



# Achievement Report 2020/21

1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021

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## Foreword from Norman Goodwin CBE Chief Executive

For most of 2020 and continuing into 2021, Adoption Matters has continued to work under the constraints imposed upon us and subject to the continuing implications of Covid-19. Much of what we implemented during last year has been built upon and new and innovative ways have continued to be found by our inventive staff to best serve those whom we seek to work with in delivering an outstanding adoption service.

Despite many difficulties, we placed 91 children with our families and approved 81 new adopters. 23% of these children were part of a sibling group of 2 or more. Finding families for brothers and sisters to grow up together is something we are passionate about. 85% of the children placed were placed with the Regional Adoption Agencies we work closely with offering them local placements for their children and helping them meet their capacity to find families in a timely way. The partnership encourages early notification about children needing to be placed and allows us to recruit the types of adopters to meet the needs of the children waiting. We are also able to identify those children who might wait the longest and look at how we can specifically recruit families for those children.

This year has also seen greater working together with the leaders of other Voluntary Agencies (via the CVAA) and the Regional Adoption Agencies to deliver a 21st Century Adoption Service. It is essential that the strength, innovation and contribution of the Voluntary Sector is recognised at the highest level as we move forward.

I always like to acknowledge the contribution of all our supporters, volunteers, panel members, Board of Trustees and staff, without whom, our achievements would not be possible.

I hope again that you will be inspired by what you read and will continue to support our work in whatever way you feel able.



**NORMAN GOODWIN CBE**

“

DESPITE MANY DIFFICULTIES, WE PLACED 91 CHILDREN WITH OUR FAMILIES AND APPROVED 81 NEW ADOPTERS

”





# A message from our Chair of Board of Trustees, Carolyn Johnson

**This has been an extremely challenging year for Adoption Matters and particularly for our staff and families as they faced the Covid-19 global pandemic, having to adapt their working practices and make acute, swift changes to their lifestyles.**

Gratifyingly, the charity was well prepared and had already implemented innovative IT structures to enable communication to continue effectively and for staff to work from home with suitable equipment and the latest technology. As a result of its success, many of the innovations that have enhanced the service we provide to families will be retained, saving travelling hours and allowing conversations and meetings to take place without organisational delays. We will welcome the resumption of face to face meetings but we have certainly benefitted this year from the foresight of our CEO and managers in enhancing our IT systems well ahead of the pandemic.

This report outlines the significant achievements and exciting events that have happened this year, despite the difficulties caused by the pandemic. I applaud and am impressed by the ingenuity and resourcefulness demonstrated by our staff and volunteers.

Our influence and research on adoption practice is acknowledged nationally by the launch event on *"Understanding Early Permanence"* which was hosted by our CEO and attracted over 170 delegates with the research being put into training and practice.

Adoption Matters' vast experience has also been used to inform the Children's Minister about the deficits in adoption practice nationally by participating with CVAA in discussion and also by being involved in the All Party Parliamentary Group for Adoption and Permanence.



CAROLYN  
JOHNSON

This year Norman Goodwin has announced that he is to retire at the end of 2021 after 36 years working for Adoption Matters; 30 years of which he has been CEO! His national profile, diligence, dedication, huge popularity and recognition for his personal support for staff, adopters and network of adoption charities, voluntary agencies and Government means the Board has been faced with a very demanding task to appoint his successor. A Succession Planning Group of experienced trustees has been formulating a professional, rigorous procedure for 2 years in order to ensure his successful legacy is preserved.

I wish to personally express my gratitude to our Board of Trustees, Norman and all the staff, panel members, volunteers and supporters for their loyalty and commitment throughout this turbulent year, to Adoption Matters, the vulnerable children and families that lie at the heart of everything we do.

