

CONSORTIUM OF VOLUNTARY ADOPTION AGENCIES UK LIMITED

England & Wales · Charity number 1108318

Details

Other names	CONSORTIUM OF VOLUNTARY ADOPTION AGENCIES LIMITED, CVAA
Status	Registered
Legal form	Charitable company
Company number	05275491
Registered	2005-02-28
Register	View on the Charity Commission register

Contact

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Email	info@cvaa.org.uk
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Website	www.cvaa.org.uk
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Activities

Objects: TO DEVELOP STANDARDS OF EXCELLENCE IN ALL MATTERS RELATING TO ADOPTION, GOOD PRACTICE AND MANAGEMENT THROUGHOUT THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE PUBLIC IN PARTICULAR TO MAXIMISE THE CONTRIBUTION OF VOLUNTARY ADOPTION AGENCIES BY INFLUENCING POLICY AND PRACTICE OF ADOPTION IN THE UK AT THE NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND LOCAL LEVELS AND TO DIRECTLY INCREASE THE NUMBER OF CHILDREN SUCCESSFULLY PLACED FOR ADOPTION BY PROMOTING LIAISON AND COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIP WORKING PRACTICES BETWEEN VOLUNTARY ADOPTION AGENCIES AND ALL OTHER STAKEHOLDERS.

Activities: CVAA enables member agencies to deliver services of excellence to children, adoptive families, and all those considering adoption, or who have been affected by it. CVAA has increased its role in effectively influencing policy and practice in the UK at national, regional and local levels.

Classification

- **How:** Makes Grants To Organisations, Provides Services, Provides Advocacy/advice/information, Sponsors Or Undertakes Research, Acts As An Umbrella Or Resource Body
- **What:** General Charitable Purposes, Education/training
- **Who:** Children/young People, Other Charities Or Voluntary Bodies, The General Public/mankind

Geography

- **Area of benefit:** THE UK
- Isle Of Man
- Northern Ireland
- Scotland
- Throughout England And Wales

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-03-31	£235,521	£292,863	-	-
2024-03-31	£231,286	£267,246	-	-
2023-03-31	£245,570	£301,754	-	-
2022-03-31	£247,233	£236,646	-	-
2021-03-31	£248,948	£216,483	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Andrew Webb		2020-09-17
Anna Pilbrow Sharkey		2022-03-15
Brenda Mary Farrell		2021-03-02
Emma Rachel Simpson		2023-09-14
Judith Penelope Vaughan		2020-09-17
Natausha Van Vliet		2021-09-15
STEPHEN J SMALL		
Susan Jane White		2022-09-13
Terry Fitzpatrick		2016-06-24

CONSORTIUM OF VOLUNTARY ADOPTION AGENCIES UK LIMITED

England & Wales - Charity number 1108318

Accounts



Annual Report and Financial Statements
1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025

Consortium of Voluntary Adoption Agencies UK Ltd (CVAA)

Registered charity number 1108318
Company Number 5275491

Registered Office
C/o ARC, Unit 29, The Business Innovation Centre, Wearside, Sunderland, SR5 2TA

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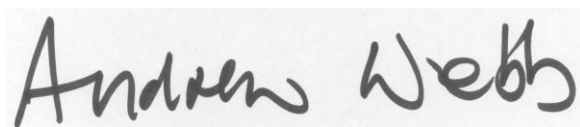
1. *Chair's Report 2024-25*

CVAA launched its current 3-year strategy *Shaping the future of adoption services* in April 2024: it is informed by evidence and driven by values. It built on “A Home for Me?”, published by us in 2022, which presented a comprehensive picture of the life-long benefits of adoption for those children whose future has been judged to be best met outside their original family. The review concluded that adoption, historically, has secured loving families for children who have gone on to thrive; and has been consistently more successful than other forms of permanence available at the time. But times change and as we gain more evidence, we develop a more nuanced view of “success”. There is currently worldwide debate about historic approaches to adoption and its role in the present and future system of family intervention. CVAA shares many of these concerns but is committed to ensuring that if adoption as a construct is to move on, it must be based on evidence and be supported by active policy-making – it cannot simply be allowed to drift. A child-centred approach to permanence (as opposed to focusing on adoption, fostering or special guardianship) creates a challenge to both policy and practice: but it is a challenge whose time is now, and is one CVAA fully embraces.

The CVAA strategy sets out three priorities. The first builds on the evidence we have collected and collated from people who have been adopted and charges us to think far more deeply about their identity and their cultural and familial connections in our practice and long-term systems of support. The second flows to some extent from the first and acknowledges the challenges Voluntary Adoption Agencies (VAAs) across the UK face in recruiting and supporting families that reflect the diversity of the children for whom adoption would offer the best chances in life, and the considers the significant skill base they need: hence our focus on adopters and the workforce needed to provide secure but flexible support. Our third priority is to champion the modernisation of adoption. This isn't simply a call for sterile policy change, it is a call for co-production: it requires the engagement of adoptees, adopters, children, families, law makers and practitioners in all relevant disciplines to consider the evidence pertaining to keeping families together and providing successful permanent alternatives.

Alongside our policy work, CVAA's focus on supporting its member agencies in their ambitious and innovative commitment to finding, supporting and nurturing families is undimmed; and it is heartening to see VAAs hold, and in many cases strengthen, their position as providers of more than 22% of all UK adoptions (an increase from 19%) despite the challenges and ongoing turbulence in the adoption sector. The challenges for VAAs in the four nations of the UK differ: to some extent as a result of policy priorities, but also as local practice in both law and social work has responded to evolving views about permanence in unique ways. So, whilst it is an essential function of CVAA to do its utmost to ensure the policy environment continues to support adoption, it is just as important that our member agencies get the bespoke back-up they need to remain successful in the challenging times we face.

In his section of this report Satwinder Sandhu, CVAA's CEO, covers many of the changes our staff have been through in the past year: I would like to take this opportunity to thank the whole team, and our trustees, for their tireless and highly effective contribution to the world of adoption, from maintaining a brilliant practice programme to developing networks of support and influence and continually looking for ways to use our resources (human and financial) to the best possible effect.



Andrew Webb
Chair of CVAA UK
September 2025

2. Treasurer's Report

The financial year, 1st April 24 to 31st March 25, has been another busy one for CVAA with being called upon to represent the sector in numerous ways as outlined in the CEO's strategic report. This not only ensures that the sector continues to have a voice but also reinforces the fact to national decision makers that the adoption system cannot meet the demand for placements without the VAA sector providing their quota of approximately 22% across the UK. Additionally, without the lifelong support services we provide to families, the Adoption & Special Guardianship Support Fund in England would be under even more pressure.

None of this valuable work could take place without our member VAAs' continued financial support through membership and we are extremely grateful for their endorsement given in this way.

However, our income from membership fees was once again under pressure with another two agencies withdrawing from the provision of adoption services during the year and therefore not renewing their membership. This was offset slightly by a new Celtic member coming onboard.

Unfortunately, we saw a further dramatic reduction in the uptake of training places on the Practice Programme. Although, once again, a tremendous, low-cost programme was put together, it ran at a loss once more. We understand fully that the budgets of all members would be under similar pressure to that experienced by CVAA and we appreciate that there is a great deal of free training being offered across the sector, but we would appeal to everyone to consider making use of this valuable resource where you can.

Efforts were made to reduce costs and where we could. For example, we reduced the overall cost of last year's very successful conference by holding it in Liverpool. We also received backdated employees' allowance of £13K, but nonetheless, with the fall in income and maternity leave to cover, our year ended with a further deficit. This deficit was **£57,342**.

All funds have been spent wisely, with the board's oversight, and this has enabled the CVAA team to maintain the high level of service and support to members, described in this report, during a further period of extreme pressure. The deficit was offset by our healthy opening reserves of **£463,521**, and although the board take the view that these reserves are there to support the organisation when it is in such a situation, we are conscious that these will continue to be eroded unless we are able to reduce our spend and can generate alternative income. Our closing reserves were therefore **£406,179**.

Once again, we were grateful to members for their acceptance of the inflationary increase to the membership fee. This has enabled the team to maintain the input required to deliver on our strategy and manifesto which have become important documents in delivering our message that adoption is still an important form of permanence for a number of vulnerable children from across the UK and from abroad. Whilst we hold significant reserves for now, the trustees continue to explore ways to best utilise these for the benefit of members and the overall impact of the voluntary sector on policy and practice throughout the UK.

As usual there are several people to thank for their support throughout the year:

Our accounts again required an independent examination at the year-end rather than a full audit. This was carried out by our auditors Mitchell Chartered accountants. I would like to thank David Gair ACA for the thorough oversight of our accounts and for the resulting reports which outline that the accounts produced were a true and fair view of the Charitable Company's affairs and can be presented for approval to the members as such at the Annual General Meeting of members on 24th September 2025.

Thanks also go to Trevor Hogg from our accountants TPA Accountancy for his oversight throughout the year and work with the Finance Sub-Committee, and to Lisa Parkin at ARC Adoption NE who has been fastidious when it comes to paying our bills, ensuring our income arrives in a timely fashion and most importantly paying CVAA staff.

I would also once again like to acknowledge the tremendous support of Chris Briggs, Caritas Care, and Stephen Small, St Andrew's Children's society, our other members of the Finance Sub-Committee whose guidance has been invaluable throughout the year and to Satwinder Sandhu, CEO, for his diligence in ensuring that where possible savings are made whilst at the same time using our funds to ensure the organisation is able to represent our membership in the most effective way.

I would finally like to repeat last year's sentiment by thanking all of our members for your staunch support, and for your continued use and contribution to the Practice Programme. I am sure once again that this reflects the value that we all continue to see in maintaining our membership and the gratitude we have for the wonderful service we receive from the CVAA team.

With a new children's minister in England and revitalised political interest in Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales, there is once again a challenge to ensure that adoption has a place in the minds of policy makers. There will no doubt be further challenges in the year ahead for us all but having CVAA in a strong position to guide us through these and to help us to not just survive but to flourish means we will be better able to serve the children and families who need the tremendous services we all provide.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Terry Fitzpatrick', written in a cursive style.

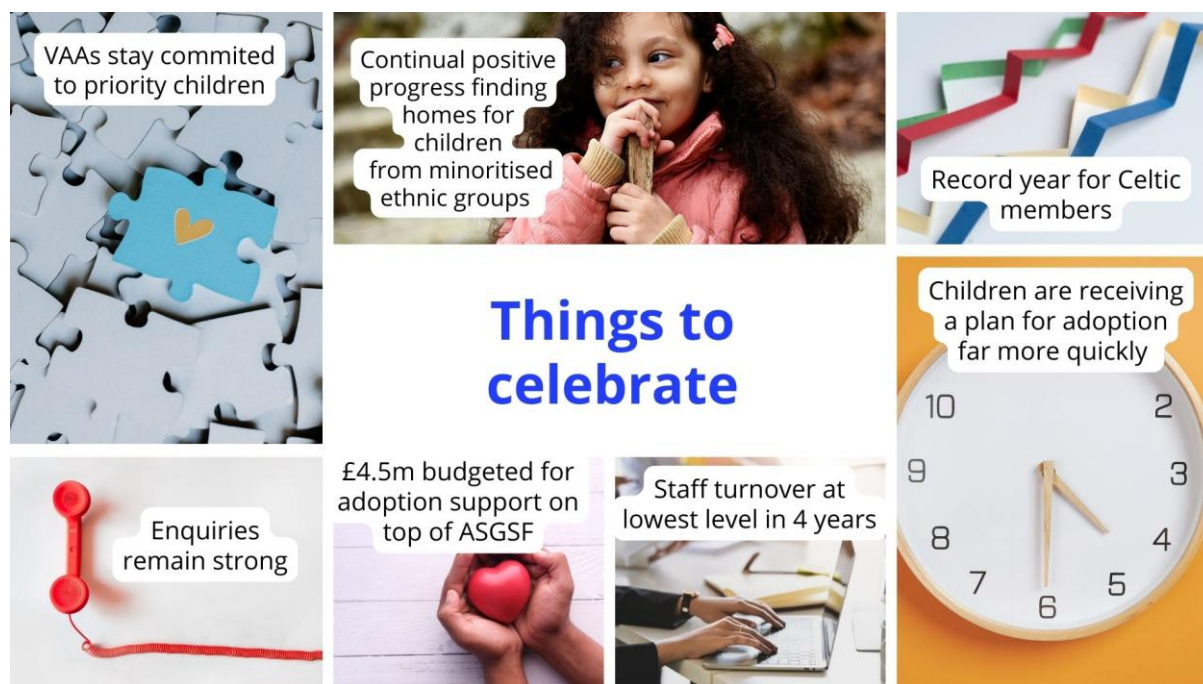
Terry Fitzpatrick OBE

Treasurer

September 2025

3. Strategic Report – CVAA Activities and Achievements 2024-25

Overview



The last financial year saw CVAA continue to make inroads in influencing adoption policy and practice in adoption across the UK. With the advent of a new government in Westminster we were hopeful of positive changes across all four nations of the UK in children's social care, but what we have seen has lagged slowly behind our expectations. Consequently, this has meant a challenging environment for CVAA to operate within as there has been little active support for the voluntary sector and so our member Voluntary Adoption Agencies (VAAs).

The CVAA team remains small but mighty. Alice Talbot, Head of Policy and Member Services, returned from maternity leave in April 2024, and during the year took on a new remit as Director of Strategy and Policy. We were delighted that Elizabeth Crowhurst was able to remain on until the autumn of 2024 providing extra capacity in both strategic and policy affairs before leaving for her new post at NSPCC. Marie Brathwaite sadly left us in May 2024, which coincided with Petra Jodlova, Head of Practice Development, preparing for her maternity leave from August 2024. This provided us with an opportunity to reshape our team and create a new Practice Programme Manager role which we were delighted to welcome Katherine Samwell-Smith into. The team continued to be valiantly supported by Hayley Brooks, Communications & Business Support Officer and Emma Shindler, Data Analyst.

The charity formally launched our new three-year strategy in April 2024, *Shaping the future of adoption services*. This built on our previous strategy and focussed on the issues pertinent to our members and the adoption community through three new strategic priorities.

Strategic Priority 1 – Identity and Connection

Ensuring that adoptees are supported by informed, empathetic adopters and VAAs, so that they develop a lifelong positive sense of identity and belonging, underpinned by continuing connections and ongoing meaningful relationships with the people that matter to them.

Strategic Priority 2 – **Adopter and workforce diversity**

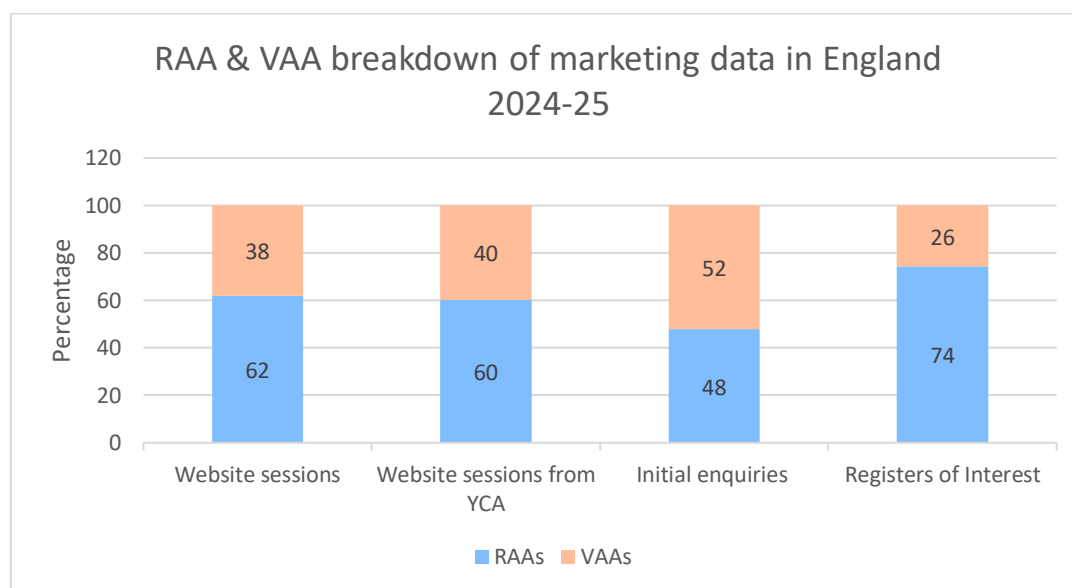
Supporting VAAs to embed learning and changes so that adopters from a wide range of ethnic, cultural and social backgrounds, with varied lived experiences, feel confident coming forward to adopt and that all services are delivered through an equitable and inter-sectional approach, rooted in anti-discriminatory practice.

Strategic Priority 3 – **Championing the modernisation of adoption**

Working with members, adopted people and their families, and stakeholders across the UK, to influence and shape the modernisation of adoption, increasing understanding of the imperative for change and the benefits for children and families.

As a UK wide membership charity CVAA is acutely aware that whilst much of the focus on children's needs is universal, each nation works to different regulations, policies and priorities, so it is vital that our CVAA strategy benefits all members across all nations. In launching the strategy, it was acknowledged that whilst inroads have been made, more work still needs to be done to further engage devolved administrations in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Overall, the year did see a shift in demand for VAA approved adopters as there was a growing sufficiency issue in the recruitment of adopters, though this varied across regions and nations. However, it provided our members and opportunity to further enhance their efforts in recruitment, and we were pleased to see this was reflected positively in our data collection – almost 14,000 enquiries were received by VAAs in 2024/25, a similar level to the previous year. Analysis of the ASG England-wide data showed better results than our statutory partners as recruitment remained fairly steady in VAAs despite a decline across the board. Part of the reason for this is inevitably in the long history that many VAAs have in being established as community based and community focussed organisations, with a proven record of providing lifelong, flexible and responsive support to the children and families that they work with. In more recent years support has become an important factor in ensuring that adopters can navigate the complex needs that many children that VAAs place have, in order to give them the best opportunity to thrive.



Source: You Can Adopt marketing data 2025-26

Strategic Priorities

The CVAA team agreed a delivery plan with the Board of Trustees to work on our new strategy beyond the launch, and this has informed much of the activity of the charity during the last year. The announcement of a general election soon after the strategy was launched meant that our planning for political engagement through the publication of our Manifesto for Adoption was time well spent as it enabled us to work closely with our voluntary sector organisations, particularly Adoption UK, on a shared vision and priorities.

Specific activity undertaken during the year against our strategic priorities included:

Identity and Connection

- Grant applications explored for funding for some elements of My People, which continues as we evolve this need into amplifying the voice and influence of adoptees.
- Achieved direct reference to CVAA's work in Public Law Working Group final report on adoption for England & Wales, influencing the core components being considered for referral for review by the Law Commission. Wrote statement responding to final report. Secured VAAs at the heart of the press coverage.
- Relationship built with Lifelong Links research team and VAA representation on research working group, even though VAAs unable to take part in first phase.
- Central theme at annual conference included lived experience panel & well-attended workshop delivered by AiM – an RAA partner.
- Significant input into Adoption England's new maintaining relationships standards and working group.
- New relationships with Cafcass, Association of Lawyers for Children & Rees Centre around identity/contact.
- Lobbied for 'Identity & Connection fund' in Spending Review submission.
- Centred the voice and lived expertise of adoptees at our strategy launch event in London.
- Moderated EurAdopt Conference at University of Cambridge focussing on the needs of people being adopted from abroad.

Tackling adopter and sector diversity

- Workforce diversity data included in 2023/24 data return for first time, providing initial benchmarking.
- Revised CVAA data collection with more useful definition of a transracial placement
- Raised awareness among policy stakeholders of VAA progress in reducing Placement Order to match timescales for children from minoritised ethnic groups. Publicised data on VAA successes recruiting diverse adopters.
- Promotion of AFDiT including via Dr. Tam Cane's presentation at CVAA conference and support of AFDiT Champions work.
- Full governance review undertaken and actions underway to diversify board.
- Scoping paper and meeting held on enhancing support/recruitment to VAAs for Black adopters.
- BALI (Black & Asian leadership) programme well attended by English VAA reps along with RAA colleagues.
- Published two UK wide adopter advice guides and coordinated third on adopting children from Black, Asian and other diverse ethnicities.

Championing the modernisation of adoption

- Secured Nuffield Family Justice Observatory interest in a 'Permanence Summit'. Proposal developed and discussions on-going.
- Application submitted to the National Lottery Fund to support research into lived experience: unsuccessful.
- Launched Manifesto for Adoption and general election toolkit to support local relationships with new MPs.
- Spending Review submission made to Department for Education and case related evidence submitted to support our requests.
- Adoption support audit of VAAs completed.
- New VAA fundraising group established.
- Submitted evidence to Children's Wellbeing & Schools Bill and engaged with Parliamentarians on tabling amendments.
- Delivered 30 Practice Programme events across the year; trained 525 professionals; reached a broad audience of non-members (274) as well as members (251).
- Presented at inaugural Kibble Conference (our newest VAA member) in Glasgow.
- Took on role as Chair of EurAdopt Executive Board supporting European colleagues with the task of modernisation across the continent.
- Hosted Big Adoption Day 2025 for VAAs across the UK in partnership with Coram.

Governance

CVAA's Board of Trustees remained stable with elections paused during this year as we undertook a governance review. The purpose of this was to build on the previous review and ensure that the board is as diverse and robust as it can be.

After exploration, Trustees agreed that rather than creating a new Advisory Board the preference was now to explore the creation of two new Trustee roles for non-members in order to reflect greater diversity and lived expertise. A revision to our Articles of Association was planned to facilitate this.

We are grateful to our Trustees who continue to provide time, focus, direction and support to the organisation whilst continuing to lead their own organisations and representing the sector.

Member Services

There were some changes to membership during the year following the announcements from Action for Children and SSAFA that they would cease their adoption services. These were both organisations providing national services so a loss to the sector. One new member, Kibble Adoption, joined as a Celtic Member as the well-respected charity based in Glasgow launched a new adoption service.

CVAA continued to provide extensive services to our members and expanded the offer through additional network meetings, greater representation at sector meetings and exploring ways to make greater inroads with key stakeholders and partners in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland to support our Celtic Members. Our weekly policy and news updates, as well as a broader monthly newsletter continued to be very popular as did our dedicated forums for people working in marketing and fundraising.

CVAA continued to meet in person twice a year with our Celtic Members to ensure that dedicated time, space and strategy was in place to support their efforts in each nation.

Regular meetings for VAA leaders continued to be held quarterly at the CVAA Leadership Forum (previously named CEO Forum), attended by CEOs, Directors and Heads of Service. These meetings gave valuable opportunity for sharing of information, initiatives and a safe space to raise concerns and issues for agencies.

A highlight of the year for CVAA and members was our annual conference in November 2024, which was held in Liverpool and supported by member agency, Nugent. With the theme: From ambition to action: delivering the future of adoption services, the event was inspired by our new strategy and built on the conversations started in 2023. We decided to make the first day for VAA members only and were joined by highly respected leaders in the voluntary sector: Jane Ide, CEO of Acevo and David Holdsworth, CEO of the Charity Commission for England & Wales. This day gave our members some tremendous inspiration with how to navigate the choppy waters that the voluntary sector works in and how to shape the future without losing focus of our core mission and core values.

On the second day we added in a significant number of external stakeholders and guests as well a range of national and international speakers. Andy Smith, President of ADCS was our keynote speaker and was followed by Dr. Tam Cane and then Dr. Hollee McGinnis, who presented adoptee led and adoptee focussed research. Our panel of lived experience and expertise included adoptees, Samantha and Joseph, and birth parents, Andy and Kristy, and was expertly chaired by adoptee champion and podcast host, Simon Benn. The room was deeply touched by what we heard and a firm commitment to learn and apply this learning was agreed.

Our workshops were hosted by Book Trust, Adoption Plus, Adoption in Merseyside and We Are Family Adoption and the feedback from each was deeply impressive. We ended proceedings with Dr. Tony Lloyd from the ADHD Foundation, who gave delegates the tools needed to see neurodiversity through an ableist lens.

The CVAA team were delighted to receive immediate and subsequent feedback that this conference had been the best yet and provided members with opportunities to network, learn, reflect, share concerns and leave deeply inspired and energised. Topped off by our members' dinner in the festive city, we were very proud of what was achieved over the two days in Liverpool. Our thanks to all who made the conference a success by attending and contributing.

Performance

In 2024/25 CVAA's annual data snapshot showed that VAAs found adoptive homes for 710 children, compared to 728 for 2023/24. This number includes all VAAs across the UK, using estimates for two agencies where full year data was not provided, and overall is two agencies less than the year before following closures in the last period. Based on analysis of VAAs in England for whom we have the corresponding nation-wide data – and using more accurate Coram-i data than the published ASG dataset – we have calculated the VAA share of the sector at 22%. Therefore, although overall placement numbers are slightly lower than last year, VAAs are maintaining their strong position in the sector, and seemingly cementing their foothold even further.

VAAs maintain strong sector share, according to best estimations

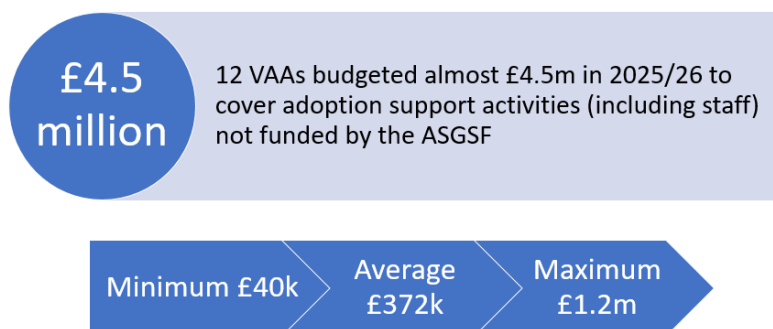


- UK-wide we estimate that VAAs found homes for 710 children (this includes all Celtic VAA data and estimates where data has not been provided)
- We estimate that 498* children were found homes in England. Coram-i has confirmed that according to agency data (more accurate than LA data) 2,228 children were placed in England. **Therefore, our best estimate of VAA market share is 22%.**

* Children placed in Celtic nations and intercountry placements have been removed

Adoption support remained a core offer from VAAs and often supported from fundraising and reserves, in order to ensure all children and families got what they needed without delay. This honours the lifelong commitment that VAAs make to children and families, which differentiates them from other agencies.

