

# THE FRIENDSHIP PROJECT ANNUAL REPORT 2017

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Friendship Project for Children

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

Registered Charity No: 517684

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## Introduction

This report reflects our achievements during 2017 and our plans for 2018. Our thanks go to the many volunteers, employees, funders, and supporters for helping disadvantaged children throughout Warwickshire in the last twelve months to have some much-needed fun, aiding their personal development, confidence, and improving their self-esteem.

Additionally, I would like to thank the contributors to this report which helps give an insight into the work undertaken by members of our Operations team, fellow trustees, plus importantly some case studies to help show the impact and difference that we and more importantly our volunteers are making.

The overall purpose of the Friendship Project is to improve the social and emotional well-being of children, aged 6-16, disadvantaged by virtue of their own or family circumstances. An Older Friend provides experiences lacking in the child's life, builds a trusting relationship and raises the self-esteem of their Younger Friend.

Volunteers, over the age of 18, are drawn from Warwickshire communities and come from all walks of life. They are carefully vetted as to their suitability for this work, including DBS checks.

Volunteers meet with their Younger Friends weekly for between 2-3 hours to be involved in mutually enjoyable and jointly planned activities and visits. Examples include: sledging, cooking, fishing, bird watching, golf, sewing, library, swimming, cinema, growing vegetables etc. which, their school contemporaries take for granted.

Volunteers maintain that the 1:1 attention, with the capacity for the child to talk to a listening adult, is the most valuable aspect of the activity. Such activities are at the heart of what the Project does.

The average length of a friendship is 2.5/3 years and over time the Younger Friend gradually becomes more open and confident in discussing worries and concerns about family, school, friends and themselves. Older Friends offer support and, increasingly, guidance on more sensitive and personal issues. This has helped Younger Friends gain a better understanding of their problems; develop better relationships with family members; and cope more positively with challenging situations at school.

Positive feedback and encouragement, invariably missing in the child's life, is a constant feature of the weekly activities and of major importance in raising self-esteem. This usually results in the young people developing new interests and acquiring a wider range of skills.

Volunteers enjoy the company of their Younger Friends and going to places they wouldn't otherwise go to. They enjoy providing new experiences and knowing they are a trusted confidante but, above all, they gain satisfaction from seeing their Younger Friend develop socially and personally.

One-to-one befriending carries a potential risk in relation to child protection. Safeguarding procedures, in relation to recruitment, vetting, briefing, training and supervision of volunteers are given the highest priority and kept under constant review with Children's Services. The Friendship Project is an Associate Member of the Warwickshire Safeguarding Children's Board and an Assistant Head of Service acts as an Advisor to our Trustees. The Project would not operate without their approval. We have also reviewed all our training, processes, procedures, and documentation for the forthcoming General Data Protection Regulations deadline of 25th May 2018

We hope that you find this report of interest, and for further information please visit our website: [www.friendshipproject.co.uk](http://www.friendshipproject.co.uk) or follow us on: – @friendshipproj or on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/TheFriendshipProjectForChildren](https://www.facebook.com/TheFriendshipProjectForChildren)

## Chairman's Report

My report is focused primarily on our activities and achievements in 2017, our last financial year, plus our plans for 2018. First and foremost, I would like to extend a big thank you on behalf of all the children (Younger Friends) that we are supporting and have supported, to all our excellent current and past volunteers, employees, benefactors/funders and trustees. Without whose dedication our small local charity could not continue to help the lives of disadvantaged children throughout Warwickshire. Since 1986, we estimate that there have been more than 1,000 children helped over this period.

The Highlights of what we have been able achieve in 2017 are as follows: -

- ✓ Continued to provide the invaluable 121 volunteer support and fun for disadvantaged children, with over 65 children being helped in the last twelve months, this is an increase over the previous year.
- ✓ In 2017 we recruited three new excellent members of the Operations team, with a new area coordinator for Rugby & North Warwickshire, Nicki Cresswell, new area Coordinator for Stratford and District, Heather Shipley, and a new administrator, Karen Hoy. Our thanks to the outgoing members of the Operations team, Deb Roberts, Helen Yendell, and Sue Frost, for their hard work and support.
- ✓ Very successful events for the Younger Friends and Older Friends have been organised, including an afternoon at Brandon, with Warwickshire Wildlife trust den building, plus an adventure day with the Territorial Army, climbing wall, bird box building, and various games, followed by Treasurer Hunt at Hill Close Gardens working alongside the National Citizen's Challenge, then another excellent craft event in the autumn featuring nature, and a magnificent Christmas party, latter again organised by the Mid Coop Children's team
- ✓ Regular get-togethers for the Volunteers and our thanks to Leamington Tennis club in providing their facilities free of charge for these meetings
- ✓ Continue to promote the Friendship Project, throughout the County; this included attendance at various CAVA events including their AGM, South Warwickshire Volunteer Forum, and local quizzes, plus professional networking groups, including the Leamington and Stratford Business Forums.
- ✓ During 2017 we have successfully recruited several new trustees. Our new Honorary Secretary is Michelle Machin was appointed in the spring, and she replaces Valerie Wallace-Burrows who had stood down after 7 years. Richard Barrett joined us from September as fund raiser, with main responsibility for Bids/Grants, and in addition Gemma Allardyce and Rachel Escott joined us from Mid Coop Childcare looking to support with events and marketing. Lois Hamson stepped down from her role as Operations chairman during the year, and then as trustee leader for PQASSO on 31st December, owing to her and her family moving to north Leicestershire. John Palmer stood down as Honorary Treasurer on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2017, and his replacement, Matthew Goodwin came on board in early 2018. All the retiring trustees are thanked greatly for their contribution, dedication, and hard work over the years.
- ✓ Safeguarding continues to be of great importance, with training being organised and carried out by Esther Chamberlain, and we are extremely grateful for her knowledge and expertise in this area. Plus, John Hancock has been undertaking direct reviews with the parent/carer and the Younger Friends too, and this is important in providing increased resilience and also for the direct valuable feedback for our Older Friend volunteers too
- ✓ Our fund raising was particularly successful with just over £52,000 being raised, against a budget of £35,000, and target of £40,000, which means that we have had almost £5,000 to add to our reserves over our expenditure in 2017, with the latter slightly higher than budget owing to handover periods with changes in personnel and knock on increase to staff costs.
- ✓ Our Group Supporter numbers at the time of writing this report are now 12, which is almost double what we had this time last year.