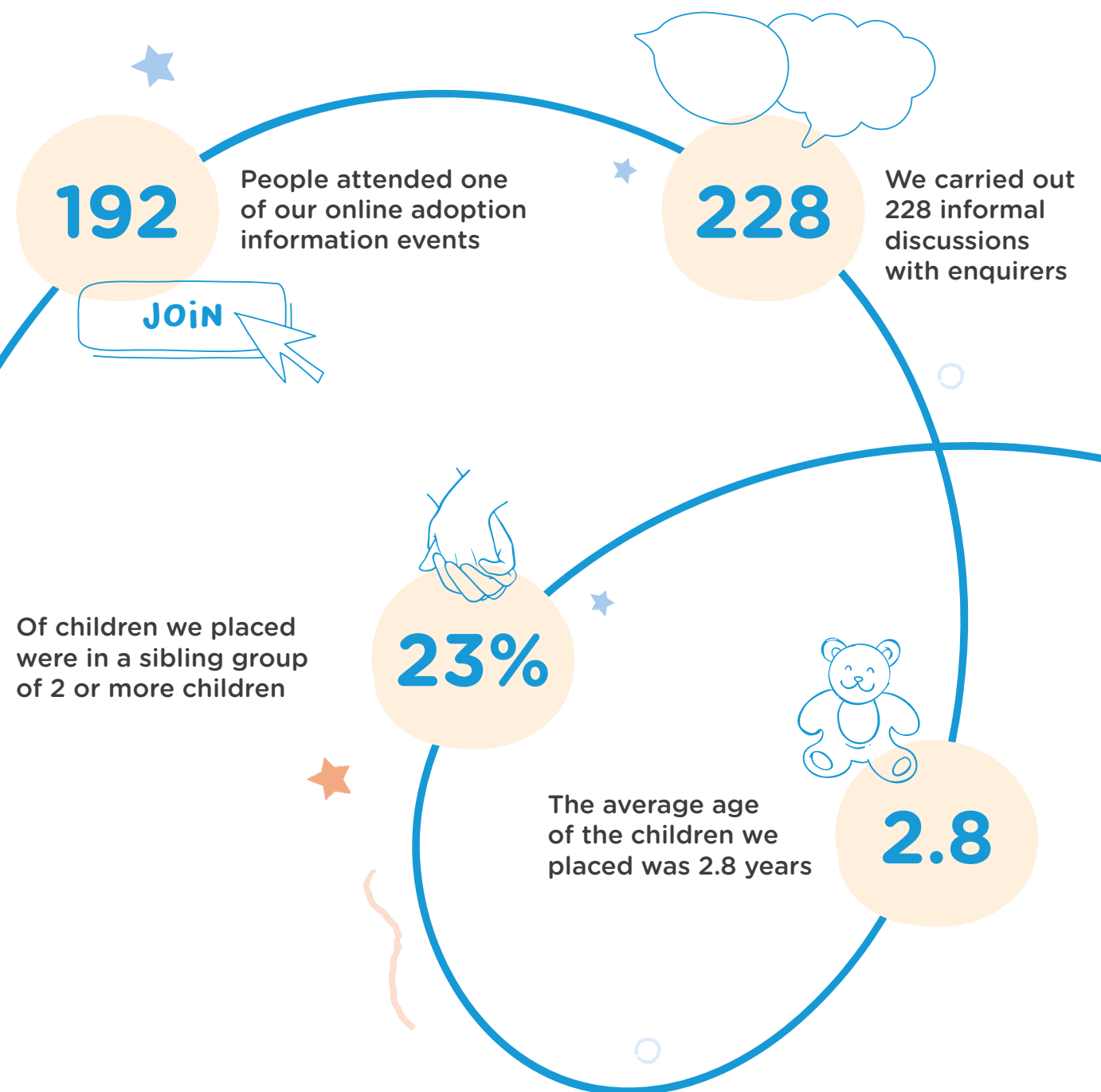
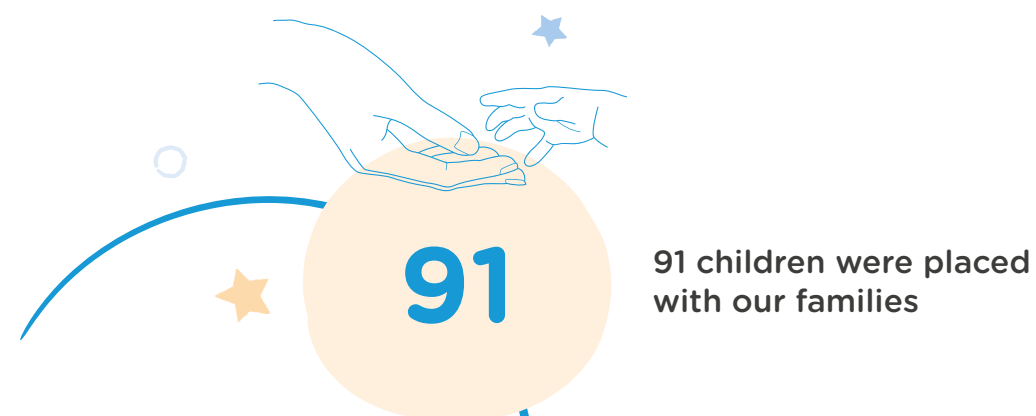
I WISH TO PERSONALLY EXPRESS  
MY GRATITUDE TO OUR BOARD  
OF TRUSTEES, NORMAN AND ALL  
THE STAFF, PANEL MEMBERS,  
VOLUNTEERS AND SUPPORTERS FOR  
THEIR LOYALTY AND COMMITMENT  
IN A TURBULENT YEAR



# OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

Despite one of the most challenging years, we continued with our work with children and families despite everything we faced during the Covid-19 global pandemic, to ensure that children did not experience more delay in finding their permanent family.

We are again proud of the hard work and dedication of our staff, this year **we placed 91 children with our families** and **we welcomed and approved 81 new adopters**. Our adopters included single people, people over the age of 50, LGBTQ+ adopters and individuals and couples from a wide variety of backgrounds all across the North of England, Stoke, Shropshire and parts of Wales.



## Local families for local children

Adoption Matters covers the whole of the North of England, parts of Wales, Stoke, Staffordshire and Shropshire. We work very closely with our Regional Adoption Agency (RAA) and Local Authority (LA) colleagues across these areas in finding **local families for local children**.

We know that maintaining community, regional, cultural, education and family links is very important. It also aids to maintaining the high quality and ongoing support we offer to our families when we are working with our RAA & LA colleagues with whom we have existing relationships across the areas we cover. We are very proud **that for the second year running, 85% of the children we have placed in 2020-21, are with local families**.

There will always be cases when a family who can best meet the child's needs is not local to the placing authority and so we also work with RAAs/LAs across the whole of the UK.

It's not about finding a child for a family, but very much **the right family for the child - children are at the centre of everything we do**.



# The Concurrent Planning Service

Concurrent Planning Service Statistics  
1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021



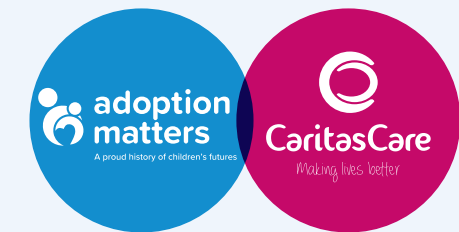
For further information about the service, visit: [www.adoptionmatters.org/ccp](http://www.adoptionmatters.org/ccp)

In March 2021, we hosted a launch event for research which was commissioned and funded by Adoption Matters along with Caritas Care and Barnardo's in order to further understanding of early permanence approaches and how they can be better developed. **"Understanding Early Permanence: A Small scale research study"** by Rebecca Brown and Claire Mason (University of Lancaster).

Over 170 delegates joined the event hosted by our CEO Norman Goodwin, CBE on Zoom joining a number of presenters alongside the lead researchers Rebecca Brown and Claire Mason including: Dr. John Simmonds, OBE Director of Policy Research and Development at CoramBAAF, Research and Development Karen Barrick, Head of Service Adoption NoW, Michelle Rawlings, Service Delivery Manager One Adoption West Yorkshire, Judith Sargent, Adoption and Fostering Operations Manager Yorkshire, Barnardo's and Susan Swarbrick, CEO at partnership agency Caritas Care.

Following the event, Julie Hogan and Kate Knowles from the Concurrent Planning Service delivered practice based training to the CVAA in relation to concurrent planning and joint training to CVAA with Rebecca Brown and Claire Mason in order to put the research into practice.

Julie Hogan, Kate Knowles and two concurrent planning carers were also invited to speak to the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Adoption and Permanence (APPGAP) on early permanence.



# Our Centre for Adoption Support & Therapy Service

The demand for our support increased threefold during the pandemic and we worked hard to ensure that our families and children continued receive the on-going support they needed.

We realised that there was a need for a different kind of support package for the families impacted by current events. Families needed access to professionals who could help all members of the family to develop effective self-regulation skills, either to get through a difficult period, such as the first months after the child moved into their home, or a period of acute family crisis later on. We quickly developed and adapted our offer to meet this need during the pandemic.

During school shut downs and home schooling, we offered tailored videos and advice to help children and families cope and we also produced a **"Transitioning your child back to school with PACE"** video for both families and schools.