Adoption support budget



Looking ahead

As we look forward to the next year, we will continue to focus on our three strategic priorities and will work with members to deliver the next phase of our strategy. We are mindful that having operated on a deficit budget our reserves should be put to good use to further support our strategy and amplify the impact of VAAs. We also hope to supplement this through securing some external funding if at all possible. We are conscious that the economic climate for charities including VAAs remains challenging.

Alongside our strategic priorities we shall ensure that our work across all four nations continues to support local and national objectives.

- Scotland – the government launched a new adoption statement in this period setting out its vision and priorities so CVAA will work with Scottish VAAs and government to ensure our sector's contribution to this vision is the best it can be.
- Northern Ireland – the executive has confirmed that they will roll out and implement the delayed Adoption & Children Act and CVAA will work with VAAs in Northern Ireland to ensure that their role and voice is part of this new chapter.
- Wales – the National Adoption Service has continued to make inroads in working with VAAs so CVAA will continue to champion the role of Welsh VAAs in providing homes and support for Welsh children.
- England – Adoption England already works closely with CVAA and together we will continue to encourage greater strategic collaboration and partnerships with VAAs who continue to provide homes for a significant proportion of English children who need adoption. This includes leading on work with You Can Adopt focussing on recruitment of adopters who can meet the needs of children waiting.

Intercountry adoption also remains a core priority for CVAA as the needs of children being placed via this route are a key focus for VAAs continuing to work in this space. To ensure our perspective is truly global, CVAA was one of the delegates at ICAR8 – International Conference on Adoption Research in 2024. Additionally, CVAA moderated the EurAdopt 2024 conference hosted by member VAA Coram IAC and EurAdopt in Cambridge in 2024 and we currently chair the EurAdopt Council.

Finally, the year ahead will see the sector mark the 100-year anniversary of the Adoption of Children Act 1926 which was the first legislation to provide a legal framework for adoption in England and Wales, replacing informal arrangements and offering permanent and secure transfer of children to new parents, including permanent rights for the child to inherit as if they were the birth child of the adopters. The Act allowed for legal adoption by individuals or joint spouses and granted adopted children the same status and rights as birth children, including for the purposes of wills and inheritance. As we continue to work on the concept of modern adoption, CVAA will continue to lead conversations with the sector and the adoption community, particularly adoptees, to ensure that our work can be truly informed by voice and influence as we look ahead.

CVAA thanks its members for their continued support of our work and for championing the rights and needs of adoptees and adopters.



Satwinder Sandhu
Chief Executive Officer
September 2025

4. Celtic Nations' Report

In this year, there was one meeting of the Celtic Nations agencies during the 12 months period of this review; London in October 2024, with the planned second meeting falling into April 2025. The membership of the CVAA Celtic Nations group currently includes Sue Brunton, Scottish Adoption & Fostering, Jacqueline Sheeran, St. Margaret's C&F Care Society, Jason Baker, St. David's Children Society, Stephen Small, St. Andrew's Children's Society, Maggie McSorley Family Care Adoption Services, Lynda Wilson, Family Routes and Paula Harkins, Kibble Adoption. Barnardo's are represented by a manager from whatever country in which the meeting is being held. Satwinder Sandhu, CEO, attends our meetings giving the CVAA UK and English perspective and provides secretariat support to the group.

As in England the agencies in the Celtic nations experienced a significant shortage of adopters at all stages of the process. One sign of this has been the significant increase in adopters from Scotland and Wales, and to a lesser extent Northern Ireland, being matched with children from English local authorities. These "cross-border" placements are nothing new but in the case of children being matched with Scottish adopters there has been an increase in English local authorities not recognising the adopters' approval status and looking to 'reapprove' them at their own panels before proceeding to a match.

A follow-on from this issue is the group members' recurring discussions about the inconsistent provision of support services to adoptive children, depending on where their 'home authority' is located. There are no plans to consider a system of central funding for adoption support in Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland as exists in England. However, children placed from England in the other nations can access the ASGSF when a case can be made.

Another challenge that arises from making these kinds of placements is the different and inconsistent approaches to references and checks for prospective adopters. This is caused by different legislation operating in different nations.

A recent attempt by CoramBAAF to clarify these "cross-border" placement anomalies through the issuing of a practice note: **Matching children from England with adopters approved in Scotland (2024)** looked at this issues from the perspective of the English legislation (understandably because this is legal jurisdiction of the children in question) but disappointingly did not consider the Scottish legislation or ways that this could be simplified to make it easier for children to move to their prospective adoptive families.

Wales has as a nation continued to operate the National Adoption Service (NAS) of Wales as it celebrated its 10th year, operating with greater consistency. VAA's in Wales experienced a sharp reduction in their market share during this period though, resulting in financial challenges and the continuation of Welsh children achieving adoption by being placed outside of Wales. As this is at odds with NAS Welsh Placement Strategy as well as the ambitions of the Welsh VAA's, it resulted in NAS undertaking comprehensive review where the role and expertise of VAAs in Wales was fully recognised.

The agencies in Northern Ireland, have always focused on trying to meet the needs of children of the Province but still place children from Scotland or England when required. The implementation of new legislation is frustratingly slow, and this, coupled with significant reductions in central funding to the voluntary sector, still makes for a challenging operating environment. The Health Care Trusts' reluctance to pay the Inter-Agency Fee to voluntary agencies is less prevalent but there are still examples of children remaining in impermanent placements rather than moving to a VAA family. CVAA UK is now in dialogue with the Department of Health over this issue to ensure that Trusts and VAAs can work more effectively together.

In Scotland, there was a very positive endorsement of adoption continuing to be a significant option for children who need permanent care away from their families of origin. The Scottish Government issued a statement to that effect which also referenced the CVAA UK's Social Return on Investment Report to support the statement. It is the hope that the drift and delay that can be a feature of the adoption process for many children in Scotland will not continue to be tolerated, which is supported by the continued progress in the implementation of The Promise. Providing early permanence and foster care placements to complement their permanence service is a priority for all the Scottish agencies.

Summary

The Celtic Agencies value the support offered by the CEO and the Board of Trustees of CVAA UK. As always, we all continue to work to ensuring that divergent systems in the four Nations do not hamper our ability to work in a UK context focussing on the permanency needs of children in all the Nations.



Stephen Small

Celtic Nations Trustee

September 2025

5. *Trustees' Annual Report*

5.1 *Trustees*

Director/Trustee Name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year
Andrew Webb	Chair	
Terry Fitzpatrick	Treasurer	
Brenda Farrell		
Emma Simpson		
Anna Sharkey		
Stephen Small		
Natausha van Vliet		
Judith Vaughan		
Susy White		

Name of Company Secretary

Satwinder Sandhu

Name of Senior Staff Members

Chief Executive Officer:	Satwinder Sandhu	
Head of Policy and Member Services	Alice Talbot	
Head of Practice Development	Elizabeth Crowhurst Petra Jodlova	(Maternity cover to November 2024)

Registered Office C/o ARC, Unit 29, The Business Innovation Centre, Wearside, Sunderland, SR5 2TA

Bankers CAF Bank Ltd, 25 King's Hill Avenue, King's Hill, West Malling, Kent, ME19 4JQ.

Independent Examiners Mitchells Chartered Accountants, Swallow House, Parsons Road, Washington, NE37 1EZ

5.2 *Statement of Trustees Responsibilities*

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Report of the Trustees and the Financial Statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Practice). Company law requires that Trustees prepare Financial Statements for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of the state of the affairs of the company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including income and expenditure for that period. In preparing these Financial Statements, the Trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently.
- Observe the methods and principles in the charity SORP.
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent; and
- prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Charity will continue in business.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Charity and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The Trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the Charity's website. It is important to bear in mind that legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of Financial Statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

In so far as the Trustees are aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the Independent Examiner is unaware.

The Trustees have taken all the steps that they ought to have taken as a Trustee-Director in order to make himself or herself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the Independent Examiner are aware of that information.

The Chief Executive is appointed by the Trustees to manage the day-to-day operations of the Charity. The Chief Executive is charged with the duty of accounting to the Board and making recommendations on plans and policy.

5.3 *Structure, Governance and Management*

The Charity is a Company limited by guarantee (Company number 5275491) and a Charity (Charity registration number 1108318) and is governed by its constitution.

The Trustees are responsible for the management of the Charity, and they form the Board. The Board meets at least four times a year. Appointment to the Board is by election of the members by a simple majority. Trustees are elected from the member agencies. The Chief Executive attends all meetings of the Board.

Appointment and Recruitment of Trustees

Members of the Charity nominate Trustees in accordance with the Constitution. An annual audit identifies gaps in representation and nominations to address these are sought. Members can be co-opted to the Board for a period before nomination. Job Descriptions and Person Specifications have been agreed for the Chair, Treasurer, Vice Chair and Trustees to provide clarity about the role and responsibilities.

Trustees Induction and Training

New Trustees undergo an induction process to brief them on their legal obligations under Charity and Company Law, the content of the Memorandum and Articles of Association, the recent financial performance of the charity and the financial projections. Trustees are encouraged to attend training events where these may aid their appreciation and understanding of CVAA and facilitate their functioning as Trustees. The Board tests compliance with the each of the Principles of Good Governance as part of its regular meetings and training opportunities are regularly circulated to Trustees.

Organisation

All members of the Board undertake tasks on behalf of CVAA as is illustrated elsewhere in this report. In summary:

- Officer positions on the Board
- Chair or member of a subgroup
- Delivery of training and consultancy

- Representation of CVAA at a national level e.g., meetings with the Department for Education (DfE); National Adoption Service Cymru, Adoption England, Ofsted, Afka Scotland, Department for Health (NI)
- Representing the VAA sector in joint working groups with statutory partners such as Regional Adoption Agencies (England) and local authorities
- Contact with the media.

CVAA recognises and values the time that the Board give to these issues; as a small organisation, it would not be possible to meet all the demands without such voluntary contribution. In addition, ARC Adoption NE have provided financial management to CVAA which has been very much appreciated. All members of staff report either directly or indirectly to the Chief Executive and the Chief Executive reports to the Chair.

Risk Management

A risk register is maintained and discussed by the full Board at each meeting, new mitigating actions proposed where the level of risk is judged to have increased; new risks are proposed and added to the register, or closed, as necessary. A revision of this process occurred during this reporting period.

Much of the Charity's approach to risk is determined by a thorough appreciation of the environment in which the Charity operates, and by ensuring that appropriate, experienced, and qualified members of staff are recruited and further are appropriately trained.

5.4 Objectives and Activities for the Public Benefit

Summary of the objects of the charity set out in the Constitution (governing document)

CVAA's objects (the Objects) are:

“ to develop standards of excellence in all matters relating to adoption, good practice and management throughout the voluntary sector for the benefit of the public, and in particular to maximise the contribution of Voluntary Adoption Agencies by influencing policy and practice of adoption in the UK at the National, Regional and Local levels and to directly increase the number of children successfully placed for adoption by promoting liaison and collaborative partnership working practices between voluntary adoption agencies and all other stakeholders”

The Trustees confirm that they have referred to the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit when reviewing the charities aims and objectives and in planning future activities.

The focus of our work: a summary of the main activities in relation to these objects

Representation	of member voluntary adoption agencies' views at local, regional, and national levels across all sectors
Promotion	of the voluntary adoption sector's commitment to achieving appropriate and timely permanence for children
Liaison	between voluntary organisations and statutory agencies by encouraging networking opportunities and forums for members
Development	of CVAA as a national partnership that responds to the needs of all member agencies whilst acknowledging those of the statutory agencies we work with.
Support	of member agencies by maintaining a national database, collection, and analysis of voluntary adoption agency statistics, maintaining the interagency fee, encouraging internal efficiencies, providing advocacy and consultation on adoption matters, driving

upwards standards of excellence and promoting collaborative working practices through an extensive programme of professional development.

5.5 Reserves Policy

Charity Law requires that the Directors and Trustees should have a policy for holding reserves. The purpose of the policy is to enable any monies which belong to CVAA, and which are not required in the immediate future for the running of the charity, to be used to generate further income.

The Reserves Policy will:

- preserve the viability of CVAA as a Charity and Company Limited by Guarantee
- enable the Charity to meet its legal objects
- provide seed capital for strategic developments should this be required pending receipt of an awarded grant or new income stream
- provide confidence to supporters and donors seeking to give financial support to a prudently controlled charity
- ensure that, consistent with the objects, mission statement and values of CVAA proper ethical consideration be afforded to all matters of investment
- ensure that the reserves are at a level sufficient to discharge all the Charity's obligations should the Charity cease its operations.

Desired level of Reserves

In the preparation of the accounts, there has been further consideration of the level of reserves which the charity needs to maintain in order to ensure that it would be in a position to meet all of its liabilities should it at any time cease to operate and also to smooth fluctuations in membership as the primary source of income, in order to maintain high quality services to beneficiaries. The value of the reserves required will vary during the year. In calculating the value of reserves there needs to be regard for the following:

- annual running costs of the charity in maintaining essential services
- contractual notice periods of the officers of the charity
- expenses payable to any of the member organisations whose representatives are Trustees of the Charity
- settlement of any other commitments where notice is required to end the contractual arrangement
- other costs payable and due to third parties.

Steps to Establish the Reserves Policy

To maintain appropriate levels of reserves the Trustees have determined that:

- any legacies, which have no restriction placed upon them by the terms of their donation, are considered to be general reserves
- expenditure plans agreed by the Board are examined at quarterly intervals by the Treasurer and Finance Sub-Committee and funds required to finance such may be removed from general reserves as necessary for the attainment of its broad objects. Funds may, from time to time, be designated for specific purposes.

Monitoring and Reviewing the Policy

The Trustees have agreed that:

- day-to-day operational responsibility for the implementation of this policy be vested in the Treasurer and the Finance Sub-Committee and (supported by the finance professionals in their agency)
- monitoring is undertaken, on a quarterly basis and reported to the next meeting of the Board
- the policy is subject to at least a bi-annual review by the Board specifically to confirm the level of Reserves required for the year ahead to meet all obligations. A full review took place in 2024.

5.6 Investment Policy

CVAA will invest the reserves appropriately with any investment to be of low risk. An appropriate balance is to be struck between income and capital growth to enable CVAA to support its charitable works and help achieve its objects.

The Trustees have developed an investment policy with the aim of achieving an improved return on investments to support the charity at time of reducing membership fees. The policy is consistent with the Reserves Policy and will seek to:

- maintain the value of CVAA reserves in line with inflation in order to sustain the long-term viability of the charity and where possible to achieve capital growth
- create an income stream to replace membership fees lost over the past few years and in anticipation of further reductions through member mergers
- support activities which benefit CVAA members and achieve the organisation's strategic ambitions.
- maintain the optimal balance between funds necessary for the efficient day to day operation of the organisation and maximizing returns on additional funds to generate income.

Decision making, management and reporting

The CVAA Trustee Board will make final decisions on investments after receiving reports and relevant professional advice sought by the Finance Sub-Committee. The Finance Sub-Committee have delegated authority to:

- seek expert advice on investment options within the risk parameters set by the Board
- investigate and assess charges and other costs of investment options, including those for the professional support and management of funds
- monitor the performance of investments, including through receiving quarterly reports from investment managers
- meet, either in person or virtually, with professional advisors as necessary, but as a minimum once per year, to recommend changes in investments to the Board, in response to changes in external markets and/or CVAA circumstances
- liaise with and monitor the performance of investment managers with delegated authority to move funds on behalf of CVAA within the parameters set by the Board.

The Board will review investment performance and assess returns against targets on an annual basis alongside consideration of the outturn figures for the preceding financial year, to ensure that the right balance of liquid and longer-term investment is in place to support CVAA's immediate and longer-term resource needs. This

review will also include an assessment of the performance of investment advisors/managers against the objectives of the policy. During this year a decision was made to withdraw funds from investments which were performing badly.

5.7 *Independent Examiners*

The Trustees will commission an independent examination of the financial operations of the charity each year from a qualified auditor.

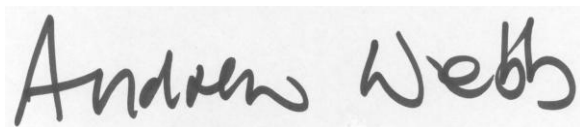
This report has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies. The financial reports were approved by the Board of Trustees and Members at an AGM on 24th September 2025.

5.8 *Financial Review*

The incoming resources of CVAA for the year ended 31st March 2025 were £235,521 after the deduction of resources expended of £292,863; the net position of the charity was a deficit of £57,342.

The retained unrestricted funds of the charity are £406,179.

Approved by order of the Board of Trustees and signed on its behalf by:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andrew Webb". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Andrew Webb
Chair of Trustees
September 2025

6. CVAA Members

Adopters for Adoption
Adoption Focus
Adoption Matters
Adoption UK (Associate member)
ARC Adoption NE
Barnardo's
Birmingham Children's Trust
Caritas Care
CCS Adoption
Coram Capital Adoption
Coram IAC – Intercountry Adoption Centre
Diagrama Foundation
Family Care Adoption Services (Celtic member)
Family Futures CIC
Family Routes (Celtic member)
Kibble Adoption (Celtic member)
Nugent Care
PAC-UK (Associate member)
Parents and Children Together (PACT)
Scottish Adoption & Fostering (Celtic member)
St Andrew's Children's Society (Celtic member)
St David's Children Society (Celtic member)
St Margaret's Children & Family Care Society (Celtic member)
Yorkshire Adoption Agency

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Consortium of Voluntary Adoption Agencies UK Limited ('the Company')

I report to the Charity Trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Company for the year ended 31st March 2025.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the Charity's Trustees of the Company (and also its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the Company are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your charity's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5) (b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Company as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
4. the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities (applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)).

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

SIGNATURE



David Gair ACA
Mitchells Chartered Accountants
Swallow House,
Parsons Road,
Washington,
NE37 1EZ

Date: 18th September 2025

**CONSORTIUM OF VOLUNTARY ADOPTION
AGENCIES UK LIMITED**

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted fund £	31/3/25 Total funds £	31/3/24 Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM					
Charitable activities					
Membership and training income		215,683	-	215,683	233,698
Conference & Other income		8,462	-	8,462	8,021
Investment income	2	<u>11,376</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>11,376</u>	<u>2,879</u>
Total		<u>235,521</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>235,521</u>	<u>231,286</u>
EXPENDITURE ON					
Charitable activities					
Membership and other costs		<u>292,863</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>292,863</u>	<u>267,246</u>
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)		(57,342)	-	(57,342)	(35,960)
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS					
Total funds brought forward		<u>463,521</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>463,521</u>	<u>499,481</u>
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		<u><u>406,179</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>406,179</u></u>	<u><u>463,521</u></u>

**CONSORTIUM OF VOLUNTARY ADOPTION
AGENCIES UK LIMITED (REGISTERED NUMBER: 05275491)**

**BALANCE SHEET
31 MARCH 2025**

	Notes	31/3/25 £	31/3/24 £
CURRENT ASSETS			
Debtors	6	5,180	29,631
Cash at bank		<u>421,238</u>	<u>471,229</u>
		426,418	500,860
CREDITORS			
Amounts falling due within one year	7	(20,239)	(37,339)
		<u>406,179</u>	<u>463,521</u>
NET CURRENT ASSETS			
		406,179	463,521
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES			
		406,179	463,521
NET ASSETS		<u>406,179</u>	<u>463,521</u>
FUNDS	9		
Unrestricted funds		<u>406,179</u>	<u>463,521</u>
TOTAL FUNDS		<u>406,179</u>	<u>463,521</u>

The charitable company is entitled to exemption from audit under Section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 for the year ended 31 March 2025.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025 in accordance with Section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

The trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for

- ensuring that the charitable company keeps accounting records that comply with Sections 386 and 387 of the Companies Act 2006 and
- preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company as at the end of each financial year and of its surplus or deficit for each financial year in accordance with the requirements of Sections 394 and 395 and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the charitable company.

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to charitable companies subject to the small companies' regime. The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on 24th September 2025 and were signed on its behalf by:



.....
Terence Fitzpatrick OBE - Trustee

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparing the financial statements

The financial statements of the charitable company, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)', Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' and the Companies Act 2006. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

Income

All income is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities once the charity has entitlement to the funds, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

Expenditure

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to that expenditure, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all cost related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

Taxation

The charity is exempt from corporation tax on its charitable activities.

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the trustees.

Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity.

Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the financial statements.

2. INVESTMENT INCOME

	31/3/25	31/3/24
	£	£
Deposit account interest	11,376	15,031
Loss on disposal of investments	-	(12,152)
Total	<u>11,376</u>	<u>2,879</u>

3. TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS

There were no trustees' remuneration or other benefits for the year ended 31 March 2025 nor for the year ended 31 March 2024.

No Trustee or any other person related to the Charity had any personal interest in any contract or any transaction entered into by the Charity during the period.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

3. TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS - continued

Trustees' expenses

During the year payments made to the value of £1,941 were made to 5 Trustees or their employing organisations for travel expenses (£1,941 in 2023 paid to 4 Trustees or their employing organisations).

4. STAFF COSTS

The average monthly number of employees during the year was as follows:

	31/3/25	31/3/24
Management and Administration	1	1
Direct Charity Workers	<u>5</u>	<u>5</u>
	<u>6</u>	<u>6</u>

The number of employees whose employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs) exceeded £60,000 was:

	31/3/25	31/3/24
£60,001 - £70,000	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>

5. COMPARATIVES FIGURES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted fund £	Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM			
Charitable activities			
Membership costs	220,386	-	220,386
Conference & Other income	8,021	-	8,021
Investment income	<u>2,879</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2,879</u>
Total	<u>231,286</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>231,286</u>
EXPENDITURE ON			
Charitable activities			
Membership costs	<u>267,246</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>267,246</u>
NET INCOME	(35,960)	-	(35,960)
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS			
Total funds brought forward	<u>499,481</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>499,481</u>
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	<u>463,521</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>463,521</u>

**CONSORTIUM OF VOLUNTARY ADOPTION
AGENCIES UK LIMITED**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

6. DEBTORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	31/3/25	31/3/24
	£	£
Trade and other debtors	<u>5,180</u>	<u>29,631</u>

7. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	31/3/25	31/3/24
	£	£
Trade creditors	2,439	1,036
Other creditors	4,823	1,827
Accruals and deferred income	<u>12,977</u>	<u>34,476</u>
	<u>20,239</u>	<u>37,339</u>

8. ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted fund	31/3/25 Total funds	31/3/24 Total funds
	£	£	£	£
Current assets	426,418	-	426,418	500,860
Current liabilities	<u>(20,239)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(20,239)</u>	<u>(37,339)</u>
	<u>406,179</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>406,179</u>	<u>463,521</u>

9. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS

	At 1/4/24 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31/3/25 £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	398,521	7,658	406,179
Closure costs	<u>65,000</u>	<u>(65,000)</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>463,521</u>	<u>(57,342)</u>	<u>406,179</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>463,521</u>	<u>(57,342)</u>	<u>406,179</u>

Net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	235,521	(292,863)	(57,342)
	<u>235,521</u>	<u>(292,863)</u>	<u>(57,342)</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>235,521</u>	<u>(292,863)</u>	<u>(57,342)</u>

**CONSORTIUM OF VOLUNTARY ADOPTION
AGENCIES UK LIMITED**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

9. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

Comparatives for movement in funds

	At 1/4/23 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31/3/24 £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	434,481	(35,960)	398,521
Designated fund	<u>65,000</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>65,000</u>
	<u>499,481</u>	<u>(35,960)</u>	<u>463,521</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u><u>499,481</u></u>	<u><u>(35,960)</u></u>	<u><u>463,521</u></u>

Comparative net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	231,438	(267,398)	(35,960)
	<u>231,438</u>	<u>(267,398)</u>	<u>(35,960)</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u><u>231,438</u></u>	<u><u>(267,398)</u></u>	<u><u>(35,960)</u></u>

A current year 12 months and prior year 12 months combined position is as follows:

	At 1/4/23 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31/3/25 £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	434,481	(28,302)	406,179
Designated funds	<u>65,000</u>	<u>(65,000)</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>499,481</u>	<u>(93,302)</u>	<u>406,179</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u><u>499,481</u></u>	<u><u>(93,302)</u></u>	<u><u>406,179</u></u>

A current year 12 months and prior year 12 months combined net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	466,807	(560,109)	(93,302)
	<u>466,807</u>	<u>(560,109)</u>	<u>(93,302)</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u><u>466,807</u></u>	<u><u>(560,109)</u></u>	<u><u>(93,302)</u></u>

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

9. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

Reserves policy:

It is the policy of the trustees to ensure that sufficient reserves are maintained to cover not less than one year's running costs for the charity. Current reserves are more than adequate to achieve this policy. The charity previously maintained a designated fund to cover closure costs but this is no longer considered necessary as such costs are included in the reserves policy.

10. RELATED PARTY DISCLOSURES

There were no related party transactions for the year ended 31 March 2025.