- ✓ We have initiated a promotion project with Warwickshire Women's Institutes and been booked at 12 of these local institutes to give talks for 2018. In addition to promotional talks to local Round Table, and Rotary clubs too.
- ✓ Our plans for the Procedures manual, PQASSO had been put on temporary hold to 2018, pending new team settling in and appointment for replacement of Lois Hamson to lead this project.
- ✓ We were awarded the Coventry & Warwickshire Not for Profit winner for 2017 at an awards ceremony in November at Coombe Abbey.

In 2018 our plans are as follows: -

- ✓ Complete our "CIO" status, with support from Ladders Solicitors, to complete the paperwork, and registration with the Charity Commission.
- ✓ Increase our fund-raising efforts, and aim to raise at least budget £55,000, with target of £60,000 so as to allow for further expansion including an additional area coordinator in North Warwickshire
- ✓ Complete our General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) project for 25 May 2018, and issue the updated Guidelines, and linked training, which commenced in November 2017. The Operations team and the Group Supporters training have both been held in April 2018.
- ✓ Recruit an additional area coordinator for North Warwickshire, once funding received, and pleased to report this was received in April from Police Commissioners fund, so this is now in progress. Unfortunately, with Nicki now having to stand down owing to family reasons in Rugby a new area coordinator for there too.
- ✓ Recruit a replacement trustee for Lois Hamson to lead our PQASSO Quality Assurance project accreditation. Additionally, consider the NVCO Befriending and Monitoring Approved Provider standard too.
- ✓ Seek additional trustees, particularly for succession, and safeguarding, including an Older Friends representative (at the time of writing this report we have just recruited Jon Gibbons to be appointed at our next trustees meeting for this role), plus legal, management and training.
- ✓ Increase the number of Older Friends as volunteers, particularly in Stratford and district, and Rugby/North Warwickshire area.
- ✓ Continue the roll out of personal visits to YFs and their carer/parent to for safeguarding and to validate worth. To extend this to include anonymous case studies to support fund raising.
- ✓ Attend periodic networking events to increase the profile of the Friendship Project. Aim to be featured Charity of the Day for the Leamington and Stratford Business Forums
- ✓ Organise two more sessions through the year for Safeguarding Training for volunteers, both as refreshers and also for new volunteers, plus online safeguarding awareness course too.
- ✓ Target to have 75 matches by year end, though quality is most important not quantity
- ✓ Continue to hold periodic Older Friends get-togethers/training/support sessions.
- ✓ Complete the Procedures Manual including Trustees Responsibilities too.
- ✓ Continue to expand training opportunities for the operations team.
- ✓ Implement annual refresher training for the Operations Team, this has already been held this spring in conjunction with the GDPR training.
- ✓ Recruit additional Group Supporters, as required as our Older Friends increase
- ✓ Review Publicity/Marketing materials prior to reissue following CIO status being granted.

Thank You

Whilst writing my report I would like to again personally thank both past and present the many Older Friends, Group Supporters, volunteers, operations team, employees and trustees, who give their time freely to help our Younger Friends have important 1:1 attention, emotional support, friendship and the opportunity to explore new activities and have some fun.

**Cheryll Rawbone, Chairman** - Email: [Cheryll.rawbone@friendshipproject.co.uk](mailto:Cheryll.rawbone@friendshipproject.co.uk)

## Vice-Chair and Safeguarding Report

Since the last AGM a number of activities and visits have taken place in relation to the roles of Vice-Chair of Trustees and Safeguarding Officer.

On the 3rd June, I had the pleasure of accompanying the Younger Friend of the Older Friend, whom I act as Group Supporter for, to an event organised by the army at Canley, whilst the OF attended her son's wedding. Activities were organised to develop the team skills of Younger Friends and it was one of the best events experienced in over 30 years serving as a volunteer for the Friendship Project. Coming away from the event with a bird box, constructed in one of the tasks, was a real bonus!

In October, the Chair of Operations and I redrafted the Project's Guidelines with a specific focus on the sections relating to safeguarding.

On the 24th November, I chaired a meeting of the Safeguarding Committee comprising: The Chair of Trustees; the Vice-Chair of Trustees/Safeguarding Officer; the Chair of Operations/DBS Manager; a Trustee with responsibility for training; and a Senior Manager in Warwickshire Children's Services with responsibility for safeguarding. The committee, with responsibility for safeguarding policy and practice, was provided with an update on the family safeguarding process and training schedule whilst, Calvin Smith, provided an update on safeguarding features in Children's Services which could be of relevance to the Friendship Project. Discussion was based on the above issues.

The previous evening, I had led a training session on safeguarding, using training materials and case studies, made available by Esther Chamberlaine who was on maternity leave.

In December, I accompanied a YF to the Project's Christmas party which was splendidly organised by members from Leamington Coop.

Safeguarding reports have been made available to periodically held Trustee and Operations meetings. Practical support and guidance has been provided, on an ongoing basis, to Area Coordinators.

The Safeguarding Review Process has been central to my role in the past year. At the time of writing this report, 36 reviews have been completed involving 40 YF's. Warwick 17 (19); Stratford 10 (12); Nuneaton/Rugby 9 (9) Initially, OF's are contacted and the process explained. A meeting is then held with Parents/Carers and YF's at their homes. The interviews are based on 10 questions with the adults (usually mothers) and 5 questions with the YF's.

Families have been overwhelmingly positive about the Project and support provided by the OF's. During the meetings it has been possible to discuss with the YF's whether they are keen for the friendships to continue. Almost invariably, the answer has been a resounding yes.