All of our Centre for Adoption Support staff continued to work tirelessly throughout the pandemic offering support with telephone and online video consultations, webinars and when needed and safe to do so, face to face therapeutic consultations.

For more information visit: [www.adoptionmatters.org/cfas](http://www.adoptionmatters.org/cfas)

## Therapy Service

Our therapy service delivered 239 contracts offering a range of therapeutic interventions for children and families. In addition to this they also delivered 74 Covid support packages to families. The service also saw an unprecedented rise in the need for therapy during Covid-19 and the team of 25 therapists continued to work, often face to face, with high crisis cases, throughout pandemic and lockdown periods.

Our therapists worked hard on developing therapeutic services that could be delivered online and feedback from families is that the online support has been helpful and supportive. The service also set up mindfulness groups for adopters which has helped maintain their psychological well-being and emotional resilience and they also plan to offer Nurturing Attachments groups in the near future.

For more information visit: [www.adoptionmatters.org/cfas#therapy](http://www.adoptionmatters.org/cfas#therapy)



Centre for Adoption Support Statistics  
1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021

805 people enrolled for one of our 59 webinars

**805**

288 children attended one of our activities / webinars / workshops

**288**

112 families received packages of support

**112**

We worked together with Parents and Education Professionals to facilitate 32 RAMPS\* into schools to support their children and help to reduce their anxieties

**32**

Therapy Service Statistics  
1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021

Our therapy service delivered 239 contracts

**239**

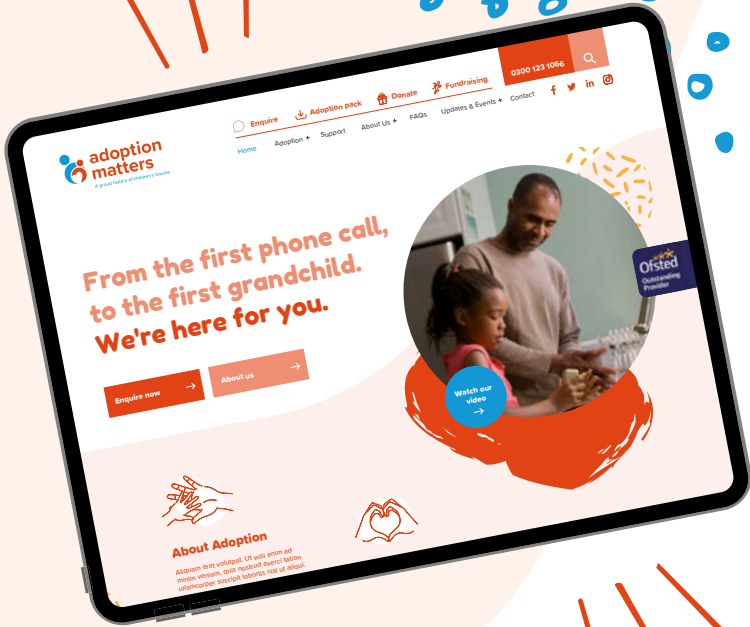
74 Covid support packages delivered to families

**74**



# We launched our new website!

We launched a brand-new website during the year and also refreshed our logo! Offering an intuitive design, fresh look and feel, we have been delighted with the increase in web visitors since launch.



NEARLY 20% OF OUR APPROVED ADOPTERS IDENTIFIED AS LGBTQ+

## #ProudtoAdopt

This year nearly 20% of our approved adopters identified as LGBTQ+. We welcome enquiries from all communities and work hard at raising awareness within the LGBTQ+ community. During LGBTQ+ Adoption and Fostering Week in March 2021 we raised awareness with case studies, profiles and videos.

[www.adoptionmatters.org/proud](http://www.adoptionmatters.org/proud)

# YouCanAdopt



Our Chief Executive, Norman Goodwin CBE and our Marketing Manager, Jenny MacQuire, are both members of the National Adoption Recruitment Steering Group who co-ordinated and produced the new **#YouCanAdopt** recruitment campaign which ran in 2020. We ran our own marketing campaigns featuring the materials produced and were proud that our own family, The Hathaway's featured in the national campaigns.