**CONSORTIUM OF VOLUNTARY ADOPTION
AGENCIES UK LIMITED**

**DETAILED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

	31/3/25 £	31/3/24 £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS		
Investment income		
Deposit account interest	11,376	15,031
Loss on disposal of investment	-	(12,152)
	<u>11,376</u>	<u>2,879</u>
Charitable activities		
Membership fees	150,496	157,288
Other income	8,462	8,021
Online webinar	65,187	63,098
	224,145	228,407
Total incoming resources	235,521	231,286
EXPENDITURE		
Charitable activities		
Staffing	217,546	200,194
Practice event costs	15,563	9,852
ICT & other costs	1,917	1,064
Overheads	7,896	5,321
Accountancy fees	1,560	1,298
Property costs	7,698	7,378
Travel costs	9,950	6,100
Financial management	8,700	8,692
Consultancy	1,114	1,006
Members events & AGM	20,195	24,400
Board & Trustees expenses	724	1,941
	<u>292,863</u>	<u>267,246</u>
Total resources expended	<u>292,863</u>	<u>267,246</u>
Net (expenditure)/income	<u>(57,342)</u>	<u>(35,960)</u>

CONSORTIUM OF VOLUNTARY ADOPTION AGENCIES UK LIMITED

England & Wales - Charity number 1108318

Accounts



Annual Report and Financial Statements
1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024

Consortium of Voluntary Adoption Agencies UK Ltd (CVAA)

Registered charity number 1108318
Company Number 5275491

Registered Office
C/o ARC, Unit 29, The Business Innovation Centre, Wearside, Sunderland, SR5 2TA

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1. *Chair's Report 2023-24*

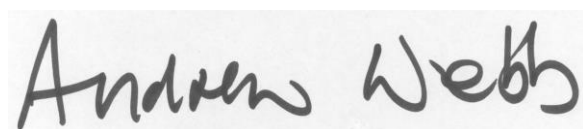
Across the UK the number of children for whom adoption is sought appears to have stabilised; the data suggests that the steady rate of decline experienced in recent years may have levelled off. There are also strong indications that the number of children in public care has plateaued, and if unaccompanied children seeking asylum are considered separately, the fact that the care system has become less fevered should provide space for reflection and new ideas.

This report covers what turned out to be the final stages of the Conservative Government, so logically, anticipating further implementation of their policies would serve little purpose. However, the machinery of government generally does grind on regardless and two of the outgoing Government's key structural changes to the adoption system: Regional Adoption Agencies and the Adoption and Special Guardianship Support Fund, will continue to make a lasting impact. Also, both provide challenges for CVAA as our members continue to report being marginalised in key decision-making arenas despite providing almost one quarter of all placements. It is less clear what the longer term will mean for the principles embodied in the Children's Social Care Review, but support to families remaining together and better support to kinship placements are both welcome and present opportunities to share the skills and resources of our members.

Over the year, CVAA continued to promote the findings of "A Home for Me?" a comparative review of the value of different forms of permanence for children we launched in early 2022, and followed this up with the publication of "My People" and our Adoption Manifesto which set out new approaches to adoption, contact, identity and family support designed to meet the challenges of today rather than a version of reality based on the past. The judiciary has been leading, through the Public Law Working Group, a review of many of the principles and processes (and their impact on practice), in the adoption system. CVAA has been calling for a more fundamental review of adoption, questioning whether the evidence set out above should lead to a paradigm shift rather than just "modernisation" of our approaches to finding and supporting permanent families for vulnerable children. This will remain on our "to do" list for the coming year.

My final reflection on the strategic and policy issues we faced last year is less positive. The data in respect of racial inequalities in the care and adoption systems are a stark reminder of lack of progress. Too many Black children still wait longer and are less likely to be placed in permanent families; our systems still don't reach enough potential parents in communities that surely hold the answer. Lord Simon Woolley spoke with passion and eloquence at our conference in November 2023 and issued CVAA and its members a series of challenges to take action: I hope the coming year will see the dial move.

In his strategic report Satwinder, our CEO, reflects on the staffing changes CVAA experienced in the past year. Every single member of the team either faced a major change in their personal life or to their work role – but somehow that never made it onto our risk register! For such a small staff group to go through such a lot of change without the organisation missing a beat says so much about the commitment, knowledge and skill set of each member of the team. So, my thanks to you all, and particularly to Maggie Jones for her leadership in the first half of the year and Satwinder for picking up the reins so quickly.



Andrew Webb
Chair of CVAA
December 2024

2. Treasurer's Report

During the financial year 1st April 23 to 31st March 24, CVAA continued the hybrid model of working that many of us have adapted to. Staff were able to work from home and many meetings took place virtually which maximised their time and effected some saving. However, any face-to-face activity did incur an increased outlay on travel costs as train fares increased dramatically. Unfortunately, like all organisations, CVAA were operating in a climate of increased running costs, and in the knowledge that our income from membership fees was once again under pressure with another agency closing during the year. Fortunately, this was balanced out a little by one new member joining CVAA and an associate member re-joining.

Unfortunately, we saw a reduction in the uptake of training places on the practice improvement programme. Although a tremendous programme was put together, for the first time it ran at a loss. We understand fully that the budgets of all members would be under similar pressure to that experienced by CVAA, but we would appeal to everyone to consider making use of the block booking system to maximise any discounts on the training that will help our staff fulfil their CPD requirements. This brings in valuable income to CVAA and greatly assists its sustainability as it strives to achieve security for its members.

Other pressures during the year came from a loss occurring with our investment portfolio and the high costs associated with holding last year's conference in London, all of which resulted in the year end deficit that is highlighted in our annual accounts.

This deficit was £36K. The investment suffered, 6 months, in from volatility in the market where our portfolio was invested. The loss was in the region of £12K and the fund managers decide to close this fund option, and we were offered the opportunity to re-invest again but this time in a slightly higher risk fund which also commanded higher fees. The CVAA board made the decision to turn this offer down and to withdraw our investment by transferring it back into our CAF bank deposit account. Nearly half of the loss was offset by the interest accrued during the time our investment was in the fund. It was also fortunate that interest rates on the CAF bank deposit account had increased greatly too making it a good place to return the money to.

Last year's conference was a tremendous success but although it was convenient being in London, from a transport perspective, all round costs were very high. This has led to the board endorsing a plan for this year's conference to be hosted in a member organisations region.

All funds have been spent wisely, with the boards oversight, and this has enabled the CVAA team to maintain a high level of service and support to members during a further period of extreme pressure. The deficit is offset by our healthy reserves, but we are conscious that these will slowly be eroded unless we reduce our spend and try to generate alternative income from some level of fundraising and by generating an improved up take of the Practice Programme.

Once again, we were grateful to members for the acceptance of the inflationary increase to the membership fee. This has enabled the team to maintain the input required to produce our strategy and manifesto which will be important documents as we begin working with a new government who need to hear that adoption is still an important form of permanence for a number of vulnerable children.

Whilst our reserves are earning a better rate of interest in our bank account these days, the board will consider again options for investment of a proportion of these to yield an alternative income.

As usual there are several people to thank for their support throughout the year:

Our accounts required an independent examination at the year-end rather than a full audit. This was carried out by our new auditors Mitchells Chartered Accountants. I would like to thank David Gair ACA for the thorough oversight of our accounts and for the resulting reports which outline that the accounts produced

were a true and fair view of the Charitable Company's affairs and presented for approval to the members as such at the Annual General Meeting of members on 18th September 2024.

Thanks also go to Trevor Hogg from our accountants TPA Accountancy for his oversight throughout the year and to Lisa Parkin at ARC Adoption NE who has been fastidious when it comes to paying our bills, ensuring our income arrives in a timely fashion and most importantly paying CVAA staff.

I would also once again like to acknowledge the tremendous support of the Finance Sub-Committee whose guidance has been invaluable throughout the year and to Satwinder who is constantly casting a keen eye on where savings can be made.

I would finally like to repeat last year's sentiment by thanking you our members for your staunch support, and for your continued use and contribution to the Practice Programme. I am sure once again that this reflects the value that we all continue to see in maintaining our membership and the gratitude we have for the tremendous service we receive from the CVAA team.

With a change of government, there will no doubt be fresh challenges in the year ahead for us all, but having CVAA in a strong position to guide us through these and to help us to not just survive but to flourish means we will be better able to serve the children and families who need the brilliant services you all provide.



Terry Fitzpatrick
Treasurer

3. Strategic Report – CVAA Activities and Achievements 2023-24

Highlights 2023/4



Overview

The last financial year was an important one for CVAA as it was our 30th Anniversary year, which we marked by producing a booklet of our history and impact. Early in the year, our Chief Executive of five years, Maggie Jones, announced that she would be stepping down from her role, and the search for a new CEO began. Satwinder Sandhu, who was already the CEO of a VAA and a former CVAA Board Member, was appointed in early 2024 and began in post in October 2024. After an extended period of turbulence across the Voluntary Adoption sector, and with many member agencies still in post-pandemic recovery, it was imperative that any handover was as seamless as possible, and we are indebted to Maggie for her support and care during this period, and for her years of service at CVAA. She left us an important legacy, and we are fortunate to continue to benefit from her expertise and wisdom.

Maggie's departure came amidst other important changes in the CVAA team. Alice Talbot, Head of Policy and Member Services, went on maternity leave in May 2024, and we were fortunate to secure Elizabeth Crowhurst as her cover. With a career steeped in policy, Elizabeth was also able to transition seamlessly from Alice to the benefit of members. Marie Brathwaite also joined the team in September 2024 to support the CVAA Practice Programme. The charity was fortunate to continue to benefit from the skills of Petra Jodlova, Head of Practice Development, Hayley Brooks, Communications & Business Support Officer and Emma Schindler, Data Analyst. Aside from managing personnel changes, during the first half of the year, Maggie and the team had set in motion the preparatory work for much of the output led by Satwinder from October to March too, which was substantial, given that this period saw the charity work towards launching a new strategy and hosting our annual member's conference. Much of the focus also involved us preparing an Adoption Manifesto for the voluntary adoption sector as we knew there would be a new government forming at some point in 2024. It remained a complicated time for Voluntary Adoption Agencies (VAAs) due to the lack of recognition of our contribution of adopters, support services and improved outcomes for children. This was evident from the absence of any funding from government to support the voluntary sector and reliance on spot purchasing arrangements from Regional Adoption Agencies (RAAs). This was further compounded by the absence of adoption in the government's review of Children's Social Care.

Nonetheless, CVAA continued to work closely alongside the statutory sector in adoption and to provide sector leadership alongside the newly formed national strategic team of Adoption England, whose remit was to work with RAAs. CVAA ensured that the role and position of VAAs was represented on a range of steering groups, working groups and boards, focussing on core issues such as adopter recruitment, assessment, adopter journey, early permanence, matching and adopter support.

Strategic Priorities

As agreed by the Board of Trustees in the last period, the defined strategic priorities for 2023-24 were:

- i) Dissemination of *A Home for me?* the social return on investment report published in late 2022, to encourage debate on the value of modern adoption in the wake of the English care review, the launch of The Promise in Scotland, imminent adoption legislation in North Ireland and the move to not-for-profit children's social care in Wales.

This work included the CVAA team and the Board presenting the report to a range of different stakeholders and audiences across the UK, with an initial focus in England. With compelling findings around the value of adoption when used as a form of permanence for the small group of children who continue to need it, CVAA wanted to ensure that the message was understood by decision makers in all four nations. Whilst some opportunities to do this were slower to emerge, an extensive process did roll out in Wales, which included Welsh VAAs, the National Adoption Service for Wales and the Welsh Government. In England, a key audience was ADCS, the Association for Directors of Children's Services, alongside the Department for Education and Adoption England.

CVAA was encouraged that the report was well received and respected across a range of key stakeholder audiences and therefore continued to develop a roll out plan.

- ii) Development of a 2024 to 2027 Strategic plan for CVAA in partnership with members and key stakeholders.

With the ongoing work at CVAA on 21st Century Adoption and the overall modernisation programme across the sector, it was essential for CVAA to develop a strategy that built on this work but also took the conversation further. This was particularly in recognition of the gap of the voice of adoptees that can often be missing or minimal in strategic thinking. The opportunity to consult with members and key stakeholders, including our associate members, Adoption UK and PAC-UK, culminated in an in-person event at the CVAA Member's Conference in London in November 2023, where we were encouraged with high levels of engagement and given a clear mandate from delegates to focus on the priorities that we eventually set.

- iii) Expanding audiences for the Practice programme to include foster carers and children's social workers.

Work on developing the CVAA Practice Programme audiences proved to be a challenge and in fact the programme saw a fall in attendance (and therefore revenue) overall, primarily due to pressures on training budgets and possible fatigue with more and more work generally being completed virtually. 35 Practice Programme events resulted in 756 tickets sold (compared to 39 events and 942 tickets sold in 2022-23). The value of the programme in offering cost-effective high-quality learning and training opportunities remains a key reason for CVAA's commitment to continue delivery.

Ongoing consideration of the Practice Programme's evolution and how we target our key priority audiences for expansion have been further strengthened by the launch of the Practice Programme Advisory Board. Made up from a range of volunteers with expertise in adoption, permanence, marketing, finance, learning and digital, we are incredibly grateful to those giving their time to CVAA to make the Practice Programme the best it can be.

- iv) Expanding our lobbying and influencing work in preparation for the general election to ensure all parties are aware of the work of VAAs and the reforms needed to achieve the benefits of 21st Century adoption for the children who need it.

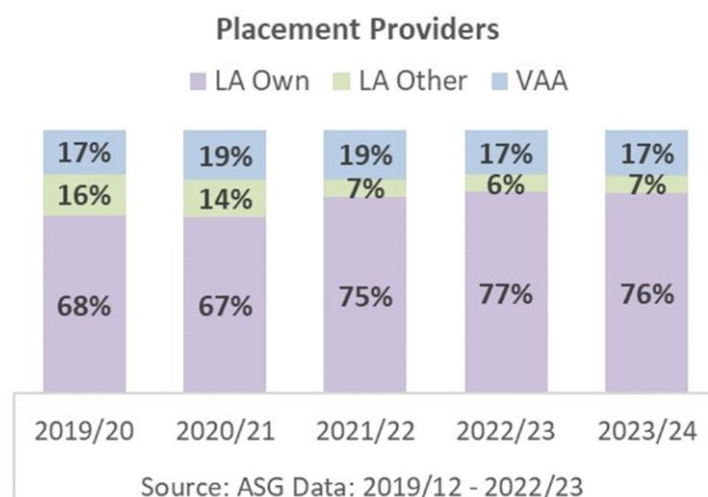
Key achievements during the year included the finalisation and launch of *My People*, which was CVAA's vision for a fully funded and supported hub to support the development of adopted children and young people being able to maintain relationships with key and important people from all stages of their lives. This model fully recognised the changes that modern adoption seeks to bring to adoption and how the role of adoption agencies is pivotal in supporting any ongoing plans for children and young people to ensure that they remain safe, supported and safeguarded. The CVAA team and members were also engaged with the work of Adoption England in maintaining relationships and the culture change programme underway as it was recognised that a unified approach to this area of practice was a key element of any success. The paper also allowed CVAA to engage in meaningful dialogue with the Department for Education about the reality of the resource required to deliver any vision for improvement.

CVAA led a lengthy consultation to formulate our response to the draft report of the Adoption Subgroup of the Public Law Working Group and we were immensely encouraged by the attendance of Hon Justice Judd at the CVAA Member's Conference as a keynote speaker on this matter. As a result, we were able to provide an extensive and comprehensive response to the report on all key areas, including that of adoptions with an international element, which remains a key output of VAAs on behalf of local authorities, but much misunderstood.

As we worked towards the election year, CVAA also consulted with members and key stakeholder partners such as Adoption UK, PAC-UK and Adoption England, about the priorities that we all wanted to see reset for the adoption sector by any new government. It was recognised that it was difficult to do this at Ministerial level due to the number of changes in the postholder leading up to this period. Nonetheless, we were again delighted that the Minister for Children in November 2023, David Johnston MP, did join our CVAA Member's Conference virtually to make a speech and host a live Q & A.

The CVAA team and Board of Trustees continued to meet with the adoption team at the Department for Education monthly which provided an ongoing and valuable forum for lobbying and engagement. Our CEO also met monthly with the Deputy Director for Adoption at the Department which further strengthened our relationship with key Civil Servants and provided a voice for issues pertinent to VAAs.

Data is increasingly important to the sector as it helps us to understand the true impact of policy, regulations and practice on the lives of the children for whom we all provide our services. Our team worked to increase the range of the data collected by CVAA from our members and how it could be analysed and put to use through the creation of Data Dashboards for our members. We also provided extensive analysis and comparison to the national Adoption & Special Guardianship Data produced by the government and Coram-i. Importantly data analysis showed that despite the challenges in the sector, VAAs in England (graph below) continued to provide 17% of all adopters and just over 20% across the UK. It was noted that more English children were being placed cross border into Wales and Scotland than previously.



All of this work assisted in the development of the CVAA Adoption Manifesto which we designed to be used as our key lobbying and messaging tool.

Governance

CVAA's Board of Trustees remained committed to supporting the work of the charity and took the role of governance very seriously. Andrew Webb was successfully re-elected as Chair of Trustees at our AGM and continued to provide expert, strategic and thoughtful stewardship to Maggie, Satwinder and the Board. The Board itself saw little change during the year with only one appointment, that of Emma Simpson, CEO of member VAA, CCS Adoption in Bristol. There was also one resignation, that of Satwinder Sandhu from the role of Trustee and Vice Chair in order to be eligible to apply for the CEO role at CVAA.

During the year work was undertaken by the CVAA team to explore the development of an Advisory Board/Group to supplement the impact of the Board as agreed following the last governance review. This proved to be slower than expected due to the idea being rescoped and other political priorities and the development of the CVAA Strategy being more urgent.

We are grateful to our Trustees who continue to provide time, focus, direction and support to the organisation whilst continuing to lead their own organisations.

Member Services

CVAA continued to provide extensive services to our members by always reviewing what we do and how we deliver it. Our weekly policy and news updates, as well as a broader monthly Newsletter continued to be popular and were revamped during the year to make them even more accessible and relevant to the sector. Maggie and then Satwinder continued to meet in person twice a year with our Celtic Members to ensure that dedicated time, space and strategy was in place to support CVAA's priorities in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. During this period a former member agency, Family Routes, resumed its adoption placement activities in Belfast and rejoined CVAA which we were delighted about.

Our successful Marketing Group made up of representatives from member agencies continued to evolve and grow and provide useful support to one another and to members. The group produced two excellent guides for prospective adopters on Adopting Brothers & Sisters and Adopting Children with Additional Needs. Both guides proved very popular through the digital reach achieved and more are planned. The group also formed closer relationships with the RAA Marketing Leads as they all consulted on the latest You Can Adopt campaigns in England. To support this work CVAA coordinate and delivered three bespoke courses to all marketing leads on a range of topical and practical issues.

Also in England, we continued to represent the voluntary sector on various national strategic and practice forums and were supported in this by a range of dedicated leaders and managers from member agencies, providing much needed capacity. This expanded to include two annual in person events for RAA and VAA leaders in England which Maggie and then Satwinder co-chaired and coordinated, providing valuable relationship building opportunities for those attending.

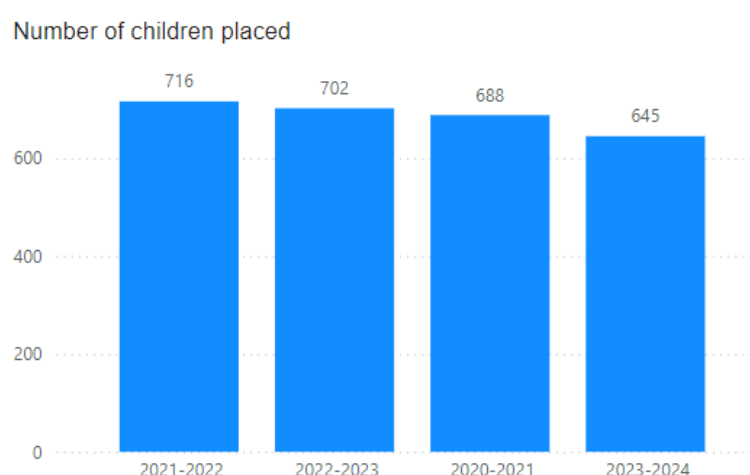
Regular meetings for CEOs continued to be held quarterly at the CEO Forum, attended by CEOs, Directors and Heads of Service. These meetings gave valuable opportunity for sharing of information, initiatives and a safe space to raise concerns and issues affecting agencies.

We were conscious that VAAs continued to face challenges with income and operations due the declining number of strategic partnerships and whilst the VAA market share of adopters remained fairly steady, some agencies were affected disproportionately. Following the closures experienced in recent years, two of our member agencies that worked nationally, SSAFA and Action for Children, decided to wind down their adoption services during this reporting period, with no more recruitment or placement from 2024-25. Any approved families without a link or match were transferred to other RAAs and VAAs following agreement from Ofsted, the regulator.

Our annual conference in November 2023, was held in London and jointly hosted by member agency, Coram. With the theme: 21st Century Adoption: responding to children's needs in the modern era, we provided a platform for a range of respected and dynamic speakers, including Lord Simon Woolley and Hon Justice Judd to inspire and challenge our members into acting on urgent issues such as racial disparity and sector diversity. We also had the talented young adoptees from In-Between Lines host a session and exhibition on adopted identities and showcase what true engagement with adoptees should look like. Alongside exploring European perspectives on contact and permanence, a further panel of adoptees and birth parents returned us to the realities of our work and four organisations provided dynamic workshops on important sector priorities, such as equitable work with the LGBTQ+ community and understanding modern concepts in adult relationships. The two days also gave us an opportunity for a celebration meal with members, delegates and guests where Norman Goodwin CBE, former CEO of Adoption Matters, former Trustee of CVAA and a founding member of CVAA presented his commemorative booklet on the history of CVAA celebrating 30 years of impact.

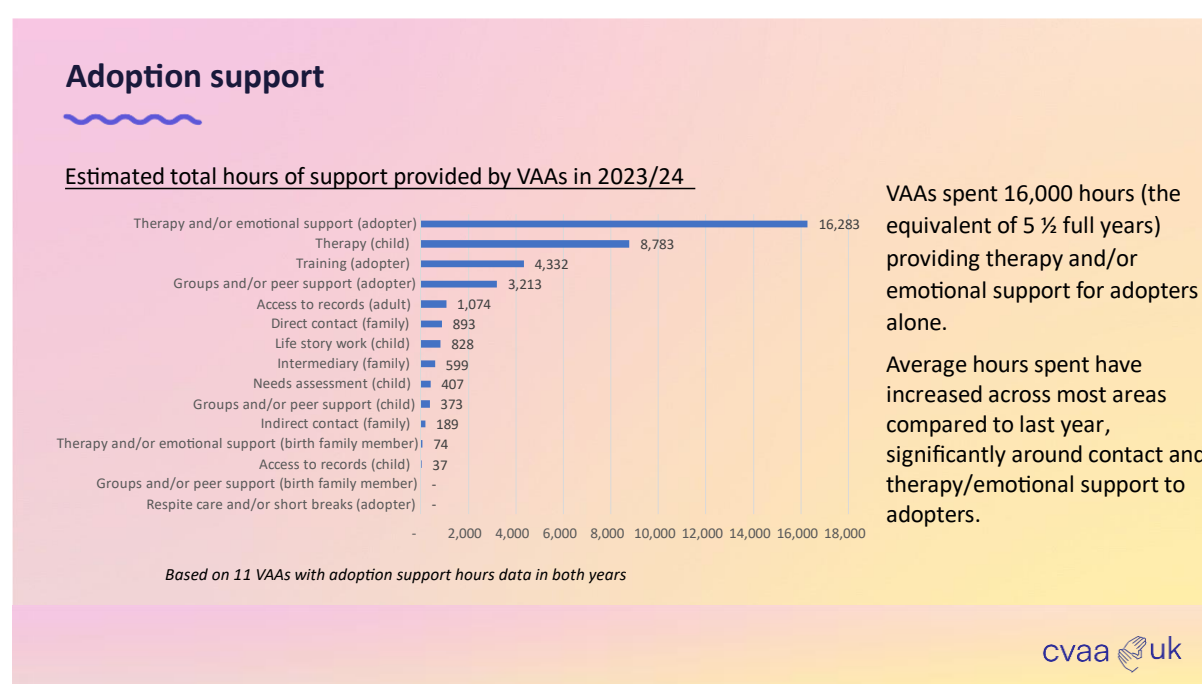
Performance

In 2023-24 CVAA's data collection showed that VAAs placed 645 children for adoption. This number is lower than the previous 3 years and reflective of the decreasing number of children being successfully matched as well as the emerging issues in adopter sufficiency. 500 of these children were from England.



In 2023/24 VAAs placed 445 'priority' children – fewer than in any of the previous 3 years. In 2022/23 this number was 527. This year over a quarter of children placed (159) had no known characteristics that would make them likely to wait longer. Whilst VAAs continue to approve high numbers of adopters for priority group children, the general levels of sufficiency of adopters saw many of them take younger children, single children and children with overall lower levels of need. Whilst this was positive for every single child successfully placed, it does raise strategic concerns about the impact of longer term sufficiency issues on the unique offer of VAAs.

As always, Adoption Support was a core offer from VAAs and often supported from fundraising and reserves, in order to ensure all children and families got what they needed without delay. At a time when increasing numbers of VAA adopters were waiting longer and longer for assessment of need from RAAs to access the Adoption & Special Guardianship Support Fund, this was a positive result, as shown in the breakdown below from our analysis of VAA data collected by CVAA.



Looking ahead

As we look forward to the next year, we have our strategic priorities set and will work with members to deliver the first phase of our strategy.

Strategic Priority 1 – Identity and Connection

Ensuring that adoptees are supported by informed, empathetic adopters and VAAs, so that they develop a lifelong positive sense of identity and belonging, underpinned by continuing connections and ongoing meaningful relationships with the people that matter to them.

Strategic Priority 2 – Adopter and workforce diversity

Supporting VAAs to embed learning and changes so that adopters from a wide range of ethnic, cultural and social backgrounds, with varied lived experiences, feel confident coming forward to adopt and that all services are delivered through an equitable and inter-sectional approach, rooted in anti-discriminatory practice.