One investigation of a DBS disclosure on a "House Sharer's" certificate has taken place. On such occasions, the following questions are used as a basis for discussion at the interview.

- Was the offence a one-off or, do they have several convictions?
- How long ago was the offence or offences committed?
- How old were they when the offence or offences were committed?
- Is the type of offence related to their role with the Friendship Project?
- What were their particular circumstances at the time of the offence?
- Have these circumstances now changed?
- What is the evidence of this change or these changes?
- What is the person's attitude to the offence or these offences?

- On this occasion, following discussion between the Volunteer, DBS Manager and Safeguarding Officer the OF was given permission to bring the YF home.
- On the 28th March 2018, in association with members of the Operations Team, I participated in a GDPR Seminar led by the Chairperson of the Project.

**John Hancock**  
**Vice-Chair of Trustees/Safeguarding Officer**  
**10 April 2018**

## Operations Report

2017 certainly flew past with a tremendous amount of change in the Ops Team. Lois handed over the Chair to me in March. We continue to meet on alternate months.

Helen Yendall left us in the summer to pursue more creative writing opportunities. Helen had done a great job as Area Coordinator in Stratford, Alcester and Shipston and as an Older Friend when she lived in the North of the County. She kindly stayed on after her notice period to provide a handover to Heather Shipley. Sue Frost retired as Administrator having overseen the new database and helped out with a lot of events. She also kindly stayed on to hand over to Karen Hoy. Then, finally, Deborah Roberts left to spend more time on family commitments. Deborah had greatly promoted and expanded the work of the Project in Rugby. She handed over to Nicki Cresswell.

So, all change! Welcome to Heather, Karen and Nicki. The new Team have worked very hard to gel together and it was soon difficult to think they had been working together for such a short time. Special thanks must go to Judy, Fiona, John and Cheryl during this very busy change over time and good wishes to Lois, Helen, Sue and Deborah for their future plans. Thank you for all you have done for the Friendship Project over the years.

I attended the excellent event held at Hill Close Gardens run by the National Citizens' Challenge. To see the enthusiasm and dedication of the young volunteers was heartwarming and bodes well for the future. I was also able to attend the Christmas party organised by Gemma and Rachael. It was amazing. Every minute was filled with fun for the Younger Friends. Nothing was too much trouble from the fundraising, the setting up of the venue, the food, the entertainer and the presents. Magical!

The Craft Morning in September was great fun. Everyone had a go at the animal themed crafts. The collage of a robin turned out well for the Christmas card. Also, we had enough decorations for the tree in St Marys church Warwick. Thank you particularly to Sam Hall and Nicki Cresswell for providing ideas and materials and for all those who helped on the day. The hall is already booked for September 2018!

Safeguarding training was provided by Esther Jones in April and John Hancock in November while Esther was on maternity leave. It has been decided to offer a more specialised session (as well as two general sessions) about online safety and this will happen on June 9th, 2018.

The Team has produced a leaflet for the Older Friends to keep in their glove compartments with instructions on "What to do in case of concern".

To reduce any delays in the interview process, Heather has now been trained to do interviews and Karen to carry out renewals of dbs. This should reduce the pressure on Fiona in 2018.

We have recruited and trained more Group Supporters and will have 6 more in place by AGM date.

The Standard DBS can no longer be overseen by WAYC and we have found another "Umbrella Body" to take over from January 2018. They are "Accessible Transport" based in Birmingham.

The Update service was not really helpful for us as the applicants had to renew every year. We have reverted to the original system of rechecking every 3 years.

So, lots of changes. But the work goes on, week by week and month by month making a difference to so many children's and young people's lives. Thank you to all involved.

**Pauline Higginbottom - Chair Operations Team / DBS Manager**



## Areas Coordinator Report: South Warwickshire District

### Friendships

Active friendships	30
Older Friends	33
Matching in progress	3
OF awaiting DBS before matching	2

A very positive year. I have matched 15 OFs which I think is a record for me and in the next couple of months I will have matched an additional 5 OFs. Over the last year 5 friendships have ended reasons are due to poor communication by carers of YF, change in work circumstance for OF, the friendship coming to a natural end and illness of volunteer. During this year all the friendships have grown and one of the main things that stands out to me is that the friendships that have consistent weekly outings flourish more than the ones where meetings become more irregular.

### Interviews/DBS

As it has been so busy in the last year I have had help from Judy and also trained up Heather to do interviews, which has been a real help. I have interviewed approximately 16 OFs for the South. Both Heather and I are now doing the second interview for each other. In the past Pauline has, but we are now trying to do this between the two of us with Pauline there as back up. I had been doing most of the DBS renewals and for OF cohabiters but now Karen has been trained up to do them, so we are spreading the load.

### The Team

There has been a lot of change, but all extremely positive. The new Area Coordinators Heather and Nicki have worked closely with myself, together with our extremely efficient administrator Karen. It has been a very productive year with ALL processes moving a lot faster. The 4 of us meet up bi-monthly which really helps having a face to face. I am very sorry that Nicki is having to leave as she has contributed a lot in the relatively short space of time that she has been here. Pauline and John continue to support me with any safeguarding issues that crop up with friendships. We have swelled in numbers of Group Supporters which is good timing as I will have 35 friendships in the next couple of months. I have 8 Group Supporters in total who help me with the reviews.

### Events/Workshops

I organised a couple of OF get togethers in Leamington, one at the tennis club and other at the Star and Garter. Both have seen a big increase of attendees up to 30 volunteers and potentials OF's.

I helped start up the organisation for the Army event as one of my OFs Louise Richards had given me a contact, but then handed over to Cheryl as it was a first for the Army and us! It was a great success and I was sorry to miss it.

The Den building, Treasure Hunt, Craft morning, and Christmas party I have come along and attended. It is such a good opportunity to see the children and get to know them and the volunteers better. Unfortunately, I missed the swimming event, but we are hoping to repeat this as Warwick school has offered the pool for future events.

For the 2nd year running Kenilworth Rotary sponsored 2 girls and 2 boys to go on the Mablethrope seaside holiday in Lincolnshire which is a week's residential. They had great fun with team games on the beach, BBQs, disco, crafts etc. They all came home very tired!

Helen and I went with Cheryl to the Aviva awards presentation which was great fun, we both won a bottle of champagne, had a delicious lunch and listened to a very inspiring speech by Will Greenwood. A really fun day out!

I attended the WCAVA safeguarding event run with MASH which has given me a better understanding of the system. We have all tried to strengthen the safeguarding process for the volunteers with new concise information and a process for them to follow if they have any concerns.

At 6.45am (!), last Friday I went along to the BNI Kenilworth. A very interesting networking meeting, from which one lady is applying to be an OF and a Trustee for Arrive Alive, is distributing 30 of our posters around all the PO sorting offices in Warwickshire, plus would like to give us some funding for our events.

### **Promotion/Social Media**

WCAVA started a new database for recruiting volunteers so I have managed this and got it set up and working before handing over to Karen once she was up and running. Since then we have had several OFs and GS's come through this system.

The Facebook following has continued to grow. I was putting a couple of posts up a week but then handed over to Heather in the Summer when she joined as I was too busy with interviews and matches. If and when things quieten down I will assist with Facebook. I attended a workshop for FB which was also very useful.

It has been an extremely productive year, so much so that my hours have recently been increased to 18 hours a week!

### **Case Study**

Bill \* (44) has been friends with Jack \*who is 10 for about 18 months now. Jack was initially referred to the Friendship project by Social Services, since the friendship social services are no longer involved with the family, the FP contact is with the support worker at Jack's school. Bill writes:

When I first met Jack, he was lacking in confidence, extremely shy and nervous of unfamiliar places and situations. Over time and visits I have tried to ensure he has fun and build his confidence. He always brings his soft toy with him and initially talked through him on the first few visits. Just before I met Jack he had only just returned to school full time and lives in a one bedroom flat with his father. Money is extremely tight for the family as the father also suffers with anxiety and unable to work.

Over time Jack has been able to go on his first school trips (day outings) which has not happened before, and experiences many different activities, when we go out together. He particularly likes Jump-In and trips to the cinema.

Although Jack still has moments when his nerves get the better of him (he had to leave the Christmas Party due to his anxiety for example.) His overall confidence and behaviour has improved significantly. To support this his Jack's auntie managed to get the business she works for to select their annual donation to the FP, quoting the positive impact the project has had on Jack.

Jack always tries to impress with his stories and we barely have a conversation through his soft toy, who still comes on outings with us, just in case....

\*Names have been changed.

**Fiona Roche**  
**Area Coordinator South Warwickshire - April 2018**

## Areas Coordinator Report: Stratford District

I started with the project in July '17 and received an excellent hand over with Helen Yendall as well as a thorough induction into the charity from Pauline and Fiona. The Ops Team work really well together and everyone is committed to the Project and has 'a team player' attitude. I enjoy working with our volunteers and sorting out any issues they may have. I especially enjoy working with other professionals, sharing knowledge and doing our very best to support the young people in the project.

Number of current friendships: 11  
Friendships ended '17 – '18: 5

(2 OF's were not seeing their YF's on a regular basis, 1 friendship ended, and the volunteer is being matched with a child in Leamington, 1 friendship had to be ended due to the OF finding the child's behaviour difficult (the child has not been re-matched) and 1 friendship that ended due to the child being taken into care, the OF is being re-matched).

New OF recruited: 5 (since July '17)  
Group Supporters: 4 (including myself)  
Volunteers to be matched: 3

### Interviewing

I began interviewing potential Older Friends and Group Supporters in February '18. I conduct first interviews as well as second interviews - after Fiona has initially interviewed the volunteers. This is a very interesting part to my job as I love meeting new people, finding out about their lives and whether they will be suitable as a volunteer.

### Referrals

We are low on referrals – even after contacting all referrers regularly and meeting with the Children's Team. This seems to be the 'norm' in the Stratford district. This may be due to the fact that historically, we have had many referrals, but no volunteers to match them with. I now contact the referrers when I have a volunteer available. Current referrers include: Thomas Joliffe School (4 matchings) and Shipston Primary School (3 matchings).

I have attended various Early Help meetings for seven of our children, as well as liaising with SENCO's/Pastoral Care in the following schools/professionals on a regular basis: Thomas Joliffe School, Shipston Primary, Shipston High School, Stratford High School and Social Workers in local Children's Teams.

### Recruitment

Two lots of advertising in The Stratford Herald generated many enquiries. We recruited four Group Supporters and three Older Friends. Out of the three Older Friend applications: one is on hold as the lady injured her arm, another (male) would not be suitable as an Older Friend as he spends a lot of time out of the UK, so Cheryll is talking to him about other ways he can help us; and the third volunteer will be matched in May/June.

### Group Supporter Role

I have three Group Supporters looking after five volunteers. I am the Group Supporter for the rest of the volunteers. I support our Group Supporters as well as conducting reviews for the other volunteers.

### Events and Activities

- ✓ WCAVA Speed Matching event with Fiona at Warwick School 13.07.17.
- ✓ Met with The Croft PTA with Cheryll. The Croft School are going to be fundraising for us over the next 2 academic years. I also attended The Croft Xmas Fayre on 08.12.17

- ✓ Attended WCAVA AGM event with Cheryl 29.09.17
- ✓ Regular Operations Team and Area Co-ordinators/Administrator meetings (every 2 months)
- ✓ Meeting with Stratford Town Trust with Cheryl and Richard 09.11.17 re: fundraising and finance
- ✓ Collected Xmas Hampers from the NFU, Tiddington and delivered to a local family
- ✓ Attended the Project's Xmas Party on 02.12.17
- ✓ Organised and attended the British Swimming Week Pool Party at Warwick Pool 10.03.18
- ✓ Attending WI meetings with Cheryl: WI Ullenhall 1st Feb and WI Studley 13th Feb
- ✓ Attended OF/GS Get Together in Leamington on 27.2.18
- ✓ Attended GDPR Training on 15.03.18

### **Marketing and Promotion**

- ✓ Leaflet drops around Stratford and Shipston areas as well as Foundation House (the new hub for volunteering/charity organisations in the town), local WI's, Citizens Advice Bureau and local supermarkets. We were one of the charities in the Community Matters green tokens scheme in Waitrose Sept '18.
- ✓ We will be featured in the SUA Directory (free bi-monthly magazine put through SUA doors) in Sept/Oct.
- ✓ South Works Now magazine (free monthly through SUA doors) will include our details in the March issue.
- ✓ Current project includes email all local businesses to promote the charity and looking for donations, volunteers and trustees.

### **Social Media – Twitter and Facebook**

I am updating both on a regular basis (with Fiona) with news, photos and details. I also check who is looking and retweeting our pages and do the same.

Current stats on Twitter are: Tweets sent: 1433, Following us: 586, Followers: 525, Likes: 1117. Facebook: works in a different way than Twitter, interesting to note that a recent post advertising volunteers reached 4082 people. I am hoping to continue to expand our reach on social media this year.

### **Website**

I have reviewed the main menu areas of the website (About, why we Exist, how we Work, Management Team and Trustees and How you can Help); updated the grammar and details as needed.

### **Behaviour Sheet**

I put together the Child's Behaviour sheet to help our volunteers who sometimes find the children's behaviour difficult; and also, as a general reminder to all our volunteers. This information was put together after many years of working with SEN children in a local primary school and my own research as working as a CBT and Emotional Therapeutic Counsellor.

### **Case Studies**

*Tom aged 13 years CV37 9AY*

Tom has had a friendship with Paula over the last 7 years. She has been (and will continue to do so "as long as there is breath in my body") a very much needed consistent stable influence in his life. Tom was referred to the project when both his parents died from drug overdoses. He was referred to The Friendship Project via the Early Help system. Transfer to secondary school was difficult for Tom and Paula supported Tom as much as she could. Our Safeguarding Officer explained the purpose of Tom's educational statement to school staff and an Annual Review. Paula has said that Tom has gained in confidence and is able to enjoy new experiences. He enjoys 'doing up' bicycles and they both enjoy buying new equipment for his bikes.

Paula has been able to help Tom with his difficult home life. He currently lives with his Nan and Grandad. Paula and Friendship Project Worker have recently had a meeting at school with his

College Leader and Form Tutor. His College Leader and Form Tutor are pleased with the positive change in Tom's behaviour this year. We feel this may be due to the fact that he is studying the subjects he enjoys. We discussed Tom's anxiety around not having a camera for his photography lessons. His College Leader will be looking into this and hopefully provide a camera for Tom from the Pupil Premium budget. Tom is showing his caring side and helping younger students during form time. He is also showing more pride in his work and is able to now accept praise. The Project and Paula are working with Tom's family to gain access to free school meals, as he is no longer eligible for them as his pupil premium entitlement has ended. This is proving to be a difficult process as the family are not keen to get involved with professionals. Paula has noticed a maturing in Tom recently, he talks about his future, his career and having his own family one day.

*Lewis aged 8 years CV37 6NR*

Lewis was referred to us in June 2017. We matched him with his older friend in November 2017, so this is a relatively new friendship. Lewis was referred to us by The Parenting Project after he moved to Stratford from the Birmingham area. There was domestic abuse within the family home. He was referred to us to be able to engage in some positive interaction with a good role model. He lives with his Mother and does not see his biological Father. There is no family unit nearby and he spends most of his time playing age inappropriate computer games. Lewis and his older friend enjoy Jump In, going to the cinema plus walks and visits to the older friend's horses. His older friend is hoping to get Lewis more involved in outdoor activities so that he will not be playing computer games as much. We have been communicating with St Gregory's School around Lewis' behaviour and learning support. Mum feels that the friendship is going really well, and Lewis is always excited to go out with his volunteer and comes home with a smile on his face

*Kevin aged 8 years CV37 9LL*

The friendship presents its challenges and rewards in equal measures. Mum tells John that his younger friend always asks when it will be Saturday so that we will be meeting up. Kevin is usually obedient and does what he is asked to. John is consciously encouraging his younger friend to interact more appropriately when faced with unfamiliar and challenging situations. This had led to improvements. Kevin is starting to express his feeling more constructively and takes pride in figuring things out for himself. John is encouraging him to take education seriously and learn that reading can be fun. John gains satisfaction from helping Kevin by giving him a good start in life (which he has not experienced so far). John enjoys interacting with Kevin and taking him cycling, to play parks and playing PS4 together – it makes him feel young again!

**Heather Shipley, April 2018**  
**Stratford, Alcester and Shipston**

## Areas Coordinator Report: North Warwickshire and Rugby District

### Friendships

The number of friendships in the North of the region has remained consistent at 19 active friendships. 2017 saw 1 friendship reach its full duration, 7 friendships ended due to a lack of engagement and support from the parents of the younger friends (efforts were made to resolve these prior to ending) and 1 friendship was ended at the request of professionals who wanted the female younger friend to be matched with a female older friend. We have successfully re-matched two younger friends in April 2018. It has therefore been a success to have 19 friendships all active even though it is not an increase on this time last year.

The majority of the referrals received are for children in Rugby, Nuneaton and Bedworth. We have seen a marked increase in the number of referrals we are receiving for children aged 14 and over. 69% of the referrals are for boys and we have 4 sets of brothers awaiting matching. We have 23 referrals that are under 6 months old and 18 that we have been requested to keep open but over 6 months old.

### The Team

Judy and I have conducted joint meetings with prospective older friends and carried out their DBS checks and interview, this has proven to be a great way to work. It has been great to learn from Judy and it has resulted in a very relaxed atmosphere where we have been able to get a good understanding of the potential older friend. I also have two additional group supporters – Sam and Miriam, and they have been really positive and provide fantastic support for their older friends.