Find out more: [www.adoptionmatters.org/youcanadopt/](http://www.adoptionmatters.org/youcanadopt/)



During National Adoption Week, we focussed on the need for more adopters for Black African and Black Caribbean children waiting. We also produced a video featuring our adopter Ruth: [www.adoptionmatters.org/case\\_study/ruth/](http://www.adoptionmatters.org/case_study/ruth/)

In March 2021, Adoption Matters joined forces with 11 other Voluntary Adoption Agencies across the UK to encourage potential adopters to consider adopting children who wait the longest. We produced a number of videos aimed at raising awareness: [www.adoptionmatters.org/childrenwhowait/](http://www.adoptionmatters.org/childrenwhowait/)



THE HATHAWAYS

[www.adoptionmatters.org](http://www.adoptionmatters.org)



# FUNDRAISING

This year was not a normal year for all the obvious reasons. However, having to think of alternative ways to fundraise certainly showed our flexibility and ability to change! Our Fundraising Team came up with a variety of events to both raise funds and also support our families and audiences. They included:



## 2.6 Challenge

# £2000 RAISED!

This year we adapted quickly to the virtual event route with our first foray joining in with the London Marathon **2.6** Challenge for which several of our supporters and even staff members undertook challenges that related to the numbers **2.6** or 26 (the number of miles in a marathon, plus the date the London Marathon would have taken place - 26th April 2020). Supporters were encouraged to run, walk, hop, skip **2.6** miles, **2.6** km or for 26 minutes or any other combination they could think of!



## Darcey Cycles

# £681.26 RAISED!

Darcey, who is the daughter of our Finance Administrator, Bev, cycled 1,000 miles in 121 consecutive days during lockdown 2020, beginning when she was just 4 years old. Darcey raised the absolutely amazing total of £2,341.61 (£2,695.70 with Gift Aid) which was split amongst four charities - Adoption Matters was one of those very lucky recipients!

Well done Darcey, what an achievement!



## "Your Christmas" campaign

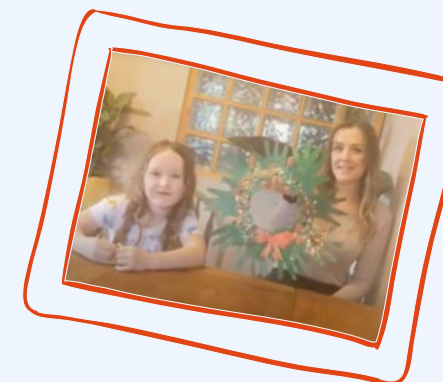
# £1300 RAISED!

Our virtual Christmas campaign was centred around helping our families to create their own traditions, magic and sparkle, at home. Christmas can be a difficult time for some of our children and families. We knew that this year would be a tough one for everyone so wanted to help them to celebrate "Your Christmas" at home, together.

Full of stories read by Actor and Comedian, John Thomson and the new Bishop of Chester, Rvd. Mark Tanner, amongst others, crafts and recipes, including some very kindly donated by Ainsley Harriott, we also had lots of tips and hints for adopters dealing with Christmas perhaps for the first time.

ACTOR AND COMEDIAN,  
JOHN THOMSON  
READS A STORY

CHRISTMAS  
CRAFTS



We also held a Virtual Christmas Quiz, kindly hosted by the Co-op Membership Team who also offered prizes. We had a great response and a lot of fun!

More info: [www.adoptionmatters.org/christmas-2020/](http://www.adoptionmatters.org/christmas-2020/)





# Corporate Opportunities

Softcat

£573 RAISED!

Our Trustee, Jamie Bennett, kindly set up an online adoption information event for all staff at the company he works for, Softcat, an IT infrastructure and services provider employing around 1,500 people. As part of LGBTQ+ History Month the Softcat Pride Network hosted a series of events throughout February. Jamie suggested that one event focused on adoption and invited members of our team, together with some of our adopters, to attend to present and answer questions.

The event also raised £573 from an online Justgiving page, SMS messaging and a very kind donation from Softcat. We would love to partner with other companies in offering similar events, if you think YOUR company would be interested, please get in touch with us.



OUR GIFTS IN WILLS GUIDE

## Gifts in Wills

This year we launched our new Gifts in Wills guide to highlight the importance of having a Will and to inform our supporters that it is possible to leave a Gift to Adoption Matters in their Will.

Having a Will in place gives you peace of mind and ensures that you look after your loved ones when the time comes. No one knows what the future holds and our circumstances change throughout our lives. By including a Gift in your Will to Adoption Matters (after looking after family and friends) you will leave a lasting legacy to improve the lives and futures of local children and their families. Once you have looked after those closest to you, it's amazing the difference even a small gift or percentage of your estate can make. A gift of any size has a real impact and ensures that we can support the whole adoption journey in the very best way possible.