Strategic Priority 3 – Championing the modernisation of adoption

Working with members, adopted people and their families, and stakeholders across the UK, to influence and shape the modernisation of adoption, increasing understanding of the imperative for change and the benefits for children and families.

Whilst in 2024/25 we will be losing two member VAAs who work on a national scale, we shall continue to work hard for our remaining members right across the UK to ensure that collectively we deliver more adopters for the children who continue to wait for adoption, whilst at the same time lobbying government in all four nations to recognise, value and support the essential contribution of VAAs, without whom the adoption sector would struggle.

CVAA thanks its members for their continued support of our work and for championing the rights of adoptees and adopters.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Satwinder Sandhu', with a stylized, cursive script.

Satwinder Sandhu
Chief Executive Officer

4. Celtic Nations' Report

There have been two meetings of the Celtic Nations agencies during the 12 months period of this review; Cardiff in October 2023 and Edinburgh in March 2024. The membership of the CVAA Celtic Nations group currently includes Sue Brunton, Scottish Adoption & Fostering, Jacqueline Sheeran, St. Margaret's Children & Family Care Society, Wendy Keidan, St. David's Children's Society, Stephen Small, St. Andrew's Children's Society and Maggie McSorley Family Care Adoption Services. Barnardo's are also represented by a manager from whatever country in which the meeting is being held. Family Routes, in Belfast, also rejoined CVAA UK during this year after recommencing their adoption placement activities and we are pleased to welcome Lynda Wilson to our group.

We would like to acknowledge the support Maggie Jones offered to this group before she retired from her post, and we are pleased that Satwinder Sandhu plans to engage actively with us to keep us informed of CVAA UK developments and to listen to us about the current practices and challenges in the devolved nations.

As with our English member colleagues, we have worked hard to disseminate the finding of the social return on investment analysis *A Home for Me?* Report within our own countries and this will continue to be a focus in the year ahead.

In the first part of this year, the agencies in Northern Ireland, continued to be impacted by the suspension of the Northern Ireland Assembly. However, there is some hope that they can now move forward in the implementation of the new adoption legislation since the Assembly started to function again early in 2024. Despite this, a decision to reduce significantly (by 50%) core funding to the voluntary sector for this financial year leaves our member agencies in The Province with real uncertainties about future funding and its impact on their services going forward. The one positive has been that the Social and Health Care Trusts are showing signs that they are more willing to use the VAAs and pay the Inter-Agency Fee. I think the agencies' willingness to invoice for the fee on a 12 monthly basis rather than in one go may have helped make the difference.

In Scotland, this year has seen our agencies begin to feel more positive again about the numbers of children who are being registered for permanency. For the first time since 2007 there has been a rise in these numbers, which we hope indicates a willingness to move children to their permanent home as quickly as possible. This is further supported by agencies noting a trend towards early placement of younger children by a growing number of local authorities. Whether this is as a result of the impact of The Promise is uncertain and we wait to see if this trend is sustained. This has also meant that member agencies need to think about how our preparation of families might need to change to respond to this.

In Wales the National Adoption Service is now well established and providing good leadership on national initiatives to improve practice across The Principality. It has been a tough year in terms of placement numbers for our members, however National data seems to show that the Welsh regions are struggling to recruit adopters and with Placement Orders up by 21% this presents an opportunity for the voluntary sector. The sector in Wales also welcomes the Welsh Government's efforts to eliminate profit from the provision of care for children.

Summary

The Celtic Agencies value the support offered by the CEO and the Board of Trustees of CVAA UK. As always, we must be vigilant in ensuring that divergent systems in the four Nations do not hamper our ability to work in a UK context to ensure the VAAs remain focussed on the permanency needs of children everywhere.



Stephen Small

On behalf the Celtic Nations

5. *Trustees' Annual Report*

5.1 *Trustees*

Director/Trustee Name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year
Andrew Webb	Chair	
Satwinder Sandhu	Vice Chair	Resigned 4 th April 2023
Terry Fitzpatrick	Treasurer	
Brenda Farrell		
Emma Simpson		Appointed 14 th September 2023
Anna Sharkey		
Stephen Small		
Natausha van Vliet		
Judith Vaughan		
Susy White		

Name of Company Secretary

Satwinder Sandhu

Appointed 15th November 2023

Maggie Jones

Resigned 15th November 2023

Name of Senior Staff Members

Chief Executive Officer:

Satwinder Sandhu

Appointed 2nd October 2023

Maggie Jones

Resigned 30th September 2023

Head of Policy and Member Services

Alice Talbot

Head of Practice Development

Elizabeth Crowhurst

(Maternity cover from May 2023)

Petra Jodlova

Registered Office

C/o ARC, Unit 29, The Business Innovation Centre, Wearside, Sunderland, SR5 2TA

Bankers

CAF Bank Ltd, 25 King's Hill Avenue, King's Hill, West Malling, Kent, ME19 4JQ.

Independent Examiners

Mitchells Chartered Accountants, Swallow House, Parsons Road, Washington, NE37 1EZ

5.2 *Statement of Trustees Responsibilities*

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Report of the Trustees and the Financial Statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Practice). Company law requires that Trustees prepare Financial Statements for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of the state of the affairs of the company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including income and expenditure for that period. In preparing these Financial Statements, the Trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently.
- Observe the methods and principles in the charity SORP.
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent; and
- prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Charity will continue in business.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Charity and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The Trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the Charity's website. It is important to bear in mind that legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of Financial Statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

In so far as the Trustees are aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the Independent Examiner is unaware.

The Trustees have taken all the steps that they ought to have taken as a Trustee-Director in order to make himself or herself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the Independent Examiner are aware of that information.

The Chief Executive is appointed by the Trustees to manage the day-to-day operations of the Charity. The Chief Executive is charged with the duty of accounting to the Board and making recommendations on plans and policy.

5.3 *Structure, Governance and Management*

The Charity is a Company limited by guarantee (Company number 5275491) and a Charity (Charity registration number 1108318) and is governed by its constitution.

The Trustees are responsible for the management of the Charity, and they form the Board. The Board meets at least four times a year. Appointment to the Board is by election of the members by a simple majority. Trustees are elected from the member agencies. The Chief Executive attends all meetings of the Board.

Appointment and Recruitment of Trustees

Members of the Charity nominate Trustees in accordance with the Constitution. An annual audit identifies gaps in representation and nominations to address these are sought. Members can be co-opted to the Board for a period before nomination. Job Descriptions and Person Specifications have been agreed for the Chair, Treasurer, Vice Chair and Trustees to provide clarity about the role and responsibilities.

Trustees Induction and Training

New Trustees undergo an induction process to brief them on their legal obligations under Charity and Company Law, the content of the Memorandum and Articles of Association, the recent financial performance of the charity and the financial projections. Trustees are encouraged to attend training events where these may aid their appreciation and understanding of CVAA and facilitate their functioning as Trustees. The Board tests compliance with the each of the Principles of Good Governance as part of its regular meetings and training opportunities are regularly circulated to Trustees.

Organisation

All members of the Board undertake tasks on behalf of CVAA as is illustrated elsewhere in this report. In summary:

- Officer positions on the Board
- Chair or member of a subgroup
- Delivery of training and consultancy
- Representation of CVAA at a national level e.g., meetings with the Department for Education (DfE); National Adoption Service Cymru, Adoption England, Ofsted
- Representing the VAA sector in joint working groups with statutory partners such as Regional Adoption Agencies (England) and local authorities
- Contact with the media.

CVAA recognises and values the time that the Board give to these issues; as a small organisation, it would not be possible to meet all the demands without such voluntary contribution. In addition, ARC Adoption NE have provided financial management to CVAA which has been very much appreciated. All members of staff report either directly or indirectly to the Chief Executive and the Chief Executive reports to the Chair.

Risk Management

A risk register is maintained and discussed by the full Board at each meeting, new mitigating actions proposed where the level of risk is judged to have increased; new risks are proposed and added to the register, or closed, as necessary.

Much of the Charity's approach to risk is determined by a thorough appreciation of the environment in which the Charity operates, and by ensuring that appropriate, experienced, and qualified members of staff are recruited and further are appropriately trained.

5.4 Objectives and Activities for the Public Benefit

Summary of the objects of the charity set out in the Constitution (governing document)

CVAA's objects (the Objects) are:

"to develop standards of excellence in all matters relating to adoption, good practice and management throughout the voluntary sector for the benefit of the public, and in particular to maximise the contribution of Voluntary Adoption Agencies by influencing policy and practice of adoption in the UK at the National, Regional and Local levels and to directly increase the number of children successfully placed for adoption by promoting liaison and collaborative partnership working practices between voluntary adoption agencies and all other stakeholders"

The Trustees confirm that they have referred to the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit when reviewing the charities aims and objectives and in planning future activities.

The focus of our work: a summary of the main activities in relation to these objects

Representation	of member voluntary adoption agencies' views at local, regional, and national levels across all sectors
Promotion	of the voluntary adoption sector's commitment to achieving appropriate and timely permanence for children

Liaison	between voluntary organisations and statutory agencies by encouraging networking opportunities and forums for members
Development	of CVAA as a national partnership that responds to the needs of all member agencies whilst acknowledging those of the statutory agencies we work with.
Support	of member agencies by maintaining a national database, collection, and analysis of voluntary adoption agency statistics, maintaining the interagency fee, encouraging internal efficiencies, providing advocacy and consultation on adoption matters, driving upwards standards of excellence and promoting collaborative working practices through an extensive programme of professional development.

5.5 Reserves Policy

Charity Law requires that the Directors and Trustees should have a policy for holding reserves. The purpose of the policy is to enable any monies which belong to CVAA, and which are not required in the immediate future for the running of the charity, to be used to generate further income.

The Reserves Policy will:

- preserve the viability of CVAA as a Charity and Company Limited by Guarantee
- enable the Charity to meet its legal objects
- provide seed capital for strategic developments should this be required pending receipt of an awarded grant or new income stream
- provide confidence to supporters and donors seeking to give financial support to a prudently controlled charity
- ensure that, consistent with the objects, mission statement and values of CVAA proper ethical consideration be afforded to all matters of investment
- ensure that the reserves are at a level sufficient to discharge all the Charity's obligations should the Charity cease its operations.

Desired level of Reserves

In the preparation of the accounts, there has been consideration of the level of reserves which the charity needs to maintain in order to ensure that it would be in a position to meet all of its liabilities should it at any time cease to operate and also to smooth fluctuations in membership as the primary source of income, in order to maintain high quality services to beneficiaries. The value of the reserves required will vary during the year. In calculating the value of reserves there needs to be regard for the following:

- annual running costs of the charity in maintaining essential services
- contractual notice periods of the officers of the charity
- expenses payable to any of the member organisations whose representatives are Trustees of the Charity
- settlement of any other commitments where notice is required to end the contractual arrangement
- other costs payable and due to third parties.

Steps to Establish the Reserves Policy

To maintain appropriate levels of reserves the Trustees have determined that:

- any legacies, which have no restriction placed upon them by the terms of their donation, are considered to be general reserves
- expenditure plans agreed by the Board are examined at quarterly intervals by the Treasurer and Finance & Audit Subcommittee and funds required to finance such may be removed from general

reserves as necessary for the attainment of its broad objects. Funds may, from time to time, be designated for specific purposes

Monitoring and Reviewing the Policy

The Trustees have agreed that:

- day-to-day operational responsibility for the implementation of this policy be vested in the Treasurer and the Finance & Audit Subcommittee and (supported by the finance professionals in their agency)
- monitoring is undertaken, on a quarterly basis and reported to the next meeting of the Board
- the policy is subject to at least a bi-annual review by the Board specifically to confirm the level of Reserves required for the year ahead to meet all obligations.

5.6 Investment Policy

CVAA will invest the reserves appropriately with any investment to be of low risk. An appropriate balance is to be struck between income and capital growth to enable CVAA to support its charitable works and help achieve its objects.

The Trustees have developed an investment policy with the aim of achieving an improved return on investments to support the charity at time of reducing membership fees. The policy is consistent with the Reserves Policy and will seek to:

- i. maintain the value of CVAA reserves in line with inflation in order to sustain the long-term viability of the charity and where possible to achieve capital growth
- ii. create an income stream to replace membership fees lost over the past few years and in anticipation of further reductions through member mergers
- iii. support activities which benefit CVAA members and achieve the organisation's strategic ambitions.
- iv. maintain the optimal balance between funds necessary for the efficient day to day operation of the organisation and maximizing returns on additional funds to generate income.

Decision making, management and reporting

The CVAA Trustee Board will make final decisions on investments after receiving reports and relevant professional advice sought by the Finance and Audit Subcommittee. The Finance and Audit Subcommittee have delegated authority to:

- i. seek expert advice on investment options within the risk parameters set by the Board
- ii. investigate and assess charges and other costs of investment options, including those for the professional support and management of funds
- iii. monitor the performance of investments, including through receiving quarterly reports from investment managers
- iv. meet, either in person or virtually, with professional advisors as necessary, but as a minimum once per year, to recommend changes in investments to the Board, in response to changes in external markets and/or CVAA circumstances

- v. liaise with and monitor the performance of investment managers with delegated authority to move funds on behalf of CVAA within the parameters set by the Board.

The Board will review investment performance and assess returns against targets on an annual basis alongside consideration of the outturn figures for the preceding financial year, to ensure that the right balance of liquid and longer-term investment is in place to support CVAA's immediate and longer-term resource needs. This review will also include an assessment of the performance of investment advisors/managers against the objectives of the policy. During this year a decision was made to withdraw funds from investments which were performing badly.

5.7 Independent Examiners

The Trustees will commission an independent examination of the financial operations of the charity each year from a qualified auditor.

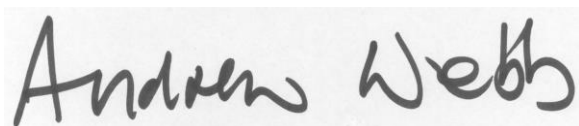
This report has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies. The financial reports were approved by the Board of Trustees and Members on 18h September 2024.

5.8 Financial Review

The incoming resources of CVAA for the year ended 31st March 2024 were £236,286 after the deduction of resources expended of £272,246; the net position of the charity was a deficit of £35,960.

The retained unrestricted funds of the charity are £463,521.

Approved by order of the Board of Trustees and signed on its behalf by:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andrew Webb". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Andrew Webb
Chair of Trustees
December 2024

6. CVAA Members

Action for Children Adoption
Adopters for Adoption
Adoption Focus
Adoption Matters
ARC Adoption North East
Barnardo's
Birmingham Children's Trust
Caritas Care
CCS Adoption
Coram Capital Adoption
Diagrama Foundation
Family Care Adoption Services (Celtic member)
Family Futures CIC
Family Routes (Celtic member)
IAC – The Centre for Adoption (now Coram IAC)
Nugent Care
PAC-UK (Associate member)
Parents and Children Together (PACT)
Scottish Adoption & Fostering (Celtic member)
SSAFA
St Andrew's Children's Society (Celtic member)
St David's Children's Society (Celtic member)
St Margaret's Children & Family Care Society (Celtic member)
Yorkshire Adoption Agency

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Consortium of Voluntary Adoption Agencies UK Limited ('the Company')

I report to the Charity Trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Company for the year ended 31st March 2024.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the Charity's Trustees of the Company (and also its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the Company are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your charity's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5) (b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Company as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
4. the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities (applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)).

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

SIGNATURE



David Gair ACA
Mitchells Chartered Accountants
Swallow House,
Parsons Road,
Washington,
NE37 1EZ

Date: 9th December 2024

**CONSORTIUM OF VOLUNTARY ADOPTION
AGENCIES UK LIMITED**

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted fund £	31/3/24 Total funds £	31/3/23 Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM					
Charitable activities					
Membership costs		220,386	-	220,386	233,698
Conference & Other income		8,021	-	8,021	8,000
Investment income	2	<u>2,879</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2,879</u>	<u>3,872</u>
Total		<u>231,286</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>231,286</u>	<u>245,570</u>
 EXPENDITURE ON					
Charitable activities					
Membership costs		<u>267,246</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>267,246</u>	<u>301,754</u>
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)		(35,960)	-	(35,960)	(56,184)
 RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS					
Total funds brought forward		<u>499,481</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>499,481</u>	<u>555,665</u>
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		<u><u>463,521</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>463,521</u></u>	<u><u>499,481</u></u>

**CONSORTIUM OF VOLUNTARY ADOPTION
AGENCIES UK LIMITED (REGISTERED NUMBER: 05275491)**

**BALANCE SHEET
31 MARCH 2024**

	Notes	31/3/24 £	31/3/23 £
CURRENT ASSETS			
Debtors	6	29,631	138
Cash at bank		<u>471,229</u>	<u>526,204</u>
		500,860	526,342
CREDITORS			
Amounts falling due within one year	7	(37,339)	(26,861)
		<u>463,521</u>	<u>499,481</u>
NET CURRENT ASSETS			
		<u>463,521</u>	<u>499,481</u>
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES			
		<u>463,521</u>	<u>499,481</u>
NET ASSETS		<u>463,521</u>	<u>499,481</u>
FUNDS	9		
Unrestricted funds		<u>463,521</u>	<u>499,481</u>
TOTAL FUNDS		<u>463,521</u>	<u>499,481</u>

The charitable company is entitled to exemption from audit under Section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 for the year ended 31 March 2024.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024 in accordance with Section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

The trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for

- ensuring that the charitable company keeps accounting records that comply with Sections 386 and 387 of the Companies Act 2006 and
- preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company as at the end of each financial year and of its surplus or deficit for each financial year in accordance with the requirements of Sections 394 and 395 and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the charitable company.

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to charitable companies subject to the small company's regime. The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on 11th December 2024 and were signed on its behalf by:



.....
Terence Fitzpatrick - Trustee

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparing the financial statements

The financial statements of the charitable company, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)', Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' and the Companies Act 2006. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

Income

All income is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities once the charity has entitlement to the funds, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

Expenditure

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to that expenditure, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all cost related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

Taxation

The charity is exempt from corporation tax on its charitable activities.

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the trustees.

Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the financial statements.

2. INVESTMENT INCOME

	31/3/24	31/3/23
	£	£
Deposit account interest	15,031	3,872
Loss on disposal of investments	(12,152)	-
Total	<u>2879</u>	<u>3,872</u>

3. TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS

There were no trustees' remuneration or other benefits for the year ended 31 March 2024 nor for the year ended 31 March 2023.

No Trustee or any other person related to the Charity had any personal interest in any contract or any transaction entered into by the Charity during the period.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

3. TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS - continued

Trustees' expenses

During the year payments made to the value of £1,941 were made to 5 Trustees or their employing organisations for travel expenses (£1,923 in 2023 paid to 4 Trustees or their employing organisations).

4. STAFF COSTS

The average monthly number of employees during the year was as follows:

	31/3/24	31/3/23
Management and Administration	1	1
Direct Charity Workers	<u>5</u>	<u>4</u>
	<u>6</u>	<u>5</u>

The number of employees whose employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs) exceeded £60,000 was:

	31/3/24	31/3/23
£60,001 - £70,000	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>

5. COMPARATIVES FIGURES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted fund £	Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM			
Charitable activities			
Membership costs	233,698	-	233,698
Conference & Other income	8,000	-	8,000
Investment income	<u>3,872</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>3,872</u>
Total	<u>245,570</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>245,570</u>
EXPENDITURE ON			
Charitable activities			
Membership costs	<u>301,754</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>301,754</u>
NET INCOME	(56,184)	-	(56,184)
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS			
Total funds brought forward	<u>555,665</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>555,665</u>
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	<u>499,481</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>499,481</u>

**CONSORTIUM OF VOLUNTARY ADOPTION
AGENCIES UK LIMITED**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

6. DEBTORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	31/3/24	31/3/23
	£	£
Trade and other debtors	<u>29,631</u>	<u>138</u>

7. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	31/3/24	31/3/23
	£	£
Trade creditors	1,036	8,788
Other creditors	1,827	2,621
Accruals and deferred income	<u>34,476</u>	<u>15,452</u>
	<u>37,339</u>	<u>26,861</u>

8. ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted fund	31/3/24 Total funds	31/3/23 Total funds
	£	£	£	£
Current assets	500,860	-	500,860	526,342
Current liabilities	<u>(37,339)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(37,339)</u>	<u>(26,861)</u>
	<u>463,521</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>463,521</u>	<u>499,481</u>

9. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS

	At 1/4/23 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31/3/23 £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	434,481	(35,960)	398,521
Closure costs	<u>65,000</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>65,000</u>
	<u>499,481</u>	<u>(35,960)</u>	<u>463,521</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>499,481</u>	<u>(35,960)</u>	<u>463,521</u>

Net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	231,438	(267,398)	(35,960)
	<u>231,438</u>	<u>(267,398)</u>	<u>(35,960)</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>231,438</u>	<u>(267,398)</u>	<u>(35,960)</u>

**CONSORTIUM OF VOLUNTARY ADOPTION
AGENCIES UK LIMITED**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

9. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

Comparatives for movement in funds

	At 1/4/22 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31/3/23 £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	490,665	(56,184)	434,481
Closure costs	<u>65,000</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>65,000</u>
	<u>555,665</u>	<u>(56,184)</u>	<u>499,481</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u><u>555,665</u></u>	<u><u>(56,184)</u></u>	<u><u>499,481</u></u>

Comparative net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	245,570	(301,754)	(56,184)
	<u>245,570</u>	<u>(301,754)</u>	<u>(56,184)</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u><u>245,570</u></u>	<u><u>(301,754)</u></u>	<u><u>(56,184)</u></u>

A current year 12 months and prior year 12 months combined position is as follows:

	At 1/4/22 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31/3/23 £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	490,665	(92,144)	398,521
Closure costs	<u>65,000</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>65,000</u>
	<u>555,665</u>	<u>(92,144)</u>	<u>463,521</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u><u>555,665</u></u>	<u><u>(92,144)</u></u>	<u><u>463,521</u></u>

A current year 12 months and prior year 12 months combined net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	476,856	(569,000)	(92,144)
	<u>476,856</u>	<u>(569,000)</u>	<u>(92,144)</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u><u>476,856</u></u>	<u><u>(569,000)</u></u>	<u><u>(92,144)</u></u>

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

9. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

Unrestricted Designated funds:

The Trustees have decided that it is prudent to set aside a sum of money which would be required to cover the closure costs should the Charity cease to operate. This designated fund is currently £65,000.

10. RELATED PARTY DISCLOSURES

There were no related party transactions for the year ended 31 March 2024.

**CONSORTIUM OF VOLUNTARY ADOPTION
AGENCIES UK LIMITED**

**DETAILED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

	31/3/24 £	31/3/23 £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS		
Investment income		
Deposit account interest	15,031	3,872
Loss on disposal of investment	(12,152)	-
	<u>2879</u>	<u>3872</u>
Charitable activities		
Membership fees	157,288	154,904
Other income	13,021	8,000
Online webinar	63,098	78,794
	233,407	241,698
Total incoming resources	236,286	245,570
EXPENDITURE		
Charitable activities		
Staffing	205,194	186,675
Practice event costs	9,852	12,700
ICT & other costs	1,064	3,441
Overheads	5,321	5,648
Accountancy fees	1,298	2,156
Property costs	7,378	8,988
Travel costs	6,100	7,162
Financial management	8,692	9,274
Consultancy	1,006	50,920
Members events & AGM	24,400	12,867
Board & Trustees expenses	1,941	1,923
	<u>272,246</u>	<u>301,754</u>
Total resources expended	<u>272,246</u>	<u>301,754</u>
Net (expenditure)/income	<u>(35,960)</u>	<u>(56,184)</u>

CONSORTIUM OF VOLUNTARY ADOPTION AGENCIES UK LIMITED

England & Wales - Charity number 1108318

Accounts



Consortium of Voluntary Adoption Agencies

Annual Report and Financial Statements

1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023

Consortium of Voluntary Adoption Agencies UK Ltd (CVAA)

Registered charity number 1108318

Company Number 5275491

Registered Office

C/o ARC, Unit 29, The Business Innovation Centre, Wearside, Sunderland, SR5 2TA

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Across the UK the number of children for whom adoption is sought has continued to fall; and whilst the number of care applications by local authorities appears to have peaked, far too many children in long term placements do not have a strong permanence plan.

The family justice system has not recovered from the impact of the Covid pandemic and the Government's proposed reforms of children's social care in England provide no quick fixes. Black children and those from other ethnic minorities wait longer to be adopted than white children. Research evidence demonstrates that adoption can secure some of the best life-time outcomes for our most vulnerable children, but it is not being recommended for children who just a few years ago would have been found loving, permanent families. The care and justice systems are currently not working well.

CVAA has continued to both push for better use of the current adoption system, and to support reform to make it fit for the 21st Century in the light of new research evidence and changing social values. We commissioned *"A Home for Me?"*, a comparative review of the value of different forms of permanence for children, and launched it at an event at the House of Lords and also with the Welsh Government. As the year goes on, we will continue to promote its findings with a wide range of stakeholders, including the legal, social care and judicial communities. The report's findings have been acknowledged by the judiciary in the report of the Public Law Working Group and we will build on this to try to bust a few myths that appear to be undermining the use of adoption.

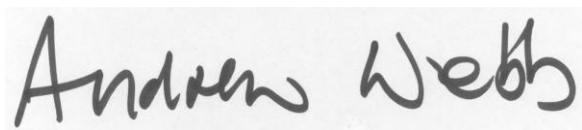
Our work on modernising adoption will continue, with maintaining significant relationships being a key area where CVAA's combination of conceptual, analytical leadership and practical solutions make an important contribution to the increasing understanding that the current systems and services are wholly inadequate for supporting children's lifetime identities. Our annual conference held in was well attended and included a powerful input from adoptive and birth mothers who gave fresh impetus to our determination to press on with the modernisation of adoption. CVAA will continue to advocate on behalf of our most vulnerable children and fight for policy change and practice improvement.

The past year has also been very busy within the VAA sector. Our practice programme has continued to grow and has successfully delivered more expert led sessions in response to member feedback. Sadly, two member organisations, Families for Children and St Francis Children's Society closed primarily as a consequence of both falling numbers and a continuing unhelpful squeeze on the interagency fee. Ruth Marriott and Wendy Keidan left the CVAA Board, and both are missed as they were tireless contributors to our complex agenda; however, Susy White joined the board and is already making a mark.

Which brings me to the biggest change facing CVAA in recent years: Maggie Jones has decided to leave us in the autumn. Maggie joined CVAA as Chief Executive in 2018, having had a range of policy and leadership roles in the national voluntary sector. She has led the organisation through some very difficult times, always with optimism and passion. CVAA has strong governance, has worked with partners and stakeholders to develop and press innovative policy and has never shied away from the challenges the sector faces on behalf of vulnerable children and potential adopters – thanks in no small part to Maggie. I will miss working with her and the sector will feel the loss.

Looking to the future, Satwinder Sandhu has been appointed as CVAA's new Chief Executive and I am confident that the sector will benefit hugely from his perspective and leadership experience (gained most

recently with IAC, which is joining the Coram group). Satwinder is a passionate advocate for the modernisation of adoption and I look forward to working with him to achieve positive change for children .

A handwritten signature in black ink on a light grey background. The signature reads "Andrew Webb" in a cursive, slightly informal script. The first name "Andrew" is written in a single line, and the last name "Webb" is written below it, with the 'W' and 'b' being prominent.

Andrew Webb

Chair of CVAA

June 2023

1. Treasurer's Report

In the last financial year, we were all continuing to adapt, like many sectors, to a new way of managing our working practices but the joy was the fact that we were able to meet with people in person when it was practical to do so. In that respect, CVAA was no different to any other agency, we enjoyed being face to face in Cardiff for our conference but, when more cost effective to do so, we continued to hold virtual meetings.

This approach has I believe resulted in CVAA having a reasonable financial outcome as reflected in the year end accounts. We didn't achieve a surplus as in recent years, but our deficit was in the main the result of a reduction in the number of membership fees due to closures, an increase in the amount of travel by staff and trustees with there being more face-to-face events and the impact of considerable increases in the cost of this travel.

A further large expenditure came from the commissioning of the Sonnet Social return on Investment (SROI), A Home for Me, report to support the position of adoption as a valid form of permanence for some of our most vulnerable children. The board agreed that, although the initial spending on this would show up as expenditure in our balance sheets, it should ultimately come from our existing reserves and show up in our end of year accounts as having done so.

We ended up with an overall deficit of £56,184, of which £50,000 was attributable to the Sonnet study. This acceptable figure was achieved once again by the tremendous contribution made by the Practice Programme for which Petra and Chemein must take a great deal of credit. The whole team though played their part by exercising a sensible and prudent approach to expenditure.

All funds have been spent wisely and this has enabled the CVAA team to maintain a high level of service and support to members during a period of extreme pressure, when the whole concept of adoption is being questioned and the position of VAA's has been constantly under threat.

As always, our main source of funding comes from membership fees. We do understand how much financial pressure all agencies are under, with increasing running costs and fewer opportunities for our families to be matched, but we were extremely grateful once again that continued membership was given a priority by member agencies and that the annual inflationary rise was accommodated. This year, the CVAA board took the difficult decision to increase the membership fee by 5% for 23/24. Whilst this was well below the rate of inflation, we understood that any increase would be difficult, but members also understood that no increase would make CVAA unsustainable in the long term and that the whole sector would suffer greatly if this were to happen.

Unfortunately, as was the case the previous year, we lost two further member agencies in the last financial year. If this pattern continues or indeed more agencies close or merge, it will require the Board, in conjunction with members, to consider CVAA's longer term position.

The Practice Programme remained our primary mechanism for offsetting any loss of membership fees and as planned there was investment in this area to support the work that Petra undertakes and consequently Chemein joined the team to help facilitate further expansion of the programme. Board feels strongly that supporting this expansion is crucial as it is important to enhance its income generation capabilities further.

As suggested last year, the Board agreed a low-risk investment strategy for some of our reserves, to create another income stream. Advice was sought from a financial adviser around ethical investment portfolios and the Board agreed to work with Eden Tree Investment Management. An investment of £271K was made at the beginning of the new financial year and hopefully this will bring in a modest income for the organisation whilst at the same time ensuring that there is easy access to funds to meet our liabilities should the need arise.

These strategies of income generation and consideration of other further fund-raising opportunities in the year ahead are all being employed to offset CVAAs dependency on income from membership fees.

So, another busy year ahead but we will all need to make time to read the Financial Times and follow our investment performance!

As usual there are several people to thank for their support throughout the year:

Once again, our accounts required an independent examination at the year-end rather than a full audit. This was carried out by Paul Woodburn from the auditors Wallwork, Nelson and Johnson. I would like to thank Paul for his thorough oversight of our accounts and for the resulting reports which outline that the accounts produced were a true and fair view of the Charitable Company's affairs and can be presented for approval to the members as such at the Annual General Meeting of members on 14th September 2023.

Thanks also go to Trevor Hogg from our accountants TPA Accountancy for helping to keep us on track throughout the year and to Lisa Parkin at ARC Adoption NE who has once again been fastidious when it comes to paying our bills, ensuring our income arrives in a timely fashion and most importantly paying CVAA staff.

I would also once again like to acknowledge the tremendous support of the Finance Sub-Committee whose challenge and advice has been invaluable throughout the year and to Maggie who is fastidious in ensuring she maintains a keen eye on our financial health.

I would finally like to repeat last year's statement by thanking you our members for your unwavering support, I have already referenced your acceptance of the increase in membership fee that took place in the year 22/23 and for your understanding about the further increase for 23/24, but I think your ongoing support of the Practice Programme and your contribution to its delivery is worthy of mention again too. I am sure this reflects the value that we all continue to see in our membership and the gratitude we have for the phenomenal service we receive from the CVAA team.

As is the case in most years, there will no doubt be fresh challenges in the year ahead for us all, but having CVAA in a strong position to guide us through these and to help us to not just survive but to flourish and perhaps diversify means we will be better able to serve the children and families who need the first-class services you all provide.



Terry Fitzpatrick
Treasurer
June 2023

2. Strategic Report – CVAA Activities and Achievements 2022-23

The voluntary adoption sector continues to do vital and inspiring work with children and families across the UK in a very challenging environment. Agencies have faced the challenges of the historic adoption enquiries this year alongside the continuing fall in children with adoption as their permanency plan. Adoptive families continue to face difficulties arising from the impact of the Covid epidemic on children and young people so demand for post adoption support is on the rise at a time when charitable fundraising has become harder due to cost of living pressures. CVAA has worked through the year to keep members fully informed of, at times, rapidly changing policy and practice through our weekly updates and bring members together for peer support and practice development opportunities through the Practice Programme. The CVAA staff team and Board of Trustees have remained focussed on providing the best possible support to members through the year, ensuring government was aware of the impressive achievements of VAAs and the huge benefits which adoption provides for children who cannot remain in their families of origin.

Achievements against priorities set for 2022-23

Alongside our members, and all organisations working for children and families, CVAA continues to respond flexibly to the challenges of the pandemic and cost of living pressures. Trustees have extended the life of the current Strategic Plan for a further year to make up for time lost through the lockdowns and kept the organisation's delivery plan and aspirations of 21st Century Adoption under regular review. CVAA has continued to provide an effective and authoritative voice for VAAs, advocating for the sector, influencing government and other key decision-makers across the social care system. We will continue the work developed over the past three years with members, adopters, adoptees and partners to build consensus about the need for radical change and pressure for action to modernise adoption so we can better meet the needs and aspirations of vulnerable children and their families today and in the years to come.

Our priorities for 2022-23 included:

1. Developing the vision and debate on maintaining important relationships for adopted children, young people and adults through a new national service.

A discussion paper has been developed this year in collaboration with members, adopted young people and academics setting out the vision for a UK wide, web based service to support the maintenance of important relationships for adopted people. ***My People*** makes the case for a new approach, initially focused on supporting the connections of children in long-term care, kinship and adoption placements, to be expanded to all care-experienced children over time. The proposed hub has four core goals:

- i. Making information on supporting children's lifelong relationships easily available for children, their carers and families – realising the rights and aspirations of care experienced people and creating efficiencies for local authorities, fostering and adoption agencies who would no longer have to duplicate these resources. The website would answer all common questions and better prepare individuals and families to navigate these relationships.
- ii. Boosting knowledge and expertise among professionals, through being a central source of guidance, research and best practice relating to preserving and promoting children's connections at each stage of their development.
- iii. Changing cultures and entrenched ways of thinking about contact and connections by working closely with practitioners to reassess ideas and reasoning which may be

obstructing change and developing a network of ‘connection champions’ to spark new thinking and expertise among leaders to take back and embed into their local organisations and services.

- iv. Using data to understand the structure of support services now, to inform an insight-driven strategy for funding support services in future. This is the first step in ensuring that all children and families are treated with equity wherever they live and have equal access to support with this crucial aspect of children and young people’s development.

My People aims to bring leadership and direction to the complex work surrounding children’s identities, to assist local services in bringing together relationship work, therapy and life story information into a coherent support framework. Further consultations are planned with adopters, adopted adults and birth family members to refine ideas and ensure the model is built on lived experiences and reflects their aspirations.

To date the paper has been well received by partner agencies and is now part of a move across the adoption sector to make the maintenance of early relationships and the lifelong identity of adopted people a priority.

2. Championing the benefits of adoption through publication of a new social return on investment study.

On 14th December 2022 CVAA published ***A Home For Me?*** a comprehensive study of the social value created by adoption across the UK.

The analysis revealed that at least £4.2 billion in value was generated across England, Wales and Scotland in 2021 when 3,359 children were adopted – including savings of £3.6 billion to local authorities, £541 million to the economy, and £34 million to the NHS. The modelling, which compared the outcomes of children who were adopted with those in other permanent placements found that the value created for adopted children, families and society is at least £1.3million for every child adopted.

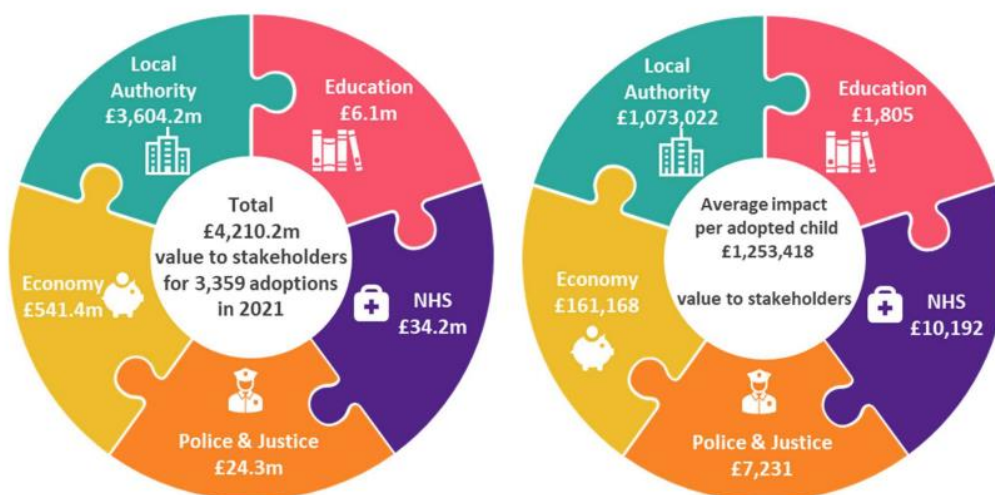


Figure 13: Breakdown of value by stakeholder (total and average per child)

The research and analysis by Sonnet Advisory & Impact shows that this value is created through two key channels: the improved outcomes adoption offers relative to staying in care or living in special guardianship placements, and the lower financial cost to local authorities of adoption compared to foster and residential homes. According to the available evidence, adopted children and young people have enhanced outcomes across health, education and future employment compared to other placements, decreasing reliance on publicly funded services and support in childhood and later life. Additionally, most adoptive parents do not receive financial support from the state, in contrast to foster and residential carers, which adds to the value adoption can bring – when it is in the best interests of the child.

The report acknowledges that adoption is only right for a small number of children who cannot remain with their birth families. Yet the scale of the benefits it brings to those children – and to society as a whole – appear to be declining year-on-year as the number of children being placed for adoption falls. Despite policies supportive of adoption introduced over the last decade, the number of children adopted peaked in England in 2015 at 5,360, and has since fallen to 2,950 in 2022. In Wales 385 children were adopted at their peak in 2014-2015 compared to 283 children in 2021-2022. This trend has occurred despite increased numbers of children needing to live in safe homes apart from their families of origin.

With the national number of children in foster care and in kinship / Special Guardianship arrangements increasing each year, the report evaluates the benefits and limitations of these placements alongside adoption, to consider what children's lives may have been like if they had not been adopted.

The report was launched at an event in the House of Lords and has since been shared with key decision makers in all four nations of the UK. A number of short summaries have been commissioned and they will be used in 23/24 to inform key groups of professionals through round table events and conference presentations.

3. Developing new opportunities for learning and development for colleagues across the adoption sector.

This year, the practice programme has been catering for adoption practitioners in the professional world after Covid and in the time of a cost-of-living crisis. At the beginning of the year, we built a robust training programme that once again has proven to be successful despite the external challenges of the current climate. Prices have been kept much lower than our main competitors whilst enhancing the programme with more expert-led training courses as requested by members. A part-time Project Support Officer has been appointed to work alongside the Head of Practice Development providing essential support to the programme and participants. The programme has successfully implemented all recent digital developments to the website and utilized the benefits of the new CRM, which overall contributed to another year of the programme's profitable delivery. Even with the tight training budgets that adoption agencies and local authorities faced this year, the Practice Programme continues to provide a stable income for CVAA and generated a small surplus that contributed to CVAA's core activities.

The practice programme's strategic objectives are summarised below:

- The contribution the programme makes in achieving CVAA's charitable objectives; influencing policy and practice, promoting liaison, collaboration and partnership working and developing standards of excellence.
- Enhancing and increasing the membership offer in supporting members to provide high quality staff development, enhancing their reputations, staff retention and Ofsted ratings.
- Future positioning of CVAA as being at the forefront of best practice and improving the quality of services to children and families
- To diversify the funding base of CVAA

Between April 2022, and March 2023 the Programme has delivered 39 practice events, 10 workshops, 9 training sessions, 17 expert-led training sessions and the remaining 3 were evidence seminars. 942 tickets have been sold across these events, an average of 24.1 per event. This is a predictable decrease compared to the previous year, where 31.5 tickets were sold per event. At the beginning of the year a decrease in attendees was anticipated due to the planned merger of two member agencies and the closure of one. Many adoption services have adapted to the post-covid environment, returning back to offices and utilizing their space to commission inhouse training to cut costs. Other key developments are set out below:

Forward planning for 2023/2024 has been better than ever before with the full practice programme offer for 2023-24 issued in February 2023 enabling members and other colleagues to plan their training and budgeting for the financial year ahead.

The establishment of an Advisory board has been agreed by trustees bringing welcome external expertise to guide further development of the programme. The Board will be chaired by a CVAA Trustee and recruitment is now almost complete with the first meeting planned for September 2023 to contribute to the development of the programme for 24/25 onwards.

Investing in technology has already helped to streamline administration and provide a better experience for participants and presenters alike. Further enhancements including an on-demand e-learning platform are being explored.

Reaching new audiences. To preserve affordable access to the Practice Programme for CVAA members, it is essential that 45% of participants are non-members who pay double the member price to attend practice events. This has been consistently achieved for every practice event throughout the year. As non-member attendance significantly boosts revenue, marketing for practice events is now being broadened to include children's social workers and foster carers, adjusting some sessions according to the demands of the new audience whilst staying true to CVAA's vision and mission.

Membership services

In 2022-23 we have continued to extend our support to members through the Practice Programme and also by the expansion of our policy and information service, and continuation of key membership events including the CEO Forum, bringing together VAA leaders for peer support and to tackle common concerns. Although this was established at a time when meeting in person was still very restricted it continues to provide a welcome opportunity for leaders across the sector to share experiences, collectively respond to government proposals and plan together, combatting the isolation many have experienced over the past two to three years.

We have continued the weekly bulletins to ensure members are kept fully briefed on the rapidly changing wider policy environment across the UK and our monthly newsletters provide an easily accessible way for members to stay informed about policy developments in adoption, the wider permanency landscape, and the voluntary sector. We have continued to strengthen CVAA's online presence through increased use of Twitter and the introduction of blog posts. These initiatives enable CVAA to better promote the value of adoption, the achievements of member agencies, the excellent services they offer families, and the work of CVAA on members' behalf.

Professor Beth Neil addressed the CVAA AGM in September 2022, presenting her work developing a theory of change for the maintenance of significant relationships for adopted children and young people. Members contributed to positive discussions on this theme, highlighting good practice and emphasising the importance of systemic reform to promote lifelong identity in the best interest of children.

The annual conference was held in Cardiff in January 2023, with speakers informing and challenging members on diversity, learning from fostering innovation, and inspirational contributions from adopted young people, birth and adoptive parents. We also heard from the Deputy Minister and adoption leaders in Wales on the positive actions being taken to improve and extend adoption services across the country. VAA leaders debated system change and practice issues that are central to modernising adoption for the 21st century, including lifelong identity and committed the sector to developing new ways to make ongoing relationships more meaningful, preparing adopters to support their children with greater face to face birth family contact in the years ahead.

Networking and collaboration

Alongside the new CEO Forum and the many joint working groups with others across the wider adoption sector CVAA has continued to facilitate the Marketing Group supporting them to deliver a successful VAA marketing campaign in England where 9 agencies collaborated to profile some inspiring adopter stories, encouraging others to come forward. The group continues to share best practice in recruiting families willing to provide loving homes for children with more complex needs.

The Data group has met to help CVAA refine and improve VAA data collection leading to the publication of the first CVAA data set for children placed by the sector, providing vital intelligence to support trustee boards and senior teams.

CVAA has facilitated VAA representation on a total of 11 working groups attached to the National Recruitment campaign, RAA leaders' group and ASGLB as well as supporting representation on the main cross sector forums. Collaborations with RAAs have been showcased at events to promote Early Permanence Placements (EPP) and taking a more proactive approach to finding forever families for black and minoritized children who continue to wait longer than their peers.

The Celtic nations have continued to meet to provide peer support and also to ensure that learning can be shared across all the nations of the UK for the benefit of children and families.

Interagency fee

This year CVAA trustees took the decision after consultation with members to limit the Interagency fee rise to 5% from 1st April 2023 (below the rate of inflation). Although this is challenging for VAAs in meeting the increasing costs of wages, energy and running costs the Board was very aware of the budget pressures on local authority children's services and member worries about falling placement numbers. Some members continue to experience push back on the payment of the fee by RAAs and it will be a priority to look at the whole basis of the IAF with the English. Sequential planning is leading to delays for the very children who need VAA families the most and we are committed to doing all we can to secure the life chances of these children through timely adoption.

The level playing field is established in Scotland and Wales. In England, CVAA continues to work with RAAs, ADCS, and the LGA to argue robustly for the level playing field and stress the negative impact on the most vulnerable children of delays caused by decision-making which seeks to minimise placement cost.

The Social Return on Investment (SROI) study published by CVAA in December 2022 provides compelling evidence of the cost effectiveness of interagency placement alongside the wider benefits to children, families and society.

Lobbying and influencing

CVAA has maintained regular communication with officials and Ministers, meeting monthly with the DfE adoption team along with writing regularly to changing Ministers to ensure that they are taking account of the voluntary adoption sector's essential work in their response to the English Care Review and future planning for adoption.

We facilitated a robust response from members to the Care Review and have worked closely with RAA leaders on the DfE-funded national recruitment campaign which this year had a focus on raising the profile of adoption and improving understanding of the needs of children waiting. It is sadly the case that VAA adopters are waiting longer to be matched with children and the CVAA CEO and trustees who represent the sector on the National Recruitment Steering Group continue to play an active part in ensuring that the campaign takes full account of the voluntary sector's expertise and the value of the adopters they prepare to care for the most vulnerable children.

The Adoption and Special Guardianship Leadership Board (ASGLB) was closed this year, leaving a vacuum in cross sector leadership on adoption. CVAA have continued to play an active role ensuring that the experience and expertise of VAAs has been recognised by ADCS, the judiciary, in the work of the Public Law Working Group on Adoption and governments across the UK. We have co-ordinated strong VAA contributions to the working groups set up by RAAs on adoption support, matching, early permanence and maintaining important relationships.

Regular meetings have been held with Ofsted to feed back front-line experience of the service changes needed to improve the timeliness of decision making and continue to support adoptive families. CVAA have stressed the quality of support and adopter preparation VAAs deliver and ensured that members were informed of any additional guidance from Ofsted on safeguarding and practice concerns. CVAA have continued to support the new Adoption Leaders Forum in England, bringing together VAA and RAA leaders to address issues of joint concern, such as tackling racial disparity and improving support for face-to-face contact between adopted children and their families of origin. A joint event was held in May 2022 to promote collaboration and positive working relationship across all regions.

The figures for 22/23 do not paint a positive picture of adoption in England. As of 31st December 2022:

- There were 1,980 children with a placement order waiting to be matched compared to 1,890 in Dec 2021 and 990 children who had been waiting longer than 18 months (1000 in Dec 2021)
- The number of Agency Decision Makers decisions has declined by 1% since Dec 21 (n=800). Placement Orders have declined by 12% (n= 670) and there has been an increase in the number of children waiting with a PO across all timeliness measures.
- The number of adopter registrations and approvals have continued to decline, together with the numbers of adopters not yet approved, and adopters approved and waiting to be matched. Approvals being down 12% on Dec 21 figures.
- However, VAAs continued to work as hard as ever to place and support a large minority of these children. As of 31 December 2022, VAAs in England had placed 16% of all children placed in the first three quarters of 2022-23 and approved 360 adopters, 19% of all adopters approved in that time. The decrease of 5% from the previous year reflects the number of VAA adopters still waiting for a child to be placed with them.

Based on the available data, the year-on-year decline in ADM decisions, placement orders, and adoption orders appears to have continued in 2022-23. CVAA has been actively involved in discussions at a national level to understand the complex dynamics that are driving this and develop proposals for action, alongside statutory colleagues.

Priorities for the year ahead

2022-23 did not see the hoped for rise in the number of children with adoption as their plan and VAAs continue to manage unprecedented levels of uncertainty. CVAA will continue to work closely with members and external partners to identify and tackle risks and challenges and do all we can to ensure that agencies can continue to provide critical services to children and families and use their skills and experience in new ways. There is much to do in the coming year to re-establish adoption as a positive life-enhancing choice for children who cannot return to their birth families. The children's social care system is not currently operating in the best interests of children so CVAA will be taking every opportunity to work with others to improve care planning, tackle waiting times and challenge the barriers which stand in the way of children finding the permanent loving homes they deserve.

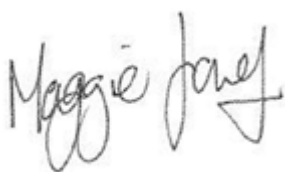
In the year ahead, our priorities will include:

- i. **Dissemination of *A Home for me?*** the social return on investment report published in late 2022, to encourage debate on the value of modern adoption in the wake of the English care review, imminent adoption legislation in North Ireland and the move to not-for-profit children's social care in Wales.
- ii. Development of a **2024 to 2027 Strategic plan** for CVAA in partnership with members and key stakeholders.
- iii. **Expanding audiences for the Practice programme** to include Foster carers and children's social workers.
- iv. **Expanding our lobbying and influencing work** in preparation for the general election to ensure all parties are aware of the work of VAAs and the reforms needed to achieve the benefits of 21st Century adoption for the children who need it.

The VAA sector continues to find loving forever homes for some of our most vulnerable children, keeping siblings together, recruiting adopters from across all communities and creating positive futures for so many families. The continuity of care and support provided by VAAs is needed more than ever as the profile of children adopted becomes increasingly complex, and the cost-of-living crisis makes life more difficult for families across the UK.

CVAA remain hugely proud of our sector, as every day we see VAAs putting children at the heart of all they do with such positive impact on the lives of so many vulnerable children and families. CVAA will continue to do all we can to support this vital work and ensure that the benefits of adoption for children are better understood by decision makers at all levels. We cannot do this work in isolation, and I am hugely grateful to the CVAA staff team, Trustee Board, our many active members and partners for their unstinting support, without which none of the work outlined above would have been possible.

This year our SROI report proved the financial benefit of adoption to society as a whole. The joy is that this benefit derived entirely from the positive lives lived by children who find a permanent loving adoptive family to support their journey through life. This makes all our work worthwhile and enhances all our futures.



Maggie Jones Chief Executive Officer

June 2023

3. Celtic Nations' Report

There have been two meetings of the Celtic Nations agencies over the past 12 months; Edinburgh in October 2022 and Belfast in March 2023. Members were keen to get back to meeting face to face despite the travel required. The membership of the CVAA Celtic Nations group currently includes Sue Brunton, Scottish Adoption, Jacqueline Sheeran, St. Margaret's C&F Care Society, Wendy Keidan, St. David's Children's Society, Stephen Small, St. Andrew's Children's Society and Maggie McSorley Family Care Adoption Services. Barnardos has recently joined this group as it has services in all if the nations, and it will be represented by a manager from whatever country in which the meeting is being held.