The Area Coordinators and Project Administrator work brilliantly together as a team. The bi-monthly meetings have been a great success and resulted in some excellent ideas sharing and discussion. We have a very good understanding of the geographical areas we support and the differences we encounter.

I have also worked closely with John and Pauline and the timely and positive support has been excellent and the expertise and guidance has been key to fulfilling my role effectively.

### Events

- ✓ I have attended two of the safeguarding training sessions that have been held throughout the year.
- ✓ I attended the Craft Event in September and helped to facilitate a craft table. This was a great session and everyone who attended really enjoyed it.
- ✓ I have attended 2 older friends get togethers in the South and these have been very informative and relaxed.
- ✓ I attended the Christmas Party – what a fantastic event for everyone!
- ✓ I have booked an Older Friend Coffee and Catch up for Saturday July 7, 2018 at Hinckley Island Hotel and they have also kindly agreed that attendees can use the leisure facilities after the meeting (they very generously agreed to provide the meeting room free of charge).
- ✓ I have attended a knitting workshop that Pauline organised and this was a lovely morning we a small group of older and younger friends with a shared interest in learning. (2018)
- ✓ Heather led the team in the organisation of a Science and Swimming party which was a huge success and took a lot of organising. I helped with the craft events and the making of rolls and nibbles for a hungry audience.
- ✓ Deborah helped to organise an event at Brandon Marsh in May

### Promotion of Project

We continue to have a slot in the Tamworth Herald every 3 months in their Volunteer View column. They have published all the articles that have submitted. We have also had articles in Local Rock, Rugby Register, Your Call and the Rugby Advertiser.

Following some great work by Deborah we were nominated to receive a donation of £1500 from TK Maxx in Rugby.

I contacted the Area Coordinator for Warwickshire Libraries and they kindly agreed to display posters and postcards in all libraries in their community news area. 49 libraries in total received a pack to display.

We have had articles included in 3 Church Newsletters (2 in Rugby and 1 in Nuneaton).

The Catholic Church PR officer arranged for the 9 key churches in North Warwickshire to display our literature.

I have worked closely with WCAVA to ensure our entries are relevant to geographical areas. They have also advised that we can send them any news we would like to be included in their weekly email newsletter.

I continue to display postcards, posters and leaflets at relevant sites in Rugby and North Warwickshire.

I have loved my time with the Friendship Project and have been proud to be part of it. I am committed to continue to support the Project in the role of older friend and advocate to potential volunteers.

**Nicki Cresswell**  
**Area Coordinator: North Warwickshire & Rugby**  
**April 2018**

## North Warwickshire DBS Officer's Report

This year has been much busier for North Warwickshire mainly due to more proactive advertising for Older Friends by the Area Coordinators.

I have undertaken 4 renewals, 4 interviews of Group Supporters and 10 interviews for Older Friends.

I attended the very successful Craft day, Christmas party, Treasure Hunt and also took part in another Safeguarding training session.

I assisted with the presentation to the students at Leamington college in the summer and with the training of the new Coordinator.

The DBS system has been far more efficient this year with most being processed in a few weeks. Thanks again to Pauline for managing the system so effectively.

It has been a pleasure helping out with interviews in the South when they became busy and working with such a dedicated team who make a positive contribution to the lives of many children in Warwickshire.

**Judy Sims**  
**DBS Officer**  
**North Warwickshire**



## Bid Fundraising / Local Fund Raising

Following the re-launch of our fund-raising activities in 2016, it is very pleasing to report that during 2017 these gained real momentum, resulting in a record year for general fund raising. In 2017, we raised a total of just over £52,000, approximately double that of 2016, for which thanks must go to Cheryll Rawbone and the rest of the team for all their hard work.

Much of our income in 2017 came from donations which saw a significant increase during the year. We are extremely grateful to all our corporate and individual donors who have supported us through large and small donations and also for the ongoing support of Aubrey Allen and our grant funders, Stratford Town Trust, BBC Children in Need, the Heart of England Community Foundation and Baron Davenports Trust.

Last year we also had successful year with local fund raising also increasing during the year. We are thankful to all who cycled, trudged through mud, sang at the carol concert, and participated in the Citizens Challenge for us and who contributed to our other fund-raising activities in 2017.

We have continued to raise our profile, through social media, local press articles, Facebook, alongside attending local networking and promotional events where we are able. As mentioned in the Chairman's Report, we were delighted to be awarded the accolade of the 2017 SME Coventry and Warwickshire Not for Profit Business of the Year.

I was delighted to be invited to join the Friendship Project as Fundraiser and Trustee last August to build upon the solid foundations already laid and look forward to taking our fundraising forward in 2018.

With plans to grow our work in support of disadvantaged children in Warwickshire during 2018, we will need to see our income increase to approximately £60,000 if we are to achieve our ambitions without reducing our reserves. I am pleased to report that we have made a good start so far in 2018.

### Contributors List

- ❖ Gallagher Ltd
- ❖ Aubrey Allen
- ❖ Aviva
- ❖ Baron davenport Trust
- ❖ BBC Children in Need
- ❖ Bewdley Charitable Trust
- ❖ Bravissimo
- ❖ Cheryll Rawbone
- ❖ Co-Op
- ❖ Greggs
- ❖ Hampton Resourcing Ltd
- ❖ JR Logistics
- ❖ Kenilworth Chiropractic Clinic
- ❖ Lions – Balsall Common, Kenilworth, Warwick and Wellesbourne
- ❖ Mid-Counties Coop
- ❖ Penmans LLP
- ❖ Provincial Grand lodge of Warwickshire
- ❖ Recessionaires
- ❖ Rotary clubs of Kenilworth, Royal Leamington Spa and Warwick
- ❖ Stratford Town Trust
- ❖ The Challenge Network
- ❖ TK Max

- ❖ WCC Resources
- ❖ Mrs S M Weetman
- ❖ Wilmcote Charitable Trust

Also, thanks to Gallagher Insurance Broking Limited who continue to give administration support, postal mail shots and loan of equipment and also to Hampton Resourcing Limited, for periodic use of meeting rooms.

**Richard Barrett**  
**May 2018**

**The Friendship Project**  
**REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER: 517684**  
**Financial Statements**  
**For the year ended 31 December 2017**

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24	Statement of financial activities
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**The Friendship Project**  
**Trustees' Annual Report**  
**for the year ended 31 December 2017**

**Full Name:** The Friendship Project

**Other names:** The Friendship Project for Children

**Registered charity number:** 517684

**Principal address:** Myton Park, Myton Lane, Warwick, CV34 6PX

**Trustees:** Cheryll Rawbone, Chairperson  
John Hancock, Vice Chairperson  
Matthew Goodwin, Honorary Treasurer, appointed 15.02.18.  
Chris Buck  
Richard Barrett, appointed 17.08.17.  
Michelle Machin, appointed 24.05.17.  
Gemma Allardyce, appointed 24.05.17.  
Rachael Escott, appointed 09.11.17.  
Lois Hamson, resigned 31.12.17.  
Valerie Wallace Burrows, resigned 24.05.17.

**Honorary Treasurer:** John Palmer, resigned 31.12.17.

**Bankers:** Lloyds TSB, Stratford upon Avon

**Independent examiner:** Paula Wilson, 2 Hickman House, Hickman Road,  
Galley Common, Nuneaton, CV10 9NQ

**Governance & management**

The charity is operated under the rules of its constitution adopted 12<sup>th</sup> May 1986 as amended 7<sup>th</sup> September 1993, 6<sup>th</sup> March 1995 and 11<sup>th</sup> May 2005.

Overall management of the charity is the responsibility of the trustees who are elected and co-opted under the terms of the constitution. Day to day management is carried out by paid staff and/or volunteers.

**The Friendship Project**  
**Trustees' annual report (continued)**  
**for the year ended 31 December 2017**

**Aims and objectives**

To provide facilities for the social and physical training of children particularly disadvantaged children between the ages of 6 and 16 years who by reason of their social circumstances are in need of developing social skills by such means as the project thinks fit including the organisation of contacts between such children and reliable older persons able to help them develop such skills.

**Summary of the main activities undertaken for the public benefit**

With developing confidence and enhanced self-esteem, gained from the friendships, the young people are more prepared to develop new interests and achieve a wider range of skills. They grow personally and socially enabling them to forge better relationships with peers and family members. Generally, they are more settled at school but, above all, they develop a greater sense of self-worth. This is priceless and will have a positive impact on every aspect of their lives.

**Summary of the main achievements during the period**

1. Over 65 children were supported in the last twelve months, an increase over 2016,
2. We received the accolade of Coventry & Warwickshire Not for Profit organisation for 2017
3. Recruited successfully three new members of the operations team, to replace those that left during the last twelve months, who were thanked for their contribution.
4. Our increased focus on fund raising was successful with just over £52,000 being raised in 2017. This included significant grants from both Children in Need for 2017 and similarly from Stratford Town Trust for 2017/2018, for which we are extremely grateful.
5. We recruited a trustee to lead Fund Raising, alongside two further trustees with responsibility for events and support with marketing
6. Various collective events were held during the year, including an afternoon with Warwickshire Wildlife Trust, Brandon - den building, plus an adventure day with the Territorial Army, including a climbing wall, bird box building, and various games; a Treasure Hunt at Hill Close Gardens working alongside the National Citizen's Challenge; another excellent craft event in the autumn featuring nature, then a magnificent Christmas party, latter again organised by the Midlands Coop Children's team
7. We continued with the implementation of the 121 safeguarding reviews with our Younger Friends and their family/carers. Safeguarding training sessions were undertaken too.
8. It was agreed at our AGM in 2016 that we would move forward to CIO status, and this process has been initiated, and is still in progress
9. The PQASSO project was put on temporary hold pending the new members of the operations team settling in, and recruitment for trustee to lead on this
10. We would like to record our thanks to the many volunteers, alongside our employees, who support disadvantaged children we help, we could not do this without their commitment.

**The Friendship Project**  
**Trustees' annual report (continued)**  
**for the year ended 31 December 2017**

**Financial Review**

The charity made a surplus of £4,934 in the year with net assets of £30,624.

**The charity's policy on reserves**

Our aim is to hold reserves at least equivalent to six months operational costs, excluding expenditure on projects funded by restricted funds. With reserves now dropping below 12 months expenditure, post legacy, once the accounts were approved to evidence this we actively started to fund raise again

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees:



Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date 17.05.2018

Cheryll Rawbone, Chairman

# Independent Examiners Report to the Trustees of The Friendship Project

**Year Ended 31 December 2017**

I report on the accounts of the charity for the year ended 31 December 2017, which are set out on pages 6 to 11.

## **Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner**

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act;
- follow the procedures laid down in the general directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act, and
- state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

## **Basis of independent examiner's report**

My examination was carried out in accordance with the general directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair' view and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

## **Independent examiner's statement**

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect, the requirements:
  - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; and
  - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act

have not been met; or

2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Signed:

Paula Wilson, MAAT

Date: 19.05.18

**The Friendship Project**  
**Statement of Financial Activities**  
**For the year ended 31 December 2017**

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2017 Total Funds £	2016  £
<b>Incoming resources</b>					
Grants	2	1,700	19,078	20,778	8,082
Donations	3	27,163	-	27,163	14,384
Fundraising donations/events	4	4,104	-	4,104	3,290
Investment income		518	-	518	748
<b>Total incoming resources</b>		<b><u>33,485</u></b>	<b><u>19,078</u></b>	<b><u>52,563</u></b>	<b><u>26,504</u></b>
<b>Resources expended</b>					
Salaries, NI	8	8,941	15,393	24,334	21,904
Staff expenses		1,274	2,828	4,101	3,541
Volunteer expenses		12,792	-	12,792	10,539
Insurance		2,526	-	2,526	2,470
Events/Christmas parties		397	-	397	190
Other expenditure	9	3,179	-	3,179	3,868
Independent examination fee	11	300	-	300	250
<b>Total resources expended</b>		<b><u>29,408</u></b>	<b><u>18,220</u></b>	<b><u>47,628</u></b>	<b><u>42,762</u></b>
<b>Net incoming/(outgoing) resources</b>		<b>4,076</b>	<b>858</b>	<b>4,934</b>	<b>(16,258)</b>
Gains & (losses) on investments		(113)	-	(113)	2,646
Total funds brought forward		20,195	5,607	25,802	39,414
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>	7	<b><u>24,159</u></b>	<b><u>6,465</u></b>	<b><u>30,624</u></b>	<b><u>25,802</u></b>

Expenditure is allocated between Unrestricted and Restricted funds on the basis of actual expenditure incurred along with an element of judgement on indirect items of expenditure.



# The Friendship Project


## Balance Sheet

For the year ended 31 December 2017

	Note	£	2017 £	2016 £
<b>Fixed assets</b>				
Investments	4		14,274	14,387
<b>Current assets</b>				
Cash at bank and in hand		19,025		12,960
Debtors	5	210		210
		<u>19,235</u>		<u>13,170</u>
<b>Current liabilities</b>				
Creditors	6	(2,885)		(1,755)
<b>Net current assets</b>			16,350	11,415
<b>Net assets</b>			<u>30,624</u>	<u>25,802</u>
<b>The funds of the charity</b>				
General Funds			24,159	-
Restricted Funds			6,465	5,607
Designated Funds			-	20,195
<b>Total Funds</b>	7		<u>30,624</u>	<u>25,802</u>

The trustees declare that they have approved the accounts above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees:

Signed:  Date: 17.05.18

Cheryll Rawbone, Chairperson

# The Friendship Project

## Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 December 2017

### 1. Accounting policies

These financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention with items recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant notes to these accounts and with the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) issued on 16 July 2014 and with the Charities Act 2011.

#### Incoming Resources

All material incoming resources have been included on a receivable basis – ie they are included if the date receivable falls within the period covered by these accounts.

#### Resources expended

These have been analysed using a natural classification.

### 2. Grants

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds £	2016 £
Stratford Town Trust	-	12,120	12,120	3,500
BBC Children in Need	-	6,958	6,958	2,982
Heart of England Community Foundation	1,000	-	1,000	1,000
Baron Davenports	700	-	700	600
	<u>1,700</u>	<u>19,078</u>	<u>20,778</u>	<u>8,082</u>

### 3. Donations

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds £	2016 £
Anonymous donor	5,000	-	5,000	4,300
Aubrey Allen	2,500	-	2,500	2,500
Mid Counties Co-op	4,939	-	4,939	-
Gallagher	5,200	-	5,200	700
Aviva	1,000	-	1,000	-
TK Maxx	1,500	-	1,500	-
Greggs	1,383	-	1,383	-
Donations under £1,000	5,641	-	5,641	6,884
	<u>27,163</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>27,163</u>	<u>14,384</u>

# The Friendship Project

## Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

For the year ended 31 December 2017

### 4. Fundraising Events

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds £	2016 £
30th Anniversary Event	-	-	-	2,056
Fundraising Events under £1,000	4,104	-	4,104	1,234
	<u>4,104</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>4,104</u>	<u>3,290</u>

### 4. Investments

Market value of surplus funds is invested in the Charibond Charities Fixed Interest Common Investment Fund ("Charibond") with M&G Investments.

### 5. Debtors

	2017 £	2016 £
Insurance	210	210
	<u>210</u>	<u>210</u>

### 6. Creditors

	2017 £	2016 £
Sundry Creditors	2,885	1,755
	<u>2,885</u>	<u>1,755</u>

# The Friendship Project

## Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

For the year ended 31 December 2017

### 7. Movements in Funds

	Opening Balance £	Incoming Resources £	(Resources expended) £	Gains & Losses £	Transfers £	Closing Balance £
General funds	-	33,485	(29,408)	(113)	20,195	24,159
Designated funds	20,195	-	-	-	(20,195)	-
	<u>20,195</u>	<u>33,485</u>	<u>(29,408)</u>	<u>(113)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>24,159</u>
Restricted funds	5,607	19,078	(18,220)	-	-	6,465
<b>Total Funds</b>	<u>25,802</u>	<u>52,563</u>	<u>(47,628)</u>	<u>(113)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>30,624</u>

### 8. Staff costs and numbers

	2017 £	2016 £
Wages	24,334	21,904
	<u>24,334</u>	<u>21,904</u>

No employee received emoluments of more than £60,000.

The average weekly number of part time employees during the year was 4 (2016: 6)

### 9. Other expenditure

	2017 £	2016 £
Storage of documents	180	111
Telephones	506	490
Bond arrangement fee	331	328
Printing & stationery	616	808
Database development	239	417
Sundries	1,309	644
Legal	-	1,071
	<u>3,179</u>	<u>3,868</u>

# The Friendship Project

## Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

### For the year ended 31 December 2017

#### 10. Trustees' remuneration, benefits and expenses

During the accounting period, the charity obtained insurance cover including Public Liability, Employer's Liability, All Risks for Assets, Personal Accident for volunteers and younger friends and Trustee Indemnity Insurance for a total of £2,526.

The management committee and other trustees did not receive any remuneration during the year (2016: nil).

#### 11. Independent examination and accountancy services

During the period, the cost of the examination and accountancy services was £300.

#### 12. Controlling parties

The charity is under the control of the management committee.

#### 13. Glossary of terms

Restricted funds: These are funds given to the charity, subject to specific restrictions set by the donor, but still within the general objects of the charity.

Debtors: These are expenses paid in the year with some of the benefit arising in the following year

Creditors: These are amounts owed by the charity, but not paid during the accounting period.