We also took part in the national **Remember A Charity Week** campaign from 7-13 September 2020 and benefitted from their fantastic marketing which included a new animated version of The Wombles.

REMEMBER A CHARITY WEEK



JAMIE COMMENTED

# The difference your support can make

£25

could fund activity materials for use within a Theraplay support package

£100

could provide a virtual therapeutic consultation session for any member of an Adoption Matters family with one of our adoption professionals

£200

could enable us to deliver a valuable peer support group session for adopted adults

£400

could fund materials for our invaluable Life Story work for children along with a session with adoptive parents to share the work

£1000

would provide a package of intense support for families during times of crisis

## Why we do it

Children are at the heart of our work and we believe that their welfare and needs are paramount. Our aim is for them to grow up in a secure and loving family which will best meet their long-term needs and can help them reach their full potential.

Every year, there are vulnerable children needing a stable, caring home through adoption. Some wait longer than others. We want to help change that. Can you help?

## How you can help

Your donations allow us to provide vital life-long support from the outset of the adoption process, helping new families to understand their child(ren)'s needs and to cope in potentially difficult circumstances. Donations also provide all the 'fun stuff' such as our social activity events.

We were delighted to receive an amazing £1,185 from supporter **Chloe Gillings**. Chloe raised this through a Facebook Birthday Fundraiser and also managed to raise a further £85 in online donations via Virgin Money Giving. Facebook Fundraisers are a great way to raise funds and awareness for Adoption Matters and we are so grateful to Chloe and all our supporters who kindly asked for donations for their birthdays this year.

THANK YOU CHLOE!



THE FUNDRAISING WEBSITE!



For more information about our Fundraising plans and how you could help, please get in touch, we would love to chat with you about any ideas you may have.

Email: [fundraising@adoptionmatters.org](mailto:fundraising@adoptionmatters.org)

[www.adoptionmatters.org/fundraising](http://www.adoptionmatters.org/fundraising)

[www.adoptionmatters.org](http://www.adoptionmatters.org)