We continue to greatly appreciate the support from Maggie Jones who provides information and guidance on matters impacting across all four nations as well as the administrative support to the group. While keeping us up to date with CVAUK developments she also assists us to draw together common themes across the UK nations as well as areas of divergence between nations.

In this year, the agencies in Northern Ireland, are still being impacted by the suspension of the Northern Ireland Assembly and its subsequent effect on policy development and sector funding. Whilst the Social and Health Care Trusts have often been openly resistant to using our member agencies, there are signs that this is reducing and placements are starting to be made more frequently.

In Scotland, the impact of The Promise and the strengthening of legislation around the placement of siblings together is still to be fully understood. Like most new governmental guidance and legal changes, there is often a lead in time while agencies understand and apply the changes.

In Wales the National Adoption Service and some of the national initiatives in terms of practice development in adoption support services are in the early stages of implementation, but appear to be making a significant and positive effect of children's experiences of adoption across the Nation.

The following records, in a bit more detail, the activities of each of the agencies over the past 12 months:

Family Care Adoption Service - Northern Ireland

This has been a positive year in terms of engagement with the Department and also regarding placements and the agency is now under pressure to recruit more families. Following a restructuring within the agency there is now a new Adoption Manager who is actively engaging more constructively with is very good and engaging better with ARIS, the Adoption Register in Northern Ireland. However, there has been a dip in suitable enquiries from prospective adopters coming forward. All Family Care's families are now on Linkmaker, but this is causing issues with LAs reluctant to place children in NI.

The previous arrangement whereby three agencies jointly offered birth family support is now being retendered and the previous partnership is no longer possible. Family Care are now considering a lone bid to continue this service. Adult post-adoption service and birth family contacts is half the agency's work and only likely to increase further with the ongoing inquiry into historic adoption practices.

Family Care's well regarded Lifestory Project is under threat as the current funding arrangement runs out in 2024. Lifestory work is still not part of statutory requirements in Northern Ireland and as such makes funding from government harder to attract.

A new Communications officer has been appointed which, it is hoped, will help with profile and therefore with recruitment.

Finance is always a challenge, and while this has been a better year, it is still of concern, but with a reduced staff team the agency is making the adjustments needed to continue to be financially viable and is feeling positive about the future.

Scottish Adoption – Scotland

Scottish Adoption has undergone a lot of changes in management as well at Trustee Board level and some reduction in staffing has had to be carried out in response to a decrease in placement activity.

Work with young people is reaping huge benefits and two of their Adoption Ambassadors delivered a thoughtful and thought provoking presentation to this year's CVAA AGM in Cardiff.

A strategic shift has committed the agency to diversify in order to increase income streams and are in the early stages of creating a fostering service.

The Early Days Programme is a package of early support for the first weeks of a placement which includes therapeutic support in response to placing more siblings and older children. Adopters are taught therapeutic games to play with children which helps continuity and there is Occupational Therapy support available to help adopters respond to the child's needs.

A pilot project to run for twelve months called the Bluebird Project aims to support birth parents who have lost children to the care system. It provides group work and counselling with the hope to develop a peer support element as it becomes more established.

2023 is the Agency's centenary year and it is hoped that the profile from this will positively impact on activity and income.

St. Andrew's Children Society - Scotland

This year marks the centenary year for St. Andrew's and the agency used this as an opportunity to showcase the impact the agency has had on people's lives, linking longevity to the quality of services St. Andrew's provides.

Placement activity like most other agency's has been slow to recover to pre-Covid days and the feeling in the agency is that while this is improving, there does seem to be a slowing of the progression of children's permanency planning that has not improved yet. They have placed more boys than girls in the last year with an average age of child being 3yrs but ranging from newborns to 8yr olds.

As a further statement of commitment to their services outwith the Central Belt of Scotland, St. Andrew's purchased and moved into a new office in the Centre of Aberdeen. The high price of office rental accommodation in the city meant that while improving their presence in the North-East we were also able to reduce their operational costs.

The foster care service has reduced as the children placed in permanent homes have grown up and the recruitment of new foster carers has not kept up. A new Strategy was launched and will roll out throughout 2023.

St. Margaret's Children and Family Care - Scotland

St. Margaret's experienced big changes during this year with the appointment of a new acting head of service and a new panel chair. This has resulted in a re-look at the agency's management structure and staffing of effort has gone into re-setting the direction of the agency. Placement and assessment activity is picking up and giving cause for optimism for the future.

There has been a refresh of the agency's IT systems, a review and update of all policies and procedures following a tough Inspection but they have come through the process with some good learning opportunities.

A new Finance Director has instilled a confidence that the financial position is stable, but in recognition that adoption support is expensive they are reviewing what they offer.

Recruitment has been re-focused on adopters who are willing to consider a wider range of children, particularly older children and those with additional needs and the agency is being rigorous at the enquiry stage to ensure adopters will consider such children;

Barnardo's - Scotland

The service experienced a time of change, in terms of its management team.

During this year Barnardos Adoption service placed its 100th child, the plan is to use this milestone to highlight the benefits of ongoing working relationships with local authorities and other partner agencies to continue to focus on finding families for sibling groups and older children.

The service continues to develop its partnerships opportunities in relation to adoption support for both adoptive and birth families.

St. David's Children Society - Wales

This has been a mixed year for St David's. They celebrated their 80 year anniversary with events for families and were delighted that the Deputy Minister for Health and Social Services and the Chief Social Care Officer for Wales joined them for the celebrations. They also rebranded their adoption services and following wide ranging consultation with all stakeholders, have produced their three year strategic plan for 2023-2026.

St David's have continued to develop partnership relationships with colleagues in the Regional Adoption Services and have now got agreements with three regions to receive information about children at a much earlier stage. There has however been a significant reduction of children with a plan for adoption and this impacted on income and cash flow. As a result of this they have gone through a period of restructuring to reduce staff costs. As part of a diversification strategy, they are now registered as a Fostering Agency.

The Celtic Agencies value the support offered by the CEO and the Board of Trustees of CVAA UK. Like our colleagues in England, we are all struggling with the challenges of fewer placements in these uncertain times but we are always vigilant in ensuring that divergent systems in the four Nations do not hamper our ability to work in a UK context to ensure the VAAs remain focussed on the best needs of children everywhere.



Stephen Small

On behalf the Celtic Nations

June 2023

5. *Trustees Annual Report*

5.1 *Trustees*

Director/Trustee Name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year
Andrew Webb	Chair	
Satwinder Sandhu	Vice Chair	Resigned 4 th April 2023
Terry Fitzpatrick	Treasurer	
Brenda Farrell		
Wendy Keidan		Resigned 15 th August 2022
Ruth Marriott		Resigned 29 th June 2022
Anna Sharkey		
Stephen Small		
Natausha van Vliet		
Judith Vaughan		
Susy White		Appointed 13 th September 2022

Name of Company Secretary

Maggie Jones

Name of Senior Staff Members

Chief Executive Officer:	Maggie Jones
Head of Policy and Member Services	Alice Tabot
Head of Practice Development	Petra Jodlova

Registered Office C/o ARC, Unit 29, The Business Innovation Centre, Wearside, Sunderland, SR5 2TA

Bankers CAF Bank Ltd, 25 King's Hill Avenue, King's Hill, West Malling, Kent, ME19 4JQ.

Independent Examiners Wallwork Nelson & Johnson, Chandler House, 7 Ferry Road Office Park, Riversway, Preston, PR2 2YH.

5.2 *Statement of Trustees Responsibilities*

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Report of the Trustees and the Financial Statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Practice). Company law requires that Trustees prepare Financial Statements for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of the state of the affairs of the company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including income and expenditure for that period. In preparing these Financial Statements, the Trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently.
- Observe the methods and principles in the charity SORP.
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent; and
- prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Charity will continue in business.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Charity and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The Trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the Charity's website. It is important to bear in mind that legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of Financial Statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

In so far as the Trustees are aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the Independent Examiner is unaware.

The Trustees have taken all the steps that they ought to have taken as a Trustee-Director in order to make himself or herself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the Independent Examiner are aware of that information.

The Chief Executive is appointed by the Trustees to manage the day-to-day operations of the Charity. The Chief Executive is charged with the duty of accounting to the Board and making recommendations on plans and policy.

5.3 *Structure, Governance and Management*

The Charity is a Company limited by guarantee (Company number 5275491) and a Charity (Charity registration number 1108318) and is governed by its constitution.

The Trustees are responsible for the management of the Charity and they form the Board. The Board meets at least four times a year. Appointment to the Board is by election of the members by a simple majority. Trustees are elected from the member agencies. The Chief Executive attends all meetings of the Board.

Appointment and Recruitment of Trustees

Members of the Charity nominate Trustees in accordance with the Constitution. An annual audit identifies gaps in representation and nominations to address these are sought. Members can be co-opted to the Board for a period before nomination. Job Descriptions and Person Specifications have been agreed for the Chair, Treasurer, Vice Chair and Trustees to provide clarity about the role and responsibilities.

Trustees Induction and Training

New Trustees undergo an induction process to brief them on their legal obligations under Charity and Company Law, the content of the Memorandum and Articles of Association, the recent financial performance of the charity and the financial projections. Trustees are encouraged to attend training events where these may aid their appreciation and understanding of CVAA and facilitate their functioning as Trustees. During 2020-21, the board tested compliance with the each of the Principles of Good Governance as part of its regular meetings.

Organisation

All members of the Board undertake tasks on behalf of CVAA as is illustrated elsewhere in this report. In summary:

- Officer positions on the Board
- Chair or member of a subgroup
- Delivery of training
- Representation of CVAA at a national level e.g., meetings with the Department for Education (DfE); National Adoption Service Cymru, Ofsted,
- Representing the VAA sector in joint working groups with statutory partners such as Regional Adoption Agencies (England) and local authorities
- Contact with the media.

CVAA recognises and values the time that the Board give to these issues; as a small organisation, it would not be possible to meet all the demands without such voluntary contribution. In addition, ARC have provided financial management to CVAA which has been very much appreciated. All members of staff report either directly or indirectly to the Chief Executive and the Chief Executive reports to the Chair.

Risk Management

A risk register is maintained and discussed by the full Board at each meeting, new mitigating actions proposed where the level of risk is judged to have increased; new risks are proposed and added to the register, or closed, as necessary.

Much of the Charity's approach to risk is determined by a thorough appreciation of the environment in which the Charity operates, and by ensuring that appropriate, experienced, and qualified members of staff are recruited and further are appropriately trained.

5.4 Objectives and Activities for the Public Benefit

Summary of the objects of the charity set out in the Constitution (governing document)

CVAA's objects (the Objects) are

“ to develop standards of excellence in all matters relating to adoption, good practice and management throughout the voluntary sector for the benefit of the public, and in particular to maximise the contribution of Voluntary Adoption Agencies by influencing policy and practice of adoption in the UK at the National, Regional and Local levels and to directly increase the number of children successfully placed for adoption by promoting liaison and collaborative partnership working practices between voluntary adoption agencies and all other stakeholders”

The Trustees confirm that they have referred to the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit when reviewing the charities aims and objectives and in planning future activities.

The focus of our work: a summary of the main activities in relation to these objects

Representation	of member voluntary adoption agencies' views at local, regional, and national levels across all sectors
Promotion	of the voluntary adoption sector's commitment to achieving appropriate and timely permanence for children
Liaison	between voluntary organisations and statutory agencies by encouraging networking opportunities and forums for members

Development	of CVAA as a national partnership that responds to the needs of all member agencies whilst acknowledging those of the statutory agencies we work with.
Support	of member agencies by maintaining a national database, collection, and analysis of voluntary adoption agency statistics, maintaining the interagency fee, encouraging internal efficiencies, providing advocacy and consultation on adoption matters, driving upwards standards of excellence and promoting collaborative working practices through an extensive programme of professional development.

5.5 Reserves Policy

Charity Law requires that the Directors and Trustees should have a policy for holding reserves. The purpose of the policy is to enable any monies which belong to CVAA and which are not required in the immediate future for the running of the charity to be used to generate further income.

The Reserves Policy will:-

- preserve the viability of CVAA as a Charity and Company Limited by Guarantee
- enable the Charity to meet its legal objects
- provide seed capital for strategic developments should this be required pending receipt of an awarded grant or new income stream
- provide confidence to supporters and donors seeking to give financial support to a prudently controlled charity
- ensure that, consistent with the objects, mission statement and values of CVAA proper ethical consideration be afforded to all matters of investment
- ensure that the reserves are at a level sufficient to discharge all the Charity's obligations should the Charity cease its operations

Desired level of Reserves

In the preparation of the accounts, there has been consideration of the level of reserves which the charity needs to maintain in order to ensure that it would be in a position to meet all of its liabilities should it at any time cease to operate and also to smooth fluctuations in membership as the primary source of income, in order to maintain high quality services to beneficiaries. The value of the reserves required will vary during the year. In calculating the value of reserves there needs to be regard for the following:

- Annual running costs of the charity in maintaining essential services
- Contractual notice periods of the officers of the charity
- Expenses payable to any of the member organisations whose representatives are Trustees of the Charity
- Settlement of any other commitments where notice is required to end the contractual arrangement
- Other costs payable and due to third parties

Steps to Establish the Reserves Policy

To maintain appropriate levels of reserves the Trustees have determined that: -

- any legacies, which have no restriction placed upon them by the terms of their donation, are considered to be general reserves
- expenditure plans agreed by the Board are examined at quarterly intervals by the Treasurer and Finance & Audit Committee and funds required to finance such may be removed from general reserves as necessary for the attainment of its broad objects. Funds may, from time to time, be designated for specific purposes

Monitoring and Reviewing the Policy

The Trustees have agreed that:-

- day-to-day operational responsibility for the implementation of this policy be vested in the Treasurer and the Finance & Audit Committee and (supported by the finance professionals in his/her agency)
- monitoring is undertaken, on a quarterly basis and reported to the next meeting of the Board
- the policy is subject to at least an annual review by the Board specifically to confirm the level of Reserves required for the year ahead to meet all obligations

5.6 Investment Policy

CVAA will invest the reserves appropriately with any investment to be of low risk. An appropriate balance is to be struck between income and capital growth to enable CVAA to support its charitable works and help achieve its objects.

This year the Trustees have developed a new investment policy with the aim of achieving an improved return on investments to support the charity at time of reducing membership fees. The policy is consistent with the Reserves Policy and will:

- i. Maintain the value of CVAA reserves in line with inflation in order to sustain the long term viability of the charity and where possible to achieve capital growth
- ii. Create an income stream to replace membership fees lost over the past few years and in anticipation of further reductions through member mergers
- iii. Support activities which benefit CVAA members and achieve the organisation's strategic ambitions.
- iv. Maintain the optimal balance between funds necessary for the efficient day to day operation of the organisation and maximizing returns on additional funds to generate income.

Decision making, management and reporting

The CVAA Trustee Board will make final decisions on investments after receiving reports and relevant professional advice sought by the Finance and Audit Subcommittee. The Finance and Audit subcommittee have delegated authority to;

- i. Seek expert advice on investment options within the risk parameters set by the Board.
- ii. Investigate and assess charges and other costs of investment options, including those for the professional support and management of funds.
- iii. Monitor the performance of investments, including through receiving quarterly reports from investment managers.
- iv. Meet, either in person or virtually, with professional advisors as necessary, but as a minimum once per year, to recommend changes in investments to the Board, in response to changes in external markets and/or CVAA circumstances.
- v. Liaise with and monitor the performance of investment managers with delegated authority to move funds on behalf of CVAA within the parameters set by the Board.

The Board will review investment performance and assess returns against targets on an annual basis alongside consideration of the outturn figures for the preceding financial year, to ensure that the right balance of liquid

and longer term investment is in place to support CVAA's immediate and longer term resource needs. This review will also include an assessment of the performance of investment advisors/managers against the objectives of the policy.

5.7 *Independent Examiners*

The Trustees will commission an independent examination of the financial operations of the charity each year from a qualified auditor.

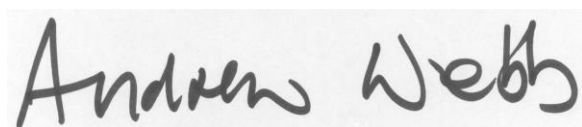
This report has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies. This report was approved by the Board of Management on 27th July 2023.

5.8 *Financial Review*

The incoming resources of CVAA for the year ended 31 March 2023 were £245,570 after the deduction of resources expended of £301,754; the net position of the charity was a deficit of £56,184.

The retained unrestricted funds of the charity are £499,481.

Approved by order of the Board of Trustees and signed on its behalf by

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andrew Webb". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Andrew Webb
Chair of Trustees
June 2023

6. CVAA Members

Action for Children Adoption
Adopters for Adoption
Adoption Focus
Adoption Matters
ARC Adoption North East
Barnardo's
Birmingham Children's Trust
Caritas Care
CCS Adoption
Coram Capital Adoption
Diagrama Foundation
Family Care Adoption Services (Celtic member)
Family Futures CIC
IAC – The Centre for Adoption
Nugent Care
PAC-UK (Associate member)
Parents and Children Together (PACT)
Scottish Adoption (Celtic member)
SSAFA
St Andrew's Children's Society (Celtic member)
St David's Children's Society (Celtic member)
St Margaret's Children & Family Care Society (Celtic member)
Yorkshire Adoption Agency

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Consortium of Voluntary Adoption Agencies UK Limited ('the Company')

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Company for the year ended 31 March 2021.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees of the Company (and also its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the Company are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your charity's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5) (b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Company as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
4. the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities (applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)).

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Paul Woodburn
FCA
Wallwork Nelson & Johnson
Chandler House
7 Ferry Road Office Park
Riversway
Preston
Lancashire
PR2 2YH

Date: 27th July 2023.....

**CONSORTIUM OF VOLUNTARY ADOPTION
AGENCIES UK LIMITED**

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted fund £	31/3/23 Total funds £	31/3/22 Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM					
Charitable activities					
Membership costs		233,698	-	233,698	239,135
Conference & Other income		8,000	-	8,000	8,000
Investment income	2	<u>3,872</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>3,872</u>	<u>98</u>
Total		<u>245,570</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>245,570</u>	<u>247,233</u>
EXPENDITURE ON					
Charitable activities					
Membership costs		<u>301,754</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>301,754</u>	<u>236,646</u>
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)		(56,184)	-	(56,184)	10,587
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS					
Total funds brought forward		<u>555,665</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>555,665</u>	<u>545,078</u>
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		<u><u>499,481</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>499,481</u></u>	<u><u>555,665</u></u>

**CONSORTIUM OF VOLUNTARY ADOPTION
AGENCIES UK LIMITED (REGISTERED NUMBER: 05275491)**

**BALANCE SHEET
31 MARCH 2023**

	Notes	31/3/23 £	31/3/22 £
CURRENT ASSETS			
Debtors	6	138	4,734
Cash at bank		<u>526,204</u>	<u>583,213</u>
		526,342	587,947
CREDITORS			
Amounts falling due within one year	7	(26,861)	(32,282)
		<u>499,481</u>	<u>555,665</u>
NET CURRENT ASSETS			
		<u>499,481</u>	<u>555,665</u>
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES			
		<u>499,481</u>	<u>555,665</u>
NET ASSETS			
		<u>499,481</u>	<u>555,665</u>
FUNDS	9		
Unrestricted funds		<u>499,481</u>	<u>555,665</u>
TOTAL FUNDS		<u>499,481</u>	<u>555,665</u>

The charitable company is entitled to exemption from audit under Section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 for the year ended 31 March 2023.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023 in accordance with Section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

The trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for

- ensuring that the charitable company keeps accounting records that comply with Sections 386 and 387 of the Companies Act 2006 and
- preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company as at the end of each financial year and of its surplus or deficit for each financial year in accordance with the requirements of Sections 394 and 395 and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the charitable company.

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to charitable companies subject to the small companies regime. The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on and were signed on its behalf by:



.....
Terence Fitzpatrick - Trustee

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparing the financial statements

The financial statements of the charitable company, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)', Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' and the Companies Act 2006. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

Income

All income is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities once the charity has entitlement to the funds, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

Expenditure

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to that expenditure, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all cost related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

Taxation

The charity is exempt from corporation tax on its charitable activities.

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the trustees.

Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the financial statements.

2. INVESTMENT INCOME

	31/3/23	31/3/22
	£	£
Deposit account interest	<u>3,872</u>	<u>98</u>

3. TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS

There were no trustees' remuneration or other benefits for the year ended 31 March 2023 nor for the year ended 31 March 2022.

No Trustee or any other person related to the Charity had any personal interest in any contract or any transaction entered into by the Charity during the period.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

3. TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS - continued

Trustees' expenses

During the year payments made to the value of £1,923 were made to 4 Trustees or their employing organisations for travel expenses (£1,060 in 2022 paid to 5 Trustees or their employing organisations).

4. STAFF COSTS

The average monthly number of employees during the year was as follows:

	31/3/23	31/3/22
Management and Administration	1	1
Direct Charity Workers	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>
	<u>5</u>	<u>4</u>

The number of employees whose employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs) exceeded £60,000 was:

	31/3/23	31/3/22
£60,001 - £70,000	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>

5. COMPARATIVES FIGURES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted fund £	Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM			
Charitable activities			
Membership costs	239,135	-	239,135
Conference & Other income	8,000	-	8,000
Investment income	<u>98</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>98</u>
Total	<u>247,233</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>247,233</u>
EXPENDITURE ON			
Charitable activities			
Membership costs	<u>236,646</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>236,646</u>
NET INCOME	10,587	-	10,587
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS			
Total funds brought forward	<u>545,078</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>545,078</u>
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	<u>555,665</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>555,665</u>

**CONSORTIUM OF VOLUNTARY ADOPTION
AGENCIES UK LIMITED**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

6. DEBTORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	31/3/23	31/3/22
	£	£
Trade debtors	<u>138</u>	<u>4,734</u>

7. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	31/3/23	31/3/22
	£	£
Trade creditors	8,788	5,962
Other creditors	2,621	772
Accruals and deferred income	<u>15,452</u>	<u>25,548</u>
	<u>26,861</u>	<u>32,282</u>

8. ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted fund	31/3/23 Total funds	31/3/22 Total funds
	£	£	£	£
Current assets	526,342	-	526,342	587,947
Current liabilities	<u>(26,861)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(26,861)</u>	<u>(32,282)</u>
	<u>499,481</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>499,481</u>	<u>555,665</u>

9. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS

	At 1/4/22 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31/3/23 £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	490,665	(56,184)	434,481
Closure costs	<u>65,000</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>65,000</u>
	<u>555,665</u>	<u>(56,184)</u>	<u>499,481</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>555,665</u>	<u>(56,184)</u>	<u>499,481</u>

Net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	245,570	(301,754)	(56,184)
	<u>245,570</u>	<u>(301,754)</u>	<u>(56,184)</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>245,570</u>	<u>(301,754)</u>	<u>(56,184)</u>

**CONSORTIUM OF VOLUNTARY ADOPTION
AGENCIES UK LIMITED**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

9. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

Comparatives for movement in funds

	At 1/4/21 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31/3/22 £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	480,078	10,587	490,665
Closure costs	<u>65,000</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>65,000</u>
	<u>545,078</u>	<u>10,587</u>	<u>555,665</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u><u>545,078</u></u>	<u><u>10,587</u></u>	<u><u>555,665</u></u>

Comparative net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	247,233	(236,646)	10,587
	<u>247,233</u>	<u>(236,646)</u>	<u>10,587</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u><u>247,233</u></u>	<u><u>(236,646)</u></u>	<u><u>10,587</u></u>

A current year 12 months and prior year 12 months combined position is as follows:

	At 1/4/21 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31/3/23 £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	480,078	(45,597)	434,481
Closure costs	<u>65,000</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>65,000</u>
	<u>545,078</u>	<u>(45,597)</u>	<u>499,481</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u><u>545,078</u></u>	<u><u>(45,597)</u></u>	<u><u>499,481</u></u>

A current year 12 months and prior year 12 months combined net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	492,803	(538,400)	(45,597)
	<u>492,803</u>	<u>(538,400)</u>	<u>(45,597)</u>

TOTAL FUNDS	<u>492,803</u>	<u>(538,400)</u>	<u>(45,597)</u>
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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

9. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

Unrestricted Designated funds:

The Trustees have decided that it is prudent to set aside a sum of money which would be required to cover the closure costs should the Charity cease to operate. This designated fund is currently £65,000.

10. RELATED PARTY DISCLOSURES

There were no related party transactions for the year ended 31 March 2023.

**CONSORTIUM OF VOLUNTARY ADOPTION
AGENCIES UK LIMITED**

**DETAILED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

	31/3/23 £	31/3/22 £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS		
Investment income		
Deposit account interest	3,872	98
Charitable activities		
Membership fees	154,904	160,714
Conference & Other income	8,000	8,000
Online webinar	<u>78,794</u>	<u>78,421</u>
	<u>241,698</u>	<u>247,135</u>
Total incoming resources	245,570	247,233
EXPENDITURE		
Charitable activities		
Staffing	186,675	165,904
Practice event costs	12,700	10,843
ICT & other costs	3,441	20,710
Overheads	5,648	5,595
Accountancy fees	2,156	1,860
Property costs	8,988	8,035
Travel costs	7,162	1,418
Financial management	9,274	9,669
Consultancy	50,920	1,913
Members events & AGM	12,867	6,111
Board & Trustees expenses	1,923	1,060
Bad debts written off	-	2,162
Advertising	<u>-</u>	<u>1,366</u>
	<u>301,754</u>	<u>236,646</u>
Total resources expended	<u>301,754</u>	<u>236,646</u>
Net (expenditure)/income	<u>(56,184)</u>	<u>10,587</u>

CONSORTIUM OF VOLUNTARY ADOPTION AGENCIES UK LIMITED

England & Wales - Charity number 1108318

Accounts



Consortium of Voluntary Adoption Agencies

Annual Report and Consolidated Financial Statements
1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022

Consortium of Voluntary Adoption Agencies UK Ltd (CVAA)

Registered charity number 1108318
Company Number 5275491

Registered Office
C/o ARC, Unit 29, The Business Innovation Centre, Wearside, Sunderland, SR5 2TA

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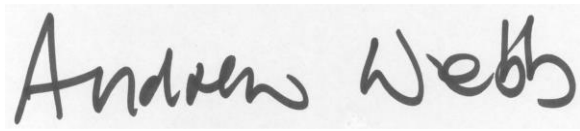
Looking back over the two years I have chaired the Board of Trustees of CVAA I am struck by the amount of change in our part of the adoption system and reminded of the need to ensure that this doesn't deflect us from our core purpose: to provide stable, permanent families for children in need.

