend all children took part in The Giant Swing, Vertical Challenge, Matrix, Quad Biking and Kayaking on the sea with Ferries in the background. We have attached a photo showing the Kayaking and as you can see, the kids had to work as a team, listen carefully to instructions, support each other and have lots of fun. We even managed to have time for a beach party with campfire and burgers on a barbecue. The children loved watching their social workers showing off their dance moves as well as partying together on the beach.*

#### **Priceless!!!!!!**

*The interaction and encouragement between the children and their social workers was a joy to witness and I know many who attended experienced their own special moment. The dedication, care and love that the children experienced with their social worker was priceless.*

*Children reluctant to take part were eventually*

*happy to try and after a while were laughing and screaming with joy and exhilaration. To see a child climb a huge structure half way up when they didn't want to go on at all was great to see.*

Mark Thornborough (Vice Chair ESFCA)







Osmington Bay-November 2019

From the 1st to the 3rd of November, we took 20 children who foster and 13 adult helpers made up from social workers, support workers, duty staff, foster carers and a foster carers son to PGL Osmington Bay in Dorset.

ESFCA recognise that "the whole family fosters" and we wanted to find a way of acknowledging the amazing commitment that foster carers own children bring to the fostering task. They share their home, parents, toys and many aspects of their life with LAC. At times this can be difficult, especially in this day and age, with the challenges that many LAC bring to our families. These children are remarkable and they deserve this small recognition of their commitment to fostering.

This was a mixed age group of 7 to 16 year olds and these children had a fantastic time.

We had really bad wet and windy weather to start with and had some of our outdoor activities changed, but the mood in camp was still very upbeat.

The activities included Quad Biking, Rifle Shooting, Climbing, Zip Wires, Giant Swing and Fencing.

We even found time to carve out and light up over 25 pumpkins, thanks to John Darling who stopped off en-route to pick them himself from a field, I think it was a very muddy experience for him too so well done John.

All of these children embraced all of the activities to an excellent level and we had a couple of girls who may hold a future in Quad Biking and Fencing.

We cannot achieve this level of success without the dedication and support from the adult helpers who always seem to go that extra mile. We also had social workers, who because of work commitments drove to PGL so they could take part, one social worker drove from Margate to be with us.

The members of staff are a credit to ESCC and all of them deserve praise for the things they do to make our trips work and work well.

Mark Thornborough (Vice Chair ESFCA)





The Queen's Award  
for Voluntary Service

*Facilitating life  
changing  
experiences for  
fostered children  
to enable brighter  
futures for the  
whole fostering  
family.*

Citation: Printed London Gazette 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2020  
ESFCA Queens Award for Voluntary Service





**The Queen's Award  
for Voluntary Service**

"I am so thrilled for the trustees, members and volunteers of ESFCA. The award really highlights the amazing work they do in offering such great opportunities to looked after children across East Sussex.

I have attended many different events and have seen the difference ESFCA makes to foster carers, their families and the children placed into care. It makes me so proud to be a patron for such an association and to contribute to alongside a dedicated team of people.

Congratulations."

*Jayne Torvill (patron)*



## On 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2019 East Sussex Foster Care Association received the Queens Award for Voluntary Service



**The Queen's Award  
for Voluntary Service**



"As a patron of ESFCA I've seen the wonderful work everyone does to enhance the lives of looked after children in East Sussex. The foster carers have such patience, love and sound commonsense, and the children flourish and develop.

The trustees, members and volunteers go the extra mile to organise frequent brilliant events, where the children meet up with their friends and feel part of a wider caring community.

It's a marvelous accolade to receive the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service – and it's richly deserved. Huge congratulations to everyone."

**Dame Jacqueline Wilson**



On 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2019 ESFCA was awarded the Queens Award for Voluntary Service. The announcement was made through the London Gazette with the citation;

“Facilitating life changing experiences for fostered children to enable brighter futures for the whole fostering family.”

This award recognises the exceptional work achieved by ESFCA in their community which incorporates the whole of East Sussex. This is a prestigious award, the highest award a voluntary group can receive in the UK and equivalent to an MBE.