## Our Management and Board of Trustee Teams

### Chief Executive:

**Norman G. Goodwin CBE**

### Presidents:

**The Right Reverend Mark Tanner**  
Bishop of Chester

**The Right Reverend Julian Henderson**  
Bishop of Blackburn

**The Right Reverend Paul Butler**  
Bishop of Durham

### Patron:

**Sir Mark Hedley**

### Board of Trustees:

**Carolyn Johnson**  
Chair

**Professor David Cracknell OBE**  
Vice-Chair

**Annesley Wright**  
Company Secretary

**Jamie Bennett**

**Dave Champness**

**Catherine Gibbons**

**Professor Elizabeth Harlow**

**Joe McArdle**

**Lynn Pates**

**David Shield**

**Barry Speker OBE, DL**

### Strategic Management Team:

**Paul Dolan**  
Service Manager

**Anne Fleming**  
Service Manager  
Centre for Adoption Support

**Gaynor Richards**  
Business Development Manager

**Jacqui Shore**  
Service Manager

**Susy White**  
Finance & Operations Director

### Social Work:

**Hazel Field**  
Adoption Team Manager

**Tracey Field**  
Adoption Team Manager

**Sally Frances**  
Adoption Team Manager

**Clive Gumbrell**  
Adoption Team Manager

**Julie Hogan**  
Social Work Team Manager  
Concurrent Planning Service

**Amy Mather**  
Adoption Team Manager

**Irene Redshaw**  
Adoption Team Manager

**Amreen Riaz**  
Adoption Team Manager

**David Robinson-Field**  
Social Work Team Manager  
Centre for Adoption Support

**Fiona Taylor**  
Adoption Team Manager

**Hedwig Verhagen** (to February 2021)  
Adoption Team Manager

### Business, HR, Marketing & Fundraising:

**Karen Davies**  
Business & Finance Manager

**Diane Handley**  
HR Manager

**Sarah Johnson**  
Fundraising & Relationship Manager

**Jenny MacQuire**  
Marketing Manager



# Financials

## Summary Financial Statements

### Statement of Financial Position

31 March 2021 Adoption Matters	2021 (£)	2020 (£)
<b>FIXED ASSETS</b>		
Tangible assets	347,037	332,993
Investments	844,515	582,281
	<u>1,191,552</u>	<u>915,274</u>
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
Debtors	1,293,961	1,005,362
Cash at bank	948,427	1,384,984
	<u>2,242,388</u>	<u>2,390,346</u>
<b>CREDITORS</b>		
Amounts falling due within one year	(889,857)	(1,545,027)
<b>NET CURRENT ASSETS</b>	<u>1,352,531</u>	<u>845,319</u>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS BEFORE PENSION DEFICIT</b>	<u>2,544,083</u>	<u>1,760,593</u>
Pension scheme liability	(5,040,000)	(1,951,000)
<b>NET ASSETS</b>	<u>(2,495,917)</u>	<u>(190,407)</u>
<b>RESTRICTED FUNDS</b>	<u>1,279</u>	<u>0</u>
<b>GENERAL FUND</b>	<u>2,542,804</u>	<u>1,760,593</u>
<b>LESS: PENSION SCHEME LIABILITY</b>	<u>(5,040,000)</u>	<u>(1,951,000)</u>
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>	<u>(2,495,917)</u>	<u>(190,407)</u>

### Statement of Financial Activities (Including Income and Expenditure Account)

31 March 2021 Adoption Matters	2021			2020
	Unrestricted Funds (£)	Restricted Funds (£)	Total Funds (£)	Total Funds (£)
<b>INCOME</b>				
Donations and legacies	82,000		82,000	60,636
Charitable activities	4,831,493		4,831,493	4,263,847
Other trading activities	9,784	1,279	11,063	38,271
Investments	12,852		12,852	12,351
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<u>4,936,129</u>	<u>1,279</u>	<u>4,937,408</u>	<u>4,352,105</u>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>				
Raising funds	55,743		55,743	66,375
Charitable activities	4,151,930		4,151,930	3,924,279
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<u>4,207,673</u>		<u>4,207,673</u>	<u>3,990,654</u>
<b>(NET GAINS/(LOSSES) ON INVESTMENTS)</b>	<u>53,755</u>		<u>53,755</u>	<u>(21,196)</u>
<b>NET INCOME / (EXPENDITURE)</b>	<u>782,211</u>	<u>1,279</u>	<u>783,490</u>	<u>363,255</u>
<b>OTHER RECOGNISED GAINS / (LOSSES)</b>				
Actuarial (losses) on pension scheme	(3,089,000)		(3,089,000)	(209,000)
<b>NET (EXPENDITURE) FOR YEAR</b>	<u>(2,306,789)</u>	<u>1,279</u>	<u>(2,305,510)</u>	<u>154,255</u>

These accounts are a summary of the information extracted from the annual accounts which were approved by the members of the Board 3rd September 2021 and are signed on their behalf by:

Mrs Carolyn Johnson, Trustee  
Mr Annesley Wright, Trustee

### Independent Auditor's Statement

To the members, Adoption Matters

We have examined the summarised accounts set out on these pages. You are responsible as Board members for the preparation of the summarised accounts.

We have agreed to report to you our opinion on the summarised accounts' consistency with the full accounts on which we reported to you on 6th September 2021.

We have carried out the procedures we consider necessary to ascertain whether the summarised accounts are consistent with the full accounts from which they have been prepared.

In our opinion, the summarised accounts are consistent with the full accounts for the year ended 31 March 2021.

The summarised accounts on these pages are an abridged version of the full accounts of Adoption Matters, which are filed with the Registrar of Companies and the Charities Commission.

The Auditor's report on the full accounts was unqualified. These summarised accounts may not contain sufficient information to allow a full understanding of the financial affairs of the Charity.

For further information, the full accounts, the Auditor's Report on these accounts and the Board of Trustees' Report should be consulted. Copies of these are available, 14 Liverpool Road, Chester CH2 1AE.





**Adoption Matters**

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

**Also offices at:**

Blackburn, Durham, Hale,  
Leeds, Salford, Stoke & Warrington.

**Tel:** 01244 390 938

**All enquiries:** 0300 123 1066

**Email:** [info@adoptionmatters.org](mailto:info@adoptionmatters.org)

Registered Charity Number: 512892  
Company Registration No. 1617324

Rated 'Outstanding' by Ofsted



Registered with  
**FUNDRAISING  
REGULATOR**

Members of:

