



A proud history of children's futures

Celebrating our 70th Anniversary



Rated 'Outstanding' by Ofsted



BAAF Voluntary
Adoption Agency
of the Year 2012 & 2014

Our history

Adoption Matters journey began in 1884 when the Duke of Westminster donated a piece of land to the Chester Diocese. In 1886, a building named the 'Diocesan House of Mercy' was opened on Lache Lane, Chester and used as a refuge for young women. In 1933, the house was run by the Sisters from St. Mary the Virgin, Wantage and became a long stay home for young women who were pregnant and in need of support. In the early 1950s, the house was renamed St. Bridget's Mother & Baby Home.

Our Blackburn office historically became involved in adoption when Deaneries in the Diocese of Blackburn provided a moral welfare service which included work with single pregnant women who wished to place their babies for adoption. They had links with a number of mother and baby homes in the Diocese and though the Lancaster and Morecambe Adoption Society placed babies with approved adoptive parents.

The first adoption was made in April 1948.

The Adoption of Children Act 1949 meant that placement of children for adoption would be supervised by local authorities. The Anglican Church has always taken its commitment to social responsibility very seriously – the Board for Social Responsibility dealt with adoption, homelessness, unemployment, social justice and more. Eventually Adoption became a smaller part of this and Blackburn Diocesan Adoption Agency and Chester Diocesan Adoption Service were formed in 1947 and 1955 respectively.

By the 1960s with societies changing views on unmarried mothers, St. Bridget's closed for a short period of time and reopened in the early 1970s as a day nursery also offering a flat let scheme for mother and child to stay for a short period of time.

Blackburn also centralised its services in the late 1970s early 1980s and moved into placing children other than babies who were in the care of local authorities. In 1976, The Adoption Act required local authorities to provide their own adoption service and we then continued to work in partnership with several local authorities in placing children for adoption.

Adoption Matters have historically supported and continue to support birth mothers who were placed at St. Bridget's throughout the period of its history and also assist adoptees with tracing records. We offer support in counselling, tracing birth records and reunions.

Today, our society, the Church and adoption agencies have all moved on since the days of mother and baby homes.

Adoption today champions inclusion, different lifestyles and sexualities, myriad ethnicities and cultures, reflecting a modern Britain where single parents achieve highly positive outcomes for the children they nurture, sometimes against all odds.

Whilst originating from a Church of England background, we now operate independently of the church; however, it's ethos and value base continues to inspire our work and we retain strong links with Chester & Blackburn Dioceses and many other Dioceses across the country.



St. Bridget's in the 1950s





A BRIEF HISTORY

- 1884** The **Duke of Westminster** donated land to the Chester Diocese
- 1886** The **Diocesan House of Mercy** was built in Chester for young women in need of refuge
- 1933** House renamed **St. Bridget's** now run by Sisters from St. Mary's, Wantage
- 1947** **Blackburn Diocesan Adoption Agency** established
- 1948** **First adoption placement made** - a baby girl
- 1955** **Chester Diocesan Adoption Service** established
- 1960-1980** **St. Bridget's** underwent modernisation, closed for a period & reopened as a day nursery and occasionally used as a flat scheme where mother & baby could stay.
- 1983** **St. Bridget's** closes
- 1983-2006** Both agencies continued to work in partnership with local authorities placing children from across the UK for adoption (& foster care for CDAS) **offering ongoing, high quality support & training to families.**
- 2007** The two agencies merge to form **Adoption Matters Northwest**
- 2012** Form partnership with Caritas Care to offer a new approach to early permanence through the **North West Concurrent Planning Service**
- 2013** Renamed **Adoption Matters** to reflect expansion into Yorkshire, Staffordshire & Stoke regions
- The Centre for Adoption Support** established, a unique regional Centre of Excellence and practice-based research in collaboration with Caritas Care and four Local Authorities.
- 2015** Secured membership to all **Regional Adoption Agencies (RAAs)** in the North West & members of the Yorkshire & Humber RAA
- 2017**

70th year and **over 4,000 children placed for adoption.**
The agency continues to grow, innovate and offer high quality service to our children and families, operating across 6 regional offices.

Changing times & brands



Today, Adoption Matters is a children's charity and one of the largest independent adoption agencies in the country offering specialised and tailored support to families.

Our reputation has grown over the years together with our staff & trustee base. We have ensured that we keep up to date with moving demand and changed our services and offering to meet this without ever compromising our high quality service. We have rebranded our agency ensuring we stay relevant in today's digital age.

Our staff, volunteers, Board of Trustees, together with our Patron and joint Presidents, continue to support our agency and look forward to celebrating our 70th year and many more successful years to come.



Our Centre for Adoption Support offers a unique graduated approach commended by the DfE



Our Concurrent Planning Service is the largest of its kind in the country offering early permanence with improved outcomes for children

Over
4,000 children
placed in our
70 year history

One of our highest source of enquiries is recommendations, proof of our high quality customer service



The only VAA in the Northwest to be rated 'Outstanding' by Ofsted three consecutive times 2008, 2011 & 2014.



 **adoption matters**
A proud history of children's futures



70 Years
1947-2017
Celebrating our
70th Anniversary



Support us



Your money will help us recruit, train & support more families enabling more children to find their forever homes.

We have placed over 4,000 children with adoptive families in our 70 year history.

In our 70th year, we want to raise £10 for every child placed.
Can **YOU** help us reach target so we can help many more families?

What difference will your money make?

- **£10** funds two toys for young children to play with at a contact session
- **£35** funds an empathy doll, designed to help strengthen a child's bonding through sensory stimuli
- **£100** provides a place for an adoptive parent on a therapeutic parenting training day
- **£400** provides an adoptive family a full consultation session with our adoption professionals
- **£1,000** provides a parenting programme, training workshop or online course for a family in need
- **£10,000+** would contribute towards additional Social Work staff and sessional workers to allow us to provide support to even more families

What can you do?

Anything from baking to biking, climbing to coffee mornings, marathons to making cakes - every penny counts. We are delighted that so many of our own adoptive families fundraise on our behalf and we hope to make 2017 the biggest year ever. We will assist with setting up a fundraising site, provide sponsorship forms, running t-shirts etc.

Are you a company and want to help a local children's charity?

At Adoption Matters we believe that children's welfare and needs are paramount and we aim for them to grow up in a secure and loving family who will best meet their long-term needs and who can help them to reach their full potential. We are always looking for companies with a similar ethos to Adoption Matters to help us offer even more support and training to families. There are many ways you can support our charity, including:

- Sponsorship of a children's event hosted by our Centre for Adoption Support
- Sponsorship of a charity fundraising event, cycle, walk etc.
- Make us your charity of the year
- Donations of raffle prizes to be used at our events throughout the year

For more information on ways to donate visit:

www.adoptionmatters.org/donate



If you would like to support us on a regular basis, please use the below form. You can tear out this page.

GIFT AID DECLARATION



Regular giving, either annually or by monthly instalments, is most helpful to Adoption Matters and a standing order form is below for your use if you are not already giving regularly.

Please complete and return to us along with your Gift Aid Declaration and we will deal with the administration.

Title:	First Name:
Surname:	
Address:	
Post Code:	Tel:
E-mail:	

Please treat the following donations made by me to Adoption Matters as Gift Aid donations:

The enclosed donation of £(Please make cheques payable to Adoption Matters Northwest)

The donation of £ I made on

and all future donations I make to Adoption Matters.

Please tick the box(es) as appropriate.

In making this declaration, I understand that I must pay or have paid an amount of income tax or capital gains tax equal to the tax to be reclaimed on my donations (28p for every £1 you give at current tax rates). I realise that I may cancel this declaration at any time and that, after notifying you of the cancellation, no further tax will be reclaimed from the date of cancellation.

Signed

Date

NB: Please notify us if you no longer pay sufficient tax to cover gifts made under this declaration or if you change your name or your address

BANKER'S ORDER / BUILDING SOCIETY ORDER

To: The Manager,
..... Bank PLC

Address:

Please pay to the account of Adoption Matters at Lloyds Bank, sort code 30-91-92 , account number 00091443 , the sum of

£ (figures)(words)

on the day of 20

and on the same day in each succeeding year/ month* until further notice.

Your account number

Your name

Signed

Address

.....

.....

* delete as applicable

In 2015, in his 30th year with the Adoption Matters, Chief Executive Norman Goodwin, receives his CBE from her majesty The Queen in recognition of his outstanding contribution and distinguished service to adoption and the family.



In 2016, Delyth Evans, Service Manager for the Centre for Adoption Support, wins Adoption Practitioner of the Year at the National Adoption Week Awards in London.



Pictured left to right: Delyth Evans with actress & presenter Clare Grogan who presented the award ceremony and Edward Timpson, Minister of State for Vulnerable Children and Families at Department.

Press coverage over the years



2014, collecting our second Voluntary Adoption Agency of the Year Award in London. Pictured: Susy White & Norman Goodwin





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of children's futures

Contact us:

For further information on any information contained in this leaflet or about any of our services, please contact us. Our offices are open Monday to Friday 9:00 am to 5:00 pm.

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Like & Follow us on Facebook & Twitter:

www.facebook.com/adoptionmattersUIK

www.twitter.com/adopt_matters

Head office: 14 Liverpool Road, Chester, CH2 1AE.

Also offices at: Blackburn, Hale, Warrington, Manchester, & Leeds.

Registered Charity Number: 512892

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For more information visit:

www.adoptionmatters.org



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