This year 281 charities, voluntary groups and social enterprises have been selected to receive the award. During May Last Susanne Beesley, Mark Thornborough & Ann Holder MBE (Chair, Vice Chair & founder trustee) attended a garden party at Buckingham Palace, along with other and individuals, all of whom have made a positive impact in their community.

The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service was created in 2002 to celebrate the Queen's Golden Jubilee. Winners are announced each year on 2 June – the anniversary of the Queen's Coronation.



**The Queen's Award  
for Voluntary Service**



We want to say a very big “**THANK YOU**” to all of our trustees, members, volunteers and supporters over the last 25 years.

We are very proud to share this award with you and your families.

ESFCA is proud to receive this award, however this recognition was 25 years in the making.

From the beginning in 1993 there have been lots of people involved with the association and we wanted to show our gratitude for the continued support from trustees (past & present), volunteers & supporters.

We invited over 80 guests to our presentation including the High Sheriff of East Sussex, Mayor of Eastbourne, Mayor of Hastings, dignitaries from ESCC, trustees, foster carers, social workers, supporters and community partners. The Award itself was presented by Peter Field; Lord Lieutenant of East Sussex accompanied by his Vice Lord Lieutenant Mrs Sara Stoner.



**Mark Thornborough (vice Chair) greeting  
Peter Field; Lord Lieutenant of East  
Sussex & Andrew Blackman**

**Peter Field; Lord Lieutenant of East Sussex**



**Andrew Blackman  
Peter Field; Lord Lieutenant of East  
Sussex,  
Steve Wallis Mayor of Eastbourne. (far  
left)  
Susanne Beesley Chair ESFCA (centre)**





**Susanne Beesley receiving the Queens Award for Voluntary Service from  
Peter Field; Lord Lieutenant of East Sussex**























ESFCA would like to thank everybody who celebrated with us at the Presentation and would also like to extend our gratitude for your continued and much valued support.

### Thank You

Peter Field; Lord Lieutenant of East Sussex, Andrew Blackman, Mrs Sara Stonor; Vice Lord Lieutenant, Mrs Violet Hancock; High Sheriff of East Sussex, Steve Wallis; Mayor of Eastbourne, Nigel Sinden; Mayor of Hastings, Cllr David Elkin; Chairman ESCC, Sandra Elkin, Cllr Colin Belsey, Cllr Sylvia Tidy, Jayne Torvill OBE (Patron), Phil Christensen, Dame Jacqueline Wilson (Patron), Trish Beswick, Susanne Beesley (Chair), Paul Beesley, Mark Thornborough (Vice Chair), Andrea Thornborough, Lysette Grosvenor (Treasurer), Gary Shirley, Tina Henderson (Founder Trustee), Peter Henderson, Ann Holder MBE (Founder Trustee), Denis Holder, Anja Leeves (Trustee), Nick Leeves, Ru Petraitis-Williams (Trustee), Kevin Petraitis-Williams, Sandra Maylam (Trustee), Roger Maylam, Christine Phillips Jane Hollobone (ex-trustee), Carl Hollobone, Chris Thornton (ex-trustee), Teresa Lavelle-Hill, Sally Carnie, Adrian Sewell, Peter Richards, Joviniana Miroto, Ana Miroto, Antonio Miroto, Kim Melville, Lucy Chatterton, Marion Cooper, Sara Macvean, Andrew Gordon, Mandy Lewis, Wendy Holmes, Julie Bourne, Sue Hartley, Sian Hardwick, Martin Bellamy, Ann Buchan, Ann Marie Field, Melanie Gibbs, Jodie Nightingale, Richard Cook, Alec Stephens, David Gamester, Sarah Mackintosh, Julie Healey-Hill, Val Thornton, Gill Morris, Lucy Mckee, Rosalyn St Pierre, Ian Lucas, David Oakenfold, Gillian Maher, Heather Eserin, Veronica Archer, Lauren Hesmer, Mark Hesmer, Chris Burt, Norman Burt, Chris Downton, Ursula Downton, Eve, Lynda Fletcher, Elizabeth Als, Denis Clark, Martin Ensom, Jacky Ensom, Phillipa Hayes, Angel Price, Sarah Twani, Sarah Avery, Bethany Beesley, Maya Beesley, Harrison Beesley, Hannah Lutter and **Pudsey Bear (Children in Need).**



## SOCIAL WORKER HERO 2019



Every year ESFCA likes to recognise the Social Worker Heroes. Social workers work in very difficult circumstances and often come under heavy criticism. We want to highlight the good work they do on a daily basis. Members complete a form and nominate their Supervising Social Worker and their LAC Social Worker, giving reasons for why they should be recognised as heroes.

This year we revealed the winners at the Queens Award presentation and asked The Lord Lieutenant to join Ru Petraitis- Williams (trustee) with presenting the superhero awards.



**Supervising Social Worker  
Superhero  
Joviniana Miroto**

**LAC Social Worker Hero  
Natalie Paul  
(Received on her behalf by Peter  
Richards)**





# Beachy Head 10K- October 2019



For the second year running ESFCA was asked to marshal the Beachy Head 10K which takes place alongside the Beachy Head Marathon.

The Beachy Head 10K has grown from its introduction in 2013 and is popular for its scenic through the South Downs National Park countryside. Covering a circular route starting from the same point as the Marathon, heading along the South Downs to Belle Tout lighthouse before circling back along the stunning coastal route and ending at the start/finish line.



Everybody who took part in the 10K represented themselves well and the whole event was a great success and lots of fun to help marshal.

ESFCA would like to thank all of the volunteers and members who generously gave their time, the association received a donation of £400.00 for their help from the organisers and were recognised at a small thank you presentation in December.



ESFCA members and volunteers positioned themselves along the course and enjoyed the crisp sunny morning and the stunning views across the course waiting for the runners to appear.



# DWP Fundraiser

A working group from Ashdown House in Hastings (Jo & Sharon) adopted ESFCA as their Charity of the year and started to raise donations on our behalf.

They organised a fun day where staff could come down to the break room and take part in a raffle, tombola as well as a cake sale. It was a great day and ESFCA was proud to attend and support the event.



However, the donations did not stop there, Jo & Sharon had started to mobilise a very large group of volunteers, friends and family. They had started to create backpacks stuffed with treats for the children. Bags contained soft toys, clothing, toiletries, notebooks, pens & toys).

ESFCA trustees were amazed at the generosity from everybody who donated, and we know they even involved the Hastings Police, local schools and some local businesses.



They donated 111 bags to ESFCA which have been distributed across East Sussex and used to help Looked after children coming into the care system adjust. This act of kindness also allows the children to realise that even though they will never know who gave them these gifts, there are people out in the community thinking of them and wish the best for them.



*"They have been really popular with the workers and the families. All of these bags are going to children suffering from neglect and/or homelessness. The social workers have commented on how useful many of the items are especially the school supplies and the hygiene products by encouraging and supporting the children to be more confident in themselves."*





# MORE RADIO

## Child of Sussex Awards



**Ruma Smith (Trustee), Susanne Beesley (Chair), Mark Thornborough (Vice Chair)**  
**Joviniana Miroto (Winner of Social Worker Hero), Christine Phillips (Trustee),**

ESFCA attended "The Child of Courage Award" at the More Radio Child of Sussex Awards held at the Grand Hotel in Brighton. There were 13 different categories at the ceremony and each award was won by an amazing child, nominated by the listeners of More Radio across Sussex. Over 250 guests attended the black-tie event which was also heavily promoted across More Radios broadcast schedule and their social media. Sponsors for the awards also benefited from the More Radio marketing campaign allowing their work to be showcased alongside the event.

As a guest of ESFCA Joviniana Miroto one of the Superhero Social Worker also attended the evening.

# Christmas Party



On Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> Dec ESFCA held its annual Christmas party, this event is one of the most popular and gets bigger every year. This annual treat (for young & old) was attended by over 120 children and 75 adults.

Once again, our thanks go out to the Kings Centre for offering the hall and facilities under their charity initiative and for dealing with the catering so

smoothly. We would not be able to deliver our much-loved party with such ease without their support.

Once again Graham from Starlight Disco who had everyone dancing and playing games with prizes for all of the winners. This year we had use of a bouncy castle donated which proved to be a big hit as well as a quiet room for those children that prefer their fun a bit quieter.

For the 6<sup>th</sup> year running we were joined by the Lewes and Eastbourne Soroptimist's, once again generously giving their time and donating presents for the children to wrap for their foster families.

*The Lewes and Eastbourne Soroptimist's clubs are part of an international organisation that aims to help women and girls at a local and international level in many different ways. It has been running for nearly 100 years and, as well as helping like-minded people meet, they raise funds locally and support causes as well as giving women more of a voice through the four seats at the UN allocated to the Soroptimist's International Organisation.*

This year the children had two special guests come to meet them; the first was Olaf (from the Disney film Frozen). Olaf joined in the party spirit and danced and played games with everyone on the dancefloor. We even found Olaf in the bouncy castle jumping up and down and helping the children play. The second guest was a very popular jolly fellow from the North Pole. Santa Claus made his yearly trip to the party and delivered a little early treat to all of the children.

Christmas can be a difficult time for looked after children and the ESFCA party provides a marvellous distraction for the children to relax and just enjoy themselves. The children took away fantastic memories, some even meeting up with siblings who may have been in different foster families, as well as other children from similar circumstances.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the volunteers, community partnerships, friends, cake bakers and the foster families. Without their support we would not be able hold this incredibly important event.







# Gift 4 Kidz

## EBMR

Eastbourne Motorcycle Rideout (EBMR) started in 2016 when Nick wanted to find new rides and meet like-minded people with a passion for motorcycles. The group has grown every year and in 2018 started their Xmas toy run riding out with a convoy of motorbikes delivering toys to the children's wards at Eastbourne and Hastings Hospitals. They also deliver easter eggs and have raised over £2000 for ESFCA and Chestnut House charities.



ESFCA feels extremely privileged to have such generous benefactors and our relationship with EBMR has also found us new friends in the Sons & Widows Masonic Lodge and their representative David Oakenfold. They have also been very generous over the last couple of years and have donated over £500 towards the Annual Pantomime trip. David has again kept on giving by nominating us to the Beachy Head Masonic Lodge who again kindly donated over £250.00 towards our Pantomime trip. ESFCA would like to thank everybody involved with the EBMR, Sons & Widows Masonic Lodge and the Beachy Head for their continued support and amazing generosity.



EBMR





# Pantomime



This year's pantomime trip was "Jack & the Beanstalk", and once again it proved to be one of the highlights of the year

The historic Devonshire Park Theatre was the destination once again on a cold day in the beginning of January. This small Victorian theatre with its beautiful foyer, boxes, and interior décor is the perfect host to our families looking to start the New Year off with a laugh.

The laughs came thick and fast as the established team of Martyn Knight (Dame Trott) and Tucker (Simple Simon) worked their magic again. It was quite difficult to see who was laughing the most, the adults

or the children.

Once again the live band kept the atmosphere electric with some great songs for the young and old to enjoy with the energetic dancers and slap stick routines. The audience quite rightly booed the baddies and cheered the heroes as the story unfurled and of course we all looked forward to living happily ever after (this was pre-Covid).

We would like to thank the Sons & Widows Masonic Lodge along with the Beachy Head Masonic lodge for their kind donation that helped make this day possible. This is a very special event for everybody as it gives everyone an escape into panto land where we can all be children again for a couple of hours.



# INSPIRE

The ever-popular half-term workshop returned and ran for three days over the February school holiday. 20 children attended the three-day workshop learning to build confidence & resilience through song & dance. The culmination was all of the children performing to a small audience at the end of the workshops.

These workshops are always popular and a key fixture in our diary. We are lucky to have two highly skilled teachers that run the sessions with the children and keep them all focused on the goal of performing Infront of the carers and members of the fostering

**INSPIRE**  
**2020**



# Financial Report

We are extremely grateful to receive an annual grant of £20,000 from East Sussex County Council (ESCC) which enables us to employ staff to support the trustees in running the charity. This money also funds our back office and operating costs. This is named our designated fund.

We continue to receive restricted funds from ESCC to top up our allegation fund to £10,000 annually, which is held by us to support any foster carer facing an allegation. The fund enables independent support at a most upsetting and worrying time for all in the family, to be provided to our foster carers which could involve a lengthy and complex investigation.

In this financial year our membership was 238 households residing in the County of East Sussex.

All grants from the wider community have been fully spent on the nominated activity and the association has often contributed significant further funds from our general fund to enable as many children as possible to benefit from specific projects. We also report back to organisations that provide funding, with full details of our expenditure and positive outcomes showing the difference these activities can make for our children.

Our reserves remain constant and at the same level as last year. These reserves are held to provide a safety net for the provision of regular annual events such as holidays, PGL weekends, the Christmas party and Pantomime, should we be unsuccessful in receiving donations or grants for these cherished activities to proceed.

Should the Local Authority withdraw its annual grant, we hold reserves to meet our obligations such as paying staff and associated costs such as pension, NI and Tax, plus any outstanding creditors. Furthermore, if the charity was wound up or placed into dormancy. We hold reserves to pay redundancy, accounting, audit and HMRC costs. The Association can access our reserve fund immediately should the need arise.

Where donations are received and the donor has asked for the money to be utilised on a specific project request or a certain group of young people, we will honour that request and mark these funds restricted so they are only used for that purpose.

We continue to hold stock of new suitcases donated from Tripp luggage and other providers. These are available to specialist teams of Social Workers needing to move children in an emergency thus ensuring that their personal belongings are carefully packed and transported with the young person.

Covid - 19 came into all of our lives around February 2020. The association had to cancel and postpone many events. Fundraisers were cancelled and much-loved annual events were postponed. All our activities are on hold until we have Government guidelines approving new methodology for our range of activities.

A heartfelt 'Thank You' goes out to all our trustees, volunteers, supporters and all who have given donations, grants, organised fundraising activities and planned wonderful events and projects for our children to enjoy and benefit from.



**Statement of financial activities (incorporating the income and expenditure account)**  
**For the year ended 31 March 2020**

Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2020 Total £	2019 Total £
<b>Incoming Resources</b>				
Donations	9,743		9,743	6,550
Core funding	20,000		20,000	20,000
Advocacy support		2,989	2,989	2,396
Membership				1,295
Fundraising - inc Bluebell walk	5,679		5,679	15,315
Christmas party		150	150	500
Keep it reel		2,000	2,000	1,000
Sibling sunshine days				9,999
PGL		14,050	14,050	
Pantomime		1,530	1,530	3,679
Contributions towards events				6,857
Interest	74		74	101
<b>Total incoming resources</b>	<b>35,496</b>	<b>20,718</b>	<b>56,214</b>	<b>67,692</b>
<b>Resources expended</b>				
Conference				4,415
Insurance	526		526	1,078
General running expenses	2,408		2,343	3,329
Inspire		1,143	1,143	1,002
Queens award	2,323		2,323	
Pantomime		3,441	3,441	3,538
PGL		13,131	13,131	15,308
Through care team	4,090		4,090	
Events	2,409		2,409	5,058
Sibling Sunshine				9,771
Keep it reel		128	128	500
Supporting CICC	790		790	1,630
Leaving care project				2,616
Fundraising	654		654	813
Intuitive Horse	640		640	560
Advocacy Support		2,920	2,920	2,989
Salaries & pensions	14,674		14,741	14,677
Christmas party		1,089	1,089	1,121
Computer Costs				225
Training				383
Accountants fees	1,272		1,272	1,606
<b>Total outgoing resources</b>	<b>29,786</b>	<b>21,852</b>	<b>51,638</b>	<b>70,617</b>
<b>Net incoming/(outgoing) resources for the year/ Net income/(expenditure) for the year</b>	<b>5,710</b>	<b>(1,133)</b>	<b>4,576</b>	<b>(2,925)</b>
Transfers	(7,888)	7,888		
Total funds brought forward	83,992	2,698	86,690	89,386
<b>Total Resources</b>	<b>81,814</b>	<b>9,453</b>	<b>91,266</b>	<b>86,461</b>

# THANK YOU



**MEMBERS  
&  
VOLUNTEERS**



Sainsbury's



TRIPP

**More**  
RADIO  
Mid Sussex



**LEWES**



**EASTBOURNE**



**Reel Poster  
Gallery**



**Beachy Head  
Marathon**



**KINGS CENTRE**



**UCKFIELD  
RUGBY CLUB**



**BEACHY HEAD  
LODGE 6620**



**Hastings  
Round Table**



**EBMR**



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**Our Amazing  
Friends at  
Ashdown  
House**



## Appendix 1 – LAC Statistics Summary

Committee: **Corporate Parenting Panel**

Date: **29 January 2021**

Title of Report: **Looked After Children (LAC) Statistics**

By: **Director of Children's Services**

Purpose of Report: **To update the Panel on changes in the last quarter**

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### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**The Corporate Parenting Panel is recommended to comment on and note the report.**

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#### **1. Background and supporting information**

1.1 Services for LAC are predominantly funded from the Children's Services base budget with some additional smaller funding streams supporting specific activity e.g. Virtual School activity from the Pupil Premium Grant.

1.2 Data is drawn as a snapshot on the last day of the month and inevitably there will be some changes subsequently as data is cleansed, however the past quarter have seen an increase in numbers of children and on the last day of December 2020 there were 610 children in care, up from 602 in September 2020 after the figures were cleansed. It is still extremely busy with ongoing pressure on the Fostering Duty system to find placements as new children come in and existing children disrupt and need to be moved, often at short notice. The ongoing context of Covid-19 has continued to place significant additional pressure on many households, including on our foster carers. Both internal and external placement options have continued to be limited and, in particular, there are still almost no external fostering agency placements, which has again meant that some of our children who would previously have been placed with agency foster carers have had to be placed within a residential setting. Our internal East Sussex County Council (ESCC) foster carers continue to work incredibly hard to make placements available wherever possible and to retain existing children placed with them, but inevitably the added pressure of Covid-19, with restrictions in school hours etc have sadly resulted in some disruptions.

1.3 A total of 370 children were in foster care at the end of December, with 83 of those children in agency placements, a rise of 1 since the end of September. In addition, we have 66 young people in supported housing options, homes or hostels, a rise of 4. 17 children were placed for adoption, 6 children being placed with foster carers who are also approved adopters under the Fostering for Adoption pathway.

1.4 At the end of the quarter the number of children with kinship carers stood at 57.

1.5 The number of children placed at home with their parents whilst remaining subject to a legal order stands at 25. Planning for placements of this sort is always monitored rigorously in order to mitigate any risk factors and agreement to begin or end a placement with parents is given at a senior level, unless it is court mandated when realistically ESCC has no choice in the matter.

1.6 At the end of December 58 children were placed in residential care placements, up 7 over the quarter. Staff continue to make every effort to place children in our in-house beds before they seek agreement from a senior manager for an agency placement and robust negotiations on both quality and price are a feature of every external placement search. As set out above, the lack of in-house or agency fostering options is driving this rise.

1.7 At the end of December 2 ESCC children were secured at Lansdowne, 1 having experienced sexual exploitation and the other having been transferred from Brodrick Road following a lengthy period of very violent and sexualised behaviour. Another ESCC child left Lansdowne just before Christmas and returned their family home. A further ESCC child remains placed in a secure home in Northumberland in the context of criminal exploitation, that being the only available bed at the time after a lengthy search. Exit planning is ongoing for all 3 but it will be very challenging to find suitable placements for all of them.

1.8 At the end of the quarter there was 1 child remanded to custody.

1.9 Overall the numbers of Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking (UASC) young people rose to 53 at the end of December, up 2 over the quarter.

1.10 The numbers of children subject to Child Arrangement/Residence Orders have risen slightly to 342 and Special Guardianship Orders have remained stable at 454.

1.11 There were no complaints from a Looked After Children in the last quarter.

## **2. Conclusion and recommendations**

2.1 Pressure on the system continues, driven by complexity and costs for children and by the context of Covid-19 which is making placements very scarce.

2.2 There have been no complaints from a child in the last quarter.

2.3 The Corporate Parenting Panel is recommended to comment on and note the report.

## **STUART GALLIMORE**

Director of Children's Services

### Appendices

#### Appendix 1 – LAC Statistics Summary

Contact Officer

Liz Rugg, Assistant Director, Early Help and Social Care

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## Appendix 1 – LAC Statistics Summary

# Children's Services LAC Summary between 01/01/2020 and 31/12/2020

Placement Type	Jan 20	Feb 20	Mar 20	Apr 20	May 20	Jun 20	Jul 20	Aug 20	Sep 20	Oct 20	Nov 20	Dec 20
A3 - Placed for adoption with consent (under section 19 of the 2002 Act) with current foster carer		1	1	1	1	1						
A4 - Placed for adoption with consent (under section 19 of the 2002 Act) not with current foster carer	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
A5 - Placed for adoption with placement order (under section 21 of the 2002 Act) with current foster carer	4	4	5	4	4	4	3	3				
A6 - Placed for adoption with placement order (under section 21 of the 2002 Act) not with current foster carer	22	22	22	20	21	21	17	17	15	16	15	15
H5 - Residential accommodation	30	29	29	38	38	40	43	45	51	52	55	58
K1 - Secure unit	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	4	4	4	4
K2 - Homes and Hostels	60	59	56	58	56	55	58	60	62	66	66	66
P1 - Placed with own parents	24	24	20	18	18	18	18	24	25	24	23	25
P2 - Independent living	2	2	4	7	6	4	3	3	4	4	3	3
R2 - NHS/Health Trust	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	4	3			
R5 - Young Offender Institution or prison	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1				
S1 - All Residential schools					1	1	2	3	4	4	4	4
U1 - Foster placement with relative or friend- long term fostering	6	5	5	5	5	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
U3 - Foster placement with relative or friend- not long term or FFA	61	55	55	55	57	49	48	53	56	57	54	53
U4 - Placement with other foster carer- long term fostering	82	82	82	80	80	78	76	76	75	74	71	66
U5 - Placement with other foster carer who is also an approved adopter- FFA	7	5	4	4	4	5	6	6	6	6	6	6
U6 - Placement with other foster carer - not long term or FFA	284	293	292	292	291	294	291	288	291	295	303	304
Total	590	588	582	589	589	581	576	591	602	608	610	610



Immigration Status	Jan 20	Feb 20	Mar 20	Apr 20	May 20	Jun 20	Jul 20	Aug 20	Sep 20	Oct 20	Nov 20	Dec 20
Asylum Seeker	4	3	3	3	2	2	2	1	1	1		
British Citizen	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Discretionary Leave to Remain in the UK to 18 (DLR)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Exceptional Leave to Remain in the UK (ELR)	1	1	1	1	1							
Humanitarian Protection applied for under ECHR	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Refugee Status	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	2
Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Child	20	22	23	31	32	32	35	36	43	45	48	47
Legal Status	Jan 20	Feb 20	Mar 20	Apr 20	May 20	Jun 20	Jul 20	Aug 20	Sep 20	Oct 20	Nov 20	Dec 20
Child Arrangements Order/ResidenceOrder S8(1)CA'89	335	335	336	336	336	337	337	337	337	341	341	342
Special Guardianship Order S14A CA 89	453	455	455	455	454	454	453	452	454	453	454	454

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