Last year I wrote about the impact of Covid on the Family Justice and Care Planning systems and the challenges being tackled. A quick review of the data that has been published recently shows no sign of a "recovery" in respect of the numbers of children for whom adoption is seen as the best choice, nor for the children with more complex needs who have been waiting longest. Putting it bluntly, whilst the Government's Adoption Strategy appears to have had limited success in increasing the numbers of adopters, it has had no impact on decision-making in local authorities; and the Family Justice system is buckling under the strain it faces, with performance on timeliness receding further with each report. The Government's Care Review, led by Josh McAllister, is virtually silent on adoption and it is difficult to see how its recommendations about changes in structures, processes and culture will have positive impact in the foreseeable future. In the meantime, individual members of CVAA will need to remain agile and adaptable if they are to remain viable: Faith in Families, based in Nottingham and founded in 1948, merged with Adoption Focus and took with them their experience of delivering pioneering trauma informed social work in schools. But unless there is a significant shift in local authority decision-making, adaptability and agility will not be enough to ensure the continued existence of all VAAs.

CVAA will always need to find ways of ensuring that the national and international adoption systems are doing their best for children, and that the conditions exist to enable individual agencies to make their contribution. But it is equally important to retain our focus on supporting our members in their priorities, whether innovating and developing excellence in practice, or finding ways to become more resilient as organisations. To this end, the practice programme, led by Petra Jodlova, has continued to adapt and develop and has seen even more take-up than last year. Also, last November's annual conference in Chester – a hybrid event building on the best of remote contributions and interpersonal contact – was a great success and provided a fitting setting for the sector's goodbye to Norman Goodwin a "founder member" of CVAA, longstanding trustee and outstanding leader of Adoption Matters, who retired in the new year.

Which brings me to some of the changes we have seen in the last year. At a national level a new minister, Will Quince, and chair of ASGLB, Krish Kandiah have taken up their roles; within CVAA we have said goodbye to staff members Sam Mercadante and Barbara Hoyte – both of whom made major contributions to our work - and welcomed Natausha Van Vliet and Anna Sharkey on to the Board and Alice Talbot to our staff team. So, plenty of opportunity to harness the enthusiasm that comes with being new and build fresh perspectives into our work, all of which the indefatigable Maggie Jones will no doubt manage without missing a beat – as ever.

So CVAA's biggest challenge in the coming year, on behalf of children who need permanent families, is to become more effective in changing the national system. The evidence supporting adoption from care is still as strong as it ever was, but clearly, child-centred evidence is not enough. We need to find more ways of influencing the way decisions are taken, and to this end CVAA commissioned a piece of work to quantify the range of benefits that flow from investment in adoption: the "social return" as well as the impact on a child's life. We will be using this report in the summer and autumn to find ways of turning national performance back in the right direction and will continue to press all our partners in the national system: the team at DfE and the ASGLB, the ADCS and RAA leadership, the judiciary and local delivery partners, to keep improving adoption firmly in their sights.

A handwritten signature in black ink on a light grey background. The signature reads "Andrew Webb" in a cursive, slightly informal script.

Andrew Webb

Chair of CVAA

June 2022

1. Treasurer's Report

The last financial year saw us all trying to adapt to whatever the new norm was meant to be whether that was socially or in terms of our working practices and routines. In that respect, CVAA was no different to any other agency and in that transition, attention was paid to what new initiatives worked well and should be maintained and what old practices were missed and should be resurrected.

This approach has I believe resulted in CVAA having another solid financial outcome as reflected in the year end accounts.

Once again we have a surplus to report this year of £10,587. Although this is less than last year it has resulted from continued efficiency savings through personnel changes, through home working and the continued use of virtual opportunities, saving on salaries and above all from the tremendous contribution made by the Practice Programme which seems to go from strength to strength and for which Petra must take a great deal of credit.

In the months ahead, the board together with the staff team will need to consider if some of the savings made are to be seen as permanent ones and if so, what working arrangements should be in place going forward throughout the next financial year.

In order to maintain the high level of service and support that members have come to expect and enjoy from the CVAA team, the board have to consider regularly the income generation streams that are at our disposal.

Our main source of funding comes from membership fees. We know how much financial pressure all agencies are under, and we are extremely grateful that continued membership has been given a priority by member agencies and that the annual inflationary rise has been accommodated.

However, we have lost a couple of member agencies this year due to mergers, which we fully appreciate may be the best outcome for the agencies concerned, but if this pattern continues or indeed some agencies close, it will require the Board, in conjunction with members, to consider CVAA's longer term sustainability.

The Practice Programme is our primary mechanism for offsetting any loss of membership fees and consideration has been given by the board to investment in this area to support the work that Petra Jodlova does and to facilitate any possible expansion of the programme.

The Board have also taken the view that we need to exploit the two recent successful financial years that CVAA have had, in accruing some substantial reserves. This will be done by undertaking a low-risk investment strategy that will hopefully bring in a further income for the organisation whilst at the same time ensuring that there is easy access to funds to meet our liabilities should the need arise. To this end, new reserves and investments policies have been ratified by the board on behalf of members.

So, a busy year ahead.

As usual there are several people to thank for their support throughout the year:

Once again, our accounts required an independent examination at the year-end rather than a full audit. This was carried out by Paul Woodburn from the auditors Wallwork, Nelson and Johnson. I would like to thank Paul for his thorough oversight of our accounts and for the resulting reports which outline that the accounts produced were a true and fair view of the Charitable Company's affairs and can be presented for approval to the members as such at the Annual General Meeting of members on 13th September 2022.

Thanks also go to Trevor Hogg from our accountants TPA Accountancy for helping to keep us on track throughout the year and to Lisa Parkin at ARC Adoption NE who has once again been fastidious when it comes to paying our bills and ensuring our income arrives in a timely fashion.

I would also like to acknowledge the tremendous support of the Finance Sub-Committee whose challenge and advice has been invaluable throughout the year and to Maggie who routinely maintains a shrewd eye on our financial health.

Lastly, but not least, I would like to thank our members for their unwavering support, I have already referenced your acceptance of the increase in membership fee this year, but I think your support of the Practice Programme and your contribution to its delivery is worthy of mention too. I am sure this reflects the value that we all see in our membership and the gratitude we have for the phenomenal service we receive from the CVAA team.

There will no doubt be fresh challenges in the year ahead for us all, but we are fortunate to have CVAA in a strong position to guide us through these and to help us develop both as individual agencies and as partners to better serve the children and families who need the first-class services you all provide.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Terry Fitzpatrick', written over a horizontal line.

Terry Fitzpatrick
Treasurer
June 2022

2. Strategic Report – CVAA Activities and Achievements 2021-22

The voluntary adoption sector continues to do wonderful work with children and families across the UK in a very challenging environment. Agencies and adoptive families continue to face difficulties arising from the impact of the Covid epidemic on the courts, social care and education services. CVAA has worked through the year to keep members fully informed of, at times, rapidly changing policy and practice through our weekly updates and bringing members together for peer support and practice development opportunities through the Practice Programme. Agencies have begun to move slowly to delivering more face to face services through the year, with the majority of support of adopters still being delivered through virtual means. The CVAA staff team and Board of Trustees have remained focussed on providing the best possible support to members through this turbulent year, ensuring government was aware of the impressive achievements of VAAs and their challenges in maintaining the vital work of finding forever homes for the children who need them.

Achievements against priorities set for 2021-22

Alongside our members, and all organisations working for children and families, CVAA has had to change its plans for the year and respond flexibly to the challenges of the pandemic. Trustees have kept the organisation's delivery plan and aspirations of 21st Century Adoption under regular review, placing some areas on hold to create capacity to work with members and government on recovery from the pandemic and its impact on adoption services across the UK. CVAA has continued to provide an effective and authoritative voice for VAAs, advocating for the sector, influencing government and other key decision-makers across the social care system.

Our priorities for 2021-22 included:

1. Building support across the membership and with partners for the changes identified in our 21st Century Adoption Position paper.

There are still many systemic concerns to be tackled if adoption is to continue to provide a positive permanency option for 21st century children who cannot safely grow up in their birth families. The CVAA report, **21st Century Adoption** sets out four key themes that must be addressed in order to modernise adoption and work has progressed this year building alliances and highlighting the need for change.

i. A 21st century adoption system with structures and processes that are collaborative, fit for purpose, and put children's needs at the centre.

CVAA has worked with ADCS, the RAA leaders' group and Celtic nations to build connections and collaboration, supporting cross sector and intercountry learning. We have provided robust challenge to the Adoption and Special Guardianship Leadership Board (ASGLB) in England on the performance data which shows a decline in timely placement for the most vulnerable children. We have also worked with others in the voluntary sector to create new structures for birth families, adopters and adopted people to meaningfully contribute to ASGLB debates and the work of the National Adopter Recruitment Steering Group.

ii. Serving 21st century children by ensuring that every child has a permanent family.

CVAA has commissioned a social return on investment study (SROI) to help build consensus across children's social care and the courts on the benefits of adoption and the children for whom adoption is the best permanency plan. We have prepared submissions to the English Care Review, the Lords committee reviewing the 2014 Children's Act and to the Northern Ireland government on their proposals for children's service reform. In all cases CVAA has stressed the life changing value of the permanency adoption provides for trauma experienced children and the strong outcomes for adopted children compared with their care experienced peers. Reversals are increasing in all

countries of the UK alongside waiting times for children who have the most complex needs. This is especially worrying given the many adopters who are also waiting longer to be matched with children. CVAA and many VAAs contributed to an analysis of the 100 adopters and children waiting the longest to be matched in England and the learning about barriers and process which inhibit effective movement through the system will be used to structure reforms which we hope will benefit VAA families.

iii. **Supporting 21st century families through strengthening the contribution that both permanent and birth families make to children's development.**

This year we have worked alongside members, researchers and sector leaders to develop ideas for a UK wide service which supports adopted people of all ages in maintaining the important relationships from their early lives. The evidence for the benefits this has on identity and security for adopted people is overwhelming and the latest research from Dr Harriet Ward was discussed with great interest and enthusiasm at the CVAA conference in November 2021. This will be an important priority for the year ahead.

iv. **Building 21st century permanence support by ensuring that every child and family receives the right support at the right time.** CVAA worked with members to produce a set of practical proposals for improving access for VAA families to the Adoption Support Fund in England. We have also supported strong VAA representation on the RAA working group on Early help and adoption support ensuring the experiences of VAAs and their families are central in decision making. Adoption support continues to be a key concern for VAAs across the UK as the complexities of the children placed increase, so do their ongoing support needs.

CVAA will continue the work begun this year with members, adopters, adoptees and partners to build consensus about the need for change and pressure for action to modernise adoption so we can better meet the needs and aspirations of vulnerable children and their families today and in the years to come.

2.Supporting members to work together across the UK overcoming the isolation imposed by Covid restrictions and developing new collaborations.

Alongside the new CEO Forum and the many joint working groups with others across the wider adoption sector CVAA has continued to facilitate the Marketing Group supporting them to make best use of the mystery shopping exercise undertaken for all VAAs and RAAs in England and share best practice in recruiting families willing to provide loving homes for children with more complex needs. At the request of the CEO Forum, the group have planned a VAA recruitment campaign for April 2022 where 12 agencies are collaborating to profile some inspiring adopter stories, encouraging others to come forward.

CVAA has facilitated VAA representation on a total of 11 working groups attached to the National Recruitment campaign, RAA leaders' group and ASGLB as well as supporting representation the main cross sector boards.

Collaborations with RAAs have been showcased at events to promote EPP and taking a more proactive approach to finding forever families for black and minoritized children who continue to wait longer than their peers.

The Celtic nations have continued to meet to provide peer support and also to ensure that learning can be shared across all the nations of the UK for the benefit of children and families.

Planned work with the judiciary had to be postponed due to limited capacity and this will be a priority for the year ahead, following the publication of the English Care Review and the outcome of the Public Law Working Group on adoption.

3.Consolidating the data programme and delivery of the first comprehensive Sector Data report

Although our data work has been hampered by staff changes this year, we nevertheless delivered the first comprehensive sector wide report on the children placed by VAAs in 20/21 on time in June 2021.

Further work has taken place with data colleagues across the membership in achieving greater consistency of reporting and analysing the data to begin to establish trends and support forward planning for agencies. The data group has met on a regular basis and worked together to make best use of the data processing programmes used by most members and translating sector data with that produced by the government.

Work has also taken place with Celtic members to ensure that next year their data can be fully incorporated into the data collection and analysis to give a rounded picture of VAA activity across the whole of the UK. This is a vital resource to underpin CVAA's lobbying and influencing work.

Members have also contributed to CVAA mini surveys on the number of adopters waiting and the length of time they are waiting for a match, post approval and to joint surveys with RAAs on adoption support, the adopter preparation process and the development of Early Permanence Placements.

4.Expanding and developing our support for learning and practice exchange across the sector

In March 2022, the practice programme completed another successful year of practice events surpassing the projected income in the business plan 2019-2022. Over the past three years, CVAA has built a strong, self-sustainable learning programme for adoption professionals and a reliable business stream that generates a small profit for the organisation. CVAA's practice programme continues to offer benefits to members and maintains its wider reputational advantages.

The practice programme's strategic objectives are summarised below:

- The contribution the programme makes in achieving CVAA's charitable objectives; influencing policy and practice, promoting liaison, collaboration and partnership working and developing standards of excellence
- Enhancing and increasing the membership offer in supporting members to provide high quality staff development, enhancing their reputations, staff retention and Ofsted ratings
- Future positioning of CVAA as being at the forefront of best practice and improving the quality of services to children and families
- To diversify the funding base of CVAA

A new business plan for 2022 to 2025 has been developed this year and agreed by trustees. The plan builds on the past successes of the programme, proposes the development of new products for members and draws a three-year projection to ensure that the programme continues to improve, delivering a greater range of learning opportunities for members and the wider adoption sector. Trustees have agreed to the appointment of a part time post to support Petra Jodlova in this expansion of the practice programme

- Between April 2019 and March 2022 CVAA delivered **93 practice events**. 55 practice sharing workshops, 33 expert-led training sessions and 5 evidence-based seminars.
- Between April 2019 and March 2022, CVAA significantly expanded the practice programme audience. In three years, CVAA increased attendance at practice events from 261 participants in 2019 to nearly **1,300 participants** in 2022 – **an increase of 400%**.
- Sustainable reductions in running costs have been achieved due to the success of online delivery.
- CVAA have developed a large pool of dedicated senior practitioners willing to offer their expertise pro bono. In three years, CVAA increased the membership participation in the programme delivery from 8 members in 2019 to 21 members (80%) in 2022.

We have received excellent feedback on how our practice webinars are managed and delivered. Adoption practitioners appreciate the easy access to a great variety of topics and the opportunity to network which was vital when restrictions on social gathering due to Covid-19 were in force. After two years of delivering the Practice Programme virtually, we are confident that most practice events will remain online, since it is extremely cost-effective, affordable, and easily accessible for our audience of adoption social workers managing busy caseloads whilst being keen to learn and develop their practice.

Membership services

In 2021-22 we have continued to extend our support to members through the Practice Programme and also by the expansion of our policy and information service, and continuation of key membership events. In addition, this year we have coordinated a CEO Forum, bringing together VAA leaders for peer support and to tackle common concerns at a time when meeting in person was still very restricted. Members have greatly appreciated the opportunity to share experiences, collectively respond to government proposals and plan together, combatting the isolation many have experienced over the past two years.

We have continued the weekly bulletins to ensure members are kept fully briefed on the rapidly changing wider policy environment across the UK and our monthly newsletters provide an easily accessible way for members to stay informed about policy developments in adoption, the wider permanency landscape, and the voluntary sector. We have continued to strengthen CVAA's online presence through a major redevelopment of our website, including an improved members area, increased use of Twitter and the introduction of blog posts. These initiatives enable CVAA to better promote the value of adoption, the achievements of member agencies, the excellent services they offer families, and the work of CVAA on members' behalf.

The chair of the ASGLB Krish Kandiah addressed the CVAA AGM, a well attended virtual event with positive discussions about the need to promote the value of adoption at the same time as instituting reforms in the best interest of children.

The annual conference was held in Chester in November 2021, with speakers attending virtually from the USA, research on adoption outcomes in Australia and wonderful contributions from adopted people contributing to an inspiring event. VAA leaders debated system change and practice issues that are central to modernising adoption for the 21st century, including lifelong identity, relationships with and support for birth family members. VAAs committed the sector to developing new ways to make ongoing relationships more meaningful, preparing adopters to support their children with greater face to face birth family contact in the years ahead.

Interagency fee

The Interagency fee rose again in line with CPIH inflation from 1st April 2022 to help keep pace with the rising costs of placements. Local authorities and RAAs have all paid the new rate, and, after lobbying by CVAA, both the ADCS and LGA recommended that the fee should be paid at the point of match to support the cash flow position of VAAs. Local authorities all make their own arrangements for payments, but over half of them have paid on match on at least one occasion.

The level playing field is now re-established in Scotland and Wales. In England, CVAA continues to work with RAAs, ADCS, and the LGA to argue robustly for the level playing field and stress the negative impact on the most vulnerable children of delays caused by consecutive decision-making which seeks to minimise placement cost.

It is hoped that the Social Return on investment study commissioned by CVAA this will evidence a strong case for the cost effectiveness of interagency placement alongside the wider benefits to children, families and society.

Lobbying and influencing

CVAA has maintained regular communication with officials and Ministers, meeting fortnightly at the start of the year and then monthly with the DfE adoption team along with writing regularly to Ministers to ensure that they are taking account of the voluntary adoption sector's essential work in their response the pandemic and future planning for adoption.

We facilitated a robust response from members to the DfE Adoption Strategy and have worked closely with RAA leaders on the DfE-funded national recruitment campaign which this year had a focus on the recruitment of families for children who because of their age, disability, race or being part of a sibling group wait longer find their permanent home. VAA adopters were central to the campaign and the CVAA CEO and trustees who represent the sector on the National Recruitment Steering Group continue to play an active part in ensuring that the campaign takes full account of the voluntary sector's expertise and perspective.

CVAA have also made the case for a cross sector coherent approach to data sharing and strategic development within the Adoption and Special Guardianship Leadership Board (ASGLB) where CVAA have continued to play an active role ensuring that the experience and expertise of VAAs was recognised and the pressure on adoptive families placed high on the Board's agenda. VAAs have made strong contributions to the working groups set up by ASGLB on adoption support, cutting waiting times and tackling the disparities faced by minoritized adopters, children and young people.

Regular meetings have been held with Ofsted to feed back front line experience of the service changes needed to respond to the ongoing impact of Covid 19 and continue to support adoptive families. CVAA have stressed the quality of support and adopter preparation VAAs deliver and ensured that members were informed of any additional guidance from Ofsted on safeguarding and requirements for safety of the workforce.

CVAA initiated the establishment of the new Adoption Leaders Forum in England, bringing together VAA and RAA leaders to address issues of joint concern, such as the fall in the number of children with adoption as their plan. A joint event is planned for May 2022 to promote collaboration and establish positive working relationship across all regions.

Over the course of 2021-22, too many children continued waiting for too long to be placed with their forever families. In England, as of 31 December 2021:

- There were 1,890 children waiting with a placement order waiting to be matched
- 1,000 children had been waiting longer than 18 months, and there has been an increase in the proportion of children with 'harder to place' characteristics waiting

However, VAAs continued to work as hard as ever to place and support a large minority of these children:

- As of 31 December 2021, VAAs in England had placed 390 children – 18% of all children placed in the first three quarters of 2021-22
- VAAs in England approved 550 adopters in the first 3 quarters of the year – 24% of all adopters approved in that time, and an increase of 1% from the previous year

Based on the available data, the year-on-year decline in ADM decisions, placement orders, and adoption orders appears to have continued in 2021-22. CVAA has been actively involved in discussions at a national level to understand the complex dynamics that are driving this and develop proposals for action, alongside working with the courts to address the worrying reduction in permanency orders of all kinds granted during the year.

Priorities for the year ahead

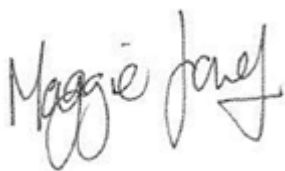
2021-22 did not see the return to pre-pandemic placement levels on adoption we had all hoped for and unprecedented levels of uncertainty for VAAs has continued. CVAA will continue to work closely with members and external partners to identify and tackle risks and challenges and do all we can to ensure that agencies can continue to provide critical services to children and families. Placements are still delayed from the pandemic and fewer children than ever are being considered for adoption, so there is much to do in the coming year to affirm adoption as a positive life-enhancing choice for children who cannot return to their birth families. The child care system is not currently operating in the best interests of children so CVAA will be taking every opportunity to work across the system to tackle waiting times and the other barriers which stand in the way of children finding the permanent loving homes they deserve with adoptive families.

In the year ahead, our priorities will include:

- 1. Developing the vision and debate on maintaining important relationships for adopted children, young people and adults through a new national service.**
- 2. Challenging the fall in children with adoption as their permanency plan, working in partnership with others across the UK.**
- 3. Championing the benefits of adoption through publication of a new social return on investment study.**
- 4. Developing new opportunities for learning and development for colleagues across the adoption sector.**

VAAs continue to put children at the heart of all they do, bringing huge commitment, skill and dedication to the children and families they serve. The sector is finding forever homes for some of our most vulnerable children, keeping siblings together, recruiting adopters from across all communities and creating positive futures for so many families. The continuity of care and support provided by VAAs to their families is needed more than ever as the profile of children adopted becomes increasingly complex, and the impact of the pandemic continues to affect education and mental health for so many children. CVAA remain hugely proud of our sector, as every day we see our principles and values being put into practice with such positive impact on the lives of so many vulnerable children and families. CVAA will continue to do all we can to support this vital work and I am hugely grateful to the CVAA staff team and Trustee Board for their unstinting support, without which none of the work outlined above would have been possible.

Each child who finds a permanent loving adoptive family to support their journey through life makes all our work worthwhile and makes an immeasurable difference, not just to their lives but to all our futures.



Maggie Jones
Chief Executive Officer
June 2022

3. Celtic Nations' Report

There have been two meetings of the Celtic Nations agencies over the past 12 months; October 2021 and March 2022. Both meetings were conducted virtually and chaired respectively by Maggie McSorley Family Care Adoption Services and Wendy Keidan St. David's Children Society. The membership of the CVAA Celtic Nations group has included Margaret Moyes, Scottish Adoption, Paula Harkins, St. Margaret's C&F Care Society, Wendy Keidan, St. David's Children's Society, Stephen Small, St. Andrew's Children's Society, Maggie McSorley Family Care Adoption Services and Sue Brunton, Barnardo's. There has been recent personnel change in the group with the pending retirement of Margaret Moyes and the appointment of Sue Brunton to CEO of Scottish Adoption.

On behalf of the group, we would like to take this opportunity to thank Margaret for her sterling contribution at the Celtic Nations meetings and we wish her a long and very happy retirement. We look forward to welcoming Sue in her new role as CEO of Scottish Adoption and a new member joining the group from Barnardo's. We have also very much appreciated the support from Maggie Jones who provides information and guidance on matters impacting across all four nations. Through wise counsel she has assisted us drawing together common themes across the UK nations as well as areas of diversification in response to individual national trends and priorities whilst always having the child central to any strategic policy direction. This theme of cohesion amongst the nations was very much central to the meeting in October with discussions on the 21st century policy agenda. Some of these discussions were about the modernisation of contact and the proposal of a national support service. Views and experiences of the Celtic nations were sought and summarized below

- In Northern Ireland, there is an expectation that contact is maintained but there are no standards or protocols to support this
- Sibling contact is a legal requirement in Scotland but without sufficient support it can be challenging to maintain those relationships.
- Digital contact can be positive but support is required to assist young people and parents
- Historically St. Andrews managed contact arrangements for all their families but this was resource heavy and it is now their expectation that contact would be managed by the Local Authority that placed the child unless they specifically contracted this to St. Andrew's.
- Contact needs to be well resourced in the longer term to promote confidence that support will be provided when needed for all parties. It also needs to be flexible according to evolving needs. There were merits expressed about a UK wide service but realistic implementation of this could be challenging, including issues on funding.
- Voice of the service user is essential when establishing a sustainable national contact service.

The strategic priority objectives of CVAA identified in the CVAA strategy ambitions remained a theme in the second meeting of the Celtic Nations in March and their relevance to the policy and practice environments in the three Countries was debated. The focus of the discussions primarily centred on Ambition 1 – sustainability. Family Care Adoption in Northern Ireland commented on the challenges faced by the lack of statutory leads willing to engage with the sector or recognise the value of the VAA's within this. Payments for placements fall well below the agreed IAF. There is a degree of hope that the new Children's plan and adoption legislation may provide opportunities to stimulate a strategic discussion about the role and value of VAA's.

In Scotland, the Promise may have unintentionally created a barrier to adoption as the plan for children, with emphasis on birth family contact. The policy for siblings to live together can result in all children within a family being placed in foster care if the oldest child is deemed too old to be adopted.

In Wales the National Adoption Service and CAFASS have commenced work on the decline in the numbers of children being placed for adoption with concern about a transient child care workforce and lack of expertise in permanency planning.

The differing experiences of managing historical ‘forced’ adoption was discussed in the group. All agencies have had historic involvement in adoption, some over 100 years. Family Care Adoption Services has noted an increase in its usual enquiry numbers in relation to historic adoptions which appears to have been stimulated to a significant extent by the publication of a research report into historical Mother and Baby Homes and the subsequent media interest generated by this. It was noted that each Nation was conducting an Independent Inquiry and all Agencies welcome this. The Northern Ireland Assembly intend to establish a statutory enquiry to look at both Mother and Baby Home practices in the past and their link to ‘forced adoptions’ which is also very likely to act on the research report recommendations for a redress board.

Once outcomes and recommendations are published from the other Nations (England and Wales will be combined given timing of devolution) the Celtic Nations have agreed to work alongside CVAA to make a collective response.

The following is a summary of activity of each Country and their representative Agency/ Agencies over the past 12 months.

Northern Ireland represented by Family Care Adoption Service:

The new Adoption and Children Bill passed its final stage in the Northern Ireland Assembly in March 2022 which when enacted will reform the landscape. Adoption legislation has not been updated in Northern Ireland since 1987 and the new bill will mirror changes introduced in England and Wales in 2002 and in Scotland in 2007. In particular, the Bill will mandate Post Adoption support, enhance a focus on the paramountcy of the child’s welfare and the rights of the child in the context of adoption and attempt to tackle delay by the removal of Freeing as a process and the introduction of Placement Orders. The Bill also introduces Special Guardianship to Northern Ireland and makes a number of arrangements to improve support for children in and leaving care.

In terms of Family Care Adoption Services, this has continued to be a challenging year. Significant delays in court and care planning decisions have resulted in a 50% reduction in projected placement activity. Family Care continue to deliver its Life Story Project which is funded by the Lottery Community Fund until 2024. One year budget setting by Government makes planning on guaranteed income and contract delivery hugely challenging.

Scotland represented by St. Andrews Children Society, Scottish Adoption, Barnardo’s and St. Margaret’s

A review of the Care system in Scotland with emphasis on maintaining birth family connections could unintentionally detract from adoption as the right plan for children. This debate is a circular one that emerges periodically. The Voluntary Adoption Agencies have exerted influence on the research evidence about adoption having the best permanency outcome for children unable to live with birth families.

Relationships between VAAs and local authority colleagues is good and this has resulted in a widespread acceptance of the IAF and the annual increases. The Scottish Government shows leadership by, every March, writing to all adoption agencies outlining the increases in the IAF that have been agreed (in line with the consumer Price Index) and urging that they are adhered to. This has had one, major, positive effect – that the IAF is not perceived to be ‘owned’ by either sector (public or voluntary) and therefore is not contentious.

It is also hoped that the Care Review will give impetus to the long-standing issue related to the involvement of The Children’s Hearing System in permanency planning. This often results, for many children, in their plans, in effect, being scrutinised by two legal processes consecutively with the concomitant delay in achieving permanence for them. The unintended benefit of this however, means that all adopters in Scotland are also approved as foster carers to allow children to be placed with them on a fostering basis until they are legally able to be adopted.

Scottish Adoption

There has been a slight decrease in placement activity which may result in a small variance to year end targets. Scottish Adoption has recently appointed a new practice manger, new CEO and five new Trustees thus internally going through a period of change. Work with young people is reaping huge benefits with young adoption people as adoption ambassadors who facilitate the group. A bid was recently submitted to support birth parents who have lost children to the care system.

St. Andrew's Children Society

The timing of placements has impacted on reaching year end targets but some excellent results in fundraising have contributed to a good year end position. St Andrew's are also soon to purchase a new office in Aberdeen, further strengthening their service in the North East of Scotland This year marks the centenary year for St. Andrew's and celebratory events are planned to showcase the impact the Agency has had on people's lives, linking longevity to the quality of services St. Andrew's provides.

Barnardo's

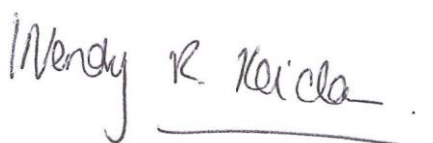
The service is experiencing a time of change, with Sue Brunton's move and the appointment of Anne Whyte, the retirement of Sandra McFadyen (Operations Manager), appointment of Moyra Maclean as Operations Manager (previously Practice Manager) and the subsequent recruitment activity into her post. The last financial year marked the 100th child to join Barnardo's Adoption Families. Celebration activities will be shared with Local Authority and Partner Agencies Barnardo's recognised the reduction in number and changing profiles of children waiting for adoptive families and concentrated their resources on finding families, for brothers and sisters and older children. The service has achieved end of year targets although the stretch on resources caused by the pandemic and subsequent delays has challenged activity. The service is exploring partnership opportunities specifically in relation to adoption support for birth parents.

Wales represented by St. David's Children Society

There is a downward trend in the numbers of children with adoption as their plan and an upward trend in the number of Special Guardianship Orders. The reasons for the downturn in adoption as the right permanency option for children resonates with experiences in other part of the UK. This could be a combination of the following ; a 17% reduction in care proceedings, lack of confidence in care planning decisions by social workers that harks back to R-BS and the "nothing else will do" judgement, lack of expertise in permanency planning and a sense that Adoption has found less favour in recent years.

Welsh Government have published their programme for change with the prioritisation of resources into preventative services. St. David's and the National Adoption Service (NAS) are working to influence that this policy directive shouldn't unintentionally undermine other permanency options and continue to promote adoption for children unable to live with birth family.

St. David's Children Society will end the year with a slight downturn on placement activity, but the agency has maintained a healthy cashflow and reserves position. Relationships with the wider adoption sector which make up the National Adoption Service (NAS) remain very positive. St. David's have recently undertaken the end of year evaluation of a pilot project with one region who purchased a number of placements in advance. The pilot was deemed successful by both parties and has now moved into an ongoing commissioning strategy. Meetings with three other Welsh regions to embark on a similar model are planned. St. David's celebrates its 80th anniversary year in 2022 with celebration events taking place during the summer.



Wendy Keidan

On behalf the Celtic Nations

5. *Trustees Annual Report*

5.1 *Trustees*

Director/Trustee Name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year
Andrew Webb	Chair	
Satwinder Sandhu	Vice Chair	
Terry Fitzpatrick	Treasurer	
Brenda Farrell		
Norman Goodwin		Resigned 31 st December 2021
Wendy Keidan		
Ruth Marriott		Appointed 15 th September 2021
Anna Sharkey		Appointed 15 th March 2022
Stephen Small		
Natausha Van Vliet		Appointed 15 th September 2021
Judith Vaughan		

Name of Company Secretary

Maggie Jones

Name of Senior Staff Members

Chief Executive Officer:	Maggie Jones
Head of Policy and Member Services	Alice Tabot
Head of Practice Development	Petra Jodlova

Registered Office C/o ARC, Unit 29, The Business Innovation Centre, Wearside, Sunderland, SR5 2TA

Bankers CAF Bank Ltd, 25 King's Hill Avenue, King's Hill, West Malling, Kent, ME19 4JQ.

Independent Examiners Wallwork Nelson & Johnson, Chandler House, 7 Ferry Road Office Park, Riversway, Preston, PR2 2YH.

5.2 *Statement of Trustees Responsibilities*

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Report of the Trustees and the Financial Statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Practice). Company law requires that Trustees prepare Financial Statements for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of the state of the affairs of the company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including income and expenditure for that period. In preparing these Financial Statements, the Trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently.

- Observe the methods and principles in the charity SORP.
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent; and
- prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Charity will continue in business.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Charity and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The Trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the Charity's website. It is important to bear in mind that legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of Financial Statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

In so far as the Trustees are aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the Independent Examiner is unaware.

The Trustees have taken all the steps that they ought to have taken as a Trustee-Director in order to make himself or herself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the Independent Examiner are aware of that information.

The Chief Executive is appointed by the Trustees to manage the day-to-day operations of the Charity. The Chief Executive is charged with the duty of accounting to the Board and making recommendations on plans and policy.

5.3 *Structure, Governance and Management*

The Charity is a Company limited by guarantee (Company number 5275491) and a Charity (Charity registration number 1108318) and is governed by its constitution.

The Trustees are responsible for the management of the Charity and they form the Board. The Board meets at least four times a year. Appointment to the Board is by election of the members by a simple majority. Trustees are elected from the member agencies. The Chief Executive attends all meetings of the Board.

Appointment and Recruitment of Trustees

Members of the Charity nominate Trustees in accordance with the Constitution. An annual audit identifies gaps in representation and nominations to address these are sought. Members can be co-opted to the Board for a period before nomination. Job Descriptions and Person Specifications have been agreed for the Chair, Treasurer, Vice Chair and Trustees to provide clarity about the role and responsibilities.

Trustees Induction and Training

New Trustees undergo an induction process to brief them on their legal obligations under Charity and Company Law, the content of the Memorandum and Articles of Association, the recent financial performance of the charity and the financial projections. Trustees are encouraged to attend training events where these may aid their appreciation and understanding of CVAA and facilitate their functioning as Trustees. During 2020-21, the board tested compliance with each of the Principles of Good Governance as part of its regular meetings.

Organisation

All members of the Board undertake tasks on behalf of CVAA as is illustrated elsewhere in this report. In summary:

- Officer positions on the Board
- Chair or member of a subgroup
- Delivery of training
- Representation of CVAA at a national level e.g., meetings with the Department for Education (DfE); National Adoption Service Cymru, Ofsted,
- Representing the VAA sector in joint working groups with statutory partners such as Regional Adoption Agencies (England) and local authorities
- Contact with the media.

CVAA recognises and values the time that the Board give to these issues; as a small organisation, it would not be possible to meet all the demands without such voluntary contribution. In addition, ARC have provided financial management to CVAA which has been very much appreciated. All members of staff report either directly or indirectly to the Chief Executive and the Chief Executive reports to the Chair.

Risk Management

A risk register is maintained and discussed by the full Board at each meeting, new mitigating actions proposed where the level of risk is judged to have increased; new risks are proposed and added to the register, or closed, as necessary.

Much of the Charity's approach to risk is determined by a thorough appreciation of the environment in which the Charity operates, and by ensuring that appropriate, experienced, and qualified members of staff are recruited and further are appropriately trained.

5.4 Objectives and Activities for the Public Benefit

Summary of the objects of the charity set out in the Constitution (governing document)

CVAA's objects (the Objects) are

“ to develop standards of excellence in all matters relating to adoption, good practice and management throughout the voluntary sector for the benefit of the public, and in particular to maximise the contribution of Voluntary Adoption Agencies by influencing policy and practice of adoption in the UK at the National, Regional and Local levels and to directly increase the number of children successfully placed for adoption by promoting liaison and collaborative partnership working practices between voluntary adoption agencies and all other stakeholders”

The Trustees confirm that they have referred to the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit when reviewing the charities aims and objectives and in planning future activities.

The focus of our work: a summary of the main activities in relation to these objects

Representation	of member voluntary adoption agencies' views at local, regional, and national levels across all sectors
Promotion	of the voluntary adoption sector's commitment to achieving appropriate and timely permanence for children
Liaison	between voluntary organisations and statutory agencies by encouraging networking opportunities and forums for members
Development	of CVAA as a national partnership that responds to the needs of all member agencies whilst acknowledging those of the statutory agencies we work with.
Support	of member agencies by maintaining a national database, collection, and analysis of voluntary adoption agency statistics, maintaining the interagency fee, encouraging

internal efficiencies, providing advocacy and consultation on adoption matters, driving upwards standards of excellence and promoting collaborative working practices through an extensive programme of professional development.

5.5 Reserves Policy

Charity Law requires that the Directors and Trustees should have a policy for holding reserves. The purpose of the policy is to enable any monies which belong to CVAA and which are not required in the immediate future for the running of the charity to be used to generate further income.

The Reserves Policy will:-

- preserve the viability of CVAA as a Charity and Company Limited by Guarantee
- enable the Charity to meet its legal objects
- provide seed capital for strategic developments should this be required pending receipt of an awarded grant or new income stream
- provide confidence to supporters and donors seeking to give financial support to a prudently controlled charity
- ensure that, consistent with the objects, mission statement and values of CVAA proper ethical consideration be afforded to all matters of investment
- ensure that the reserves are at a level sufficient to discharge all the Charity's obligations should the Charity cease its operations

Desired level of Reserves

In the preparation of the accounts, there has been consideration of the level of reserves which the charity needs to maintain in order to ensure that it would be in a position to meet all of its liabilities should it at any time cease to operate and also to smooth fluctuations in membership as the primary source of income, in order to maintain high quality services to beneficiaries. The value of the reserves required will vary during the year. In calculating the value of reserves there needs to be regard for the following:

- Annual running costs of the charity in maintaining essential services
- Contractual notice periods of the officers of the charity
- Expenses payable to any of the member organisations whose representatives are Trustees of the Charity
- Settlement of any other commitments where notice is required to end the contractual arrangement
- Other costs payable and due to third parties

Steps to Establish the Reserves Policy

To maintain appropriate levels of reserves the Trustees have determined that:-

- any legacies, which have no restriction placed upon them by the terms of their donation, are considered to be general reserves
- expenditure plans agreed by the Board are examined at quarterly intervals by the Treasurer and Finance & Audit Committee and funds required to finance such may be removed from general reserves as necessary for the attainment of its broad objects. Funds may, from time to time, be designated for specific purposes

Monitoring and Reviewing the Policy

The Trustees have agreed that:-

- day-to-day operational responsibility for the implementation of this policy be vested in the Treasurer and the Finance & Audit Committee and (supported by the finance professionals in his/her agency)
- monitoring is undertaken, on a quarterly basis and reported to the next meeting of the Board

- the policy is subject to at least an annual review by the Board specifically to confirm the level of Reserves required for the year ahead to meet all obligations

5.6 Investment Policy

CVAA will invest the reserves appropriately with any investment to be of low risk. An appropriate balance is to be struck between income and capital growth to enable CVAA to support its charitable works and help achieve its objects.

This year the Trustees have developed a new investment policy with the aim of achieving an improved return on investments to support the charity at time of reducing membership fees. The policy is consistent with the Reserves Policy and will:

- Maintain the value of CVAA reserves in line with inflation in order to sustain the long term viability of the charity and where possible to achieve capital growth
- Create an income stream to replace membership fees lost over the past few years and in anticipation of further reductions through member mergers
- Support activities which benefit CVAA members and achieve the organisation's strategic ambitions.
- Maintain the optimal balance between funds necessary for the efficient day to day operation of the organisation and maximizing returns on additional funds to generate income.

Decision making, management and reporting

The CVAA Trustee Board will make final decisions on investments after receiving reports and relevant professional advice sought by the Finance and Audit Subcommittee. The Finance and Audit subcommittee have delegated authority to;

- Seek expert advice on investment options within the risk parameters set by the Board.
- Investigate and assess charges and other costs of investment options, including those for the professional support and management of funds.
- Monitor the performance of investments, including through receiving quarterly reports from investment managers.
- Meet, either in person or virtually, with professional advisors as necessary, but as a minimum once per year, to recommend changes in investments to the Board, in response to changes in external markets and/or CVAA circumstances.
- Liaise with and monitor the performance of investment managers with delegated authority to move funds on behalf of CVAA within the parameters set by the Board.

The Board will review investment performance and assess returns against targets on an annual basis alongside consideration of the outturn figures for the preceding financial year, to ensure that the right balance of liquid and longer term investment is in place to support CVAA's immediate and longer term resource needs. This review will also include an assessment of the performance of investment advisors/managers against the objectives of the policy.

5.7 *Independent Examiners*

The Trustees will commission an independent examination of the financial operations of the charity each year from a qualified auditor.

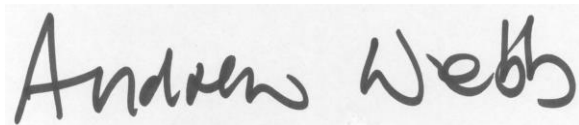
This report has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies. This report was approved by the Board of Management on 22nd June 2022

5.8 *Financial Review*

The incoming resources of CVAA for the year ended 31 March 2022 were £247,233 after the deduction of resources expended of £236,646; the net position of the charity was a surplus of £10,587

The retained unrestricted funds of the charity are £555,665.

Approved by order of the Board of Trustees and signed on its behalf by

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andrew Webb". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Andrew Webb

Chair of Trustees

22th June 2022

6. CVAA Members

Action for Children Adoption
Adopters for Adoption
Adoption Focus
Adoption Matters
Adoptionplus
Adoption UK (Associate member)
ARC Adoption North East
Barnardo's
Birmingham Children's Trust
Caritas Care
CCS Adoption
Coram Capital Adoption
Diagrama Foundation
Families for Children
Family Care Adoption Services (Celtic member)
Family Futures CIC
IAC – The Centre for Adoption
Nugent Care
PAC-UK (Associate member)
Parents and Children Together (PACT)
Scottish Adoption (Celtic member)
SSAFA
St Andrew's Children's Society (Celtic member)
St David's Children's Society (Celtic member)
St Francis' Children's Society
St Margaret's Children & Family Care Society (Celtic member)
Yorkshire Adoption Agency

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Consortium of Voluntary Adoption Agencies UK Limited ('the Company')

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Company for the year ended 31 March 2021.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees of the Company (and also its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the Company are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your charity's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5) (b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Company as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
4. the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities (applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)).

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Paul Woodburn
FCA
Wallwork Nelson & Johnson
Chandler House
7 Ferry Road Office Park
Riversway
Preston
Lancashire
PR2 2YH

Date:

**CONSORTIUM OF VOLUNTARY ADOPTION
AGENCIES UK LIMITED**

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022**

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted fund £	31/3/22 Total funds £	31/3/21 Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM					
Charitable activities					
Membership costs		239,135	-	239,135	222,145
Conference & Other income		8,000	-	8,000	26,609
Investment income	2	<u>98</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>98</u>	<u>194</u>
Total		247,233	-	247,233	248,948
EXPENDITURE ON					
Charitable activities					
Membership costs		<u>236,646</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>236,646</u>	<u>216,483</u>
NET INCOME		10,587	-	10,587	32,465
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS					
Total funds brought forward		<u>545,078</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>545,078</u>	<u>512,613</u>
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		<u><u>555,665</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>555,665</u></u>	<u><u>545,078</u></u>

**CONSORTIUM OF VOLUNTARY ADOPTION
AGENCIES UK LIMITED (REGISTERED NUMBER: 05275491)**

**BALANCE SHEET
31 MARCH 2022**

	Notes	31/3/22 £	31/3/21 £
CURRENT ASSETS			
Debtors	6	4,734	14,685
Cash at bank		<u>583,213</u>	<u>553,280</u>
		587,947	567,965
CREDITORS			
Amounts falling due within one year	7	(32,282)	(22,887)
		<u>555,665</u>	<u>545,078</u>
NET CURRENT ASSETS			
		<u>555,665</u>	<u>545,078</u>
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES			
		555,665	545,078
NET ASSETS		<u>555,665</u>	<u>545,078</u>
FUNDS	9		
Unrestricted funds		<u>555,665</u>	<u>545,078</u>
TOTAL FUNDS		<u>555,665</u>	<u>545,078</u>

The charitable company is entitled to exemption from audit under Section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 for the year ended 31 March 2022.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2022 in accordance with Section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

The trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for

- (a) ensuring that the charitable company keeps accounting records that comply with Sections 386 and 387 of the Companies Act 2006 and
- (b) preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company as at the end of each financial year and of its surplus or deficit for each financial year in accordance with the requirements of Sections 394 and 395 and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the charitable company.

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to charitable companies subject to the small companies regime.

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on 22nd June 2022. and were signed on its behalf by:



.....
Terence Fitzpatrick - Trustee

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparing the financial statements

The financial statements of the charitable company, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)', Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' and the Companies Act 2006. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

Income

All income is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities once the charity has entitlement to the funds, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

Expenditure

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to that expenditure, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all cost related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

Taxation

The charity is exempt from corporation tax on its charitable activities.

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the trustees.

Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the financial statements.

2. INVESTMENT INCOME

	31/3/22	31/3/21
	£	£
Deposit account interest	<u>98</u>	<u>194</u>

3. TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS

There were no trustees' remuneration or other benefits for the year ended 31 March 2022 nor for the year ended 31 March 2021.

No Trustee or any other person related to the Charity had any personal interest in any contract or any transaction entered into by the Charity during the period.

Trustees' expenses

During the year payments made to the value of £1,060 were made to 5 Trustees or their employing organisations for travel expenses (£291 in 2021, paid to 2 Trustees or their employing organisations).

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

4. STAFF COSTS

The average monthly number of employees during the year was as follows:

	31/3/22	31/3/21
Management and Administration	1	1
Direct Charity Workers	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>
	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>

No employees received emoluments in excess of £60,000.

5. COMPARATIVES FIGURES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2019

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted fund £	Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM			
Charitable activities			
Membership costs	222,145	-	222,145
Conference & Other income	26,609	-	26,609
Investment income	<u>194</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>194</u>
Total	248,948	-	248,948
EXPENDITURE ON			
Charitable activities			
Membership costs	216,483	-	216,483
NET INCOME	32,465	-	32,465
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS			
Total funds brought forward	512,613	-	512,613
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	<u>545,078</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>545,078</u>

6. DEBTORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	31/3/22	31/3/21
	£	£
Trade debtors	4,734	11,517
Prepayments and accrued income	<u>-</u>	<u>3,168</u>
	<u>4,734</u>	<u>14,685</u>

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

7. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	31/3/22	31/3/21
	£	£
Trade creditors	5,962	328
Other creditors	772	372
Accruals and deferred income	<u>25,548</u>	<u>22,187</u>
	<u><u>32,282</u></u>	<u><u>22,887</u></u>

8. ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted fund	31/3/22 Total funds	31/3/21 Total funds
	£	£	£	£
Current assets	587,947	-	587,947	567,965
Current liabilities	<u>(32,282)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(32,282)</u>	<u>(22,887)</u>
	<u><u>555,665</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>555,665</u></u>	<u><u>545,078</u></u>

9. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS

	At 1/4/21	Net movement in funds	At 31/3/22
	£	£	£
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	480,078	10,587	490,665
Closure costs	<u>65,000</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>65,000</u>
	<u>545,078</u>	<u>10,587</u>	<u>555,665</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u><u>545,078</u></u>	<u><u>10,587</u></u>	<u><u>555,665</u></u>

Net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Movement in funds
	£	£	£
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	247,233	(236,646)	10,587
	<u>247,233</u>	<u>(236,646)</u>	<u>10,587</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u><u>247,233</u></u>	<u><u>(236,646)</u></u>	<u><u>10,587</u></u>

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

9. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

Comparatives for movement in funds

	At 1/4/20 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31/3/21 £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	447,613	32,465	480,078
Closure costs	<u>65,000</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>65,000</u>
	<u>512,613</u>	<u>32,465</u>	<u>545,078</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>512,613</u>	<u>32,465</u>	<u>545,078</u>

Comparative net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	248,948	(216,483)	32,465
	<u>248,948</u>	<u>(216,483)</u>	<u>32,465</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>248,948</u>	<u>(216,483)</u>	<u>32,465</u>

A current year 12 months and prior year 12 months combined position is as follows:

	At 1/4/20 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31/3/22 £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	447,613	43,052	490,665
Closure costs	<u>65,000</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>65,000</u>
	<u>512,613</u>	<u>43,052</u>	<u>555,665</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>512,613</u>	<u>43,052</u>	<u>555,665</u>

A current year 12 months and prior year 12 months combined net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	496,181	(453,129)	43,052
	<u>496,181</u>	<u>(453,129)</u>	<u>43,052</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>496,181</u>	<u>(453,129)</u>	<u>43,052</u>

Unrestricted Designated funds:

The Trustees have decided that it is prudent to set aside a sum of money which would be required to cover the closure costs should the Charity cease to operate. This designated fund is currently £65,000.

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022**

10. RELATED PARTY DISCLOSURES

There were no related party transactions for the year ended 31 March 2022.

DETAILED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

	31/3/22 £	31/3/21 £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS		
Investment income		
Deposit account interest	98	194
Charitable activities		
Membership fees	160,714	165,897
Conference & Other income	8,000	26,609
Online webinar	<u>78,421</u>	<u>56,248</u>
	<u>247,135</u>	<u>248,754</u>
Total incoming resources	247,233	248,948
EXPENDITURE		
Charitable activities		
Staffing	165,904	156,662
Practice event costs	10,843	5,432
ICT & other costs	20,710	21,673
Overheads	5,595	2,828
Accountancy fees	1,860	2,000
Property costs	8,035	8,805
Travel costs	1,418	1,432
Financial management	9,669	10,074
Consultancy	1,913	2,695
Members events & AGM	6,111	-
Board & Trustees expenses	1,060	291
Bad debts written off	2,162	-
Legal fees	-	4,591
Advertising	<u>1,366</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>236,646</u>	<u>216,483</u>
Total resources expended	<u>236,646</u>	<u>216,483</u>
Net income	<u>10,587</u>	<u>32,465</u>

CONSORTIUM OF VOLUNTARY ADOPTION AGENCIES UK LIMITED

England & Wales - Charity number 1108318

Accounts



Consortium of Voluntary Adoption Agencies

Annual Report and Consolidated Financial Statements
1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020

Consortium of Voluntary Adoption Agencies UK Ltd (CVAA)

Registered charity number 1108318
Company Number 5275491

Registered Office
C/o ARC, Unit 29, The Business Innovation Centre, Wearside, Sunderland, SR5 2TA

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1. Chair's Report 2020-21

When I took on the role of Chair of Trustees at the CVAA, two thoughts were uppermost in my mind: the first was that the outgoing chair, Ray Shostak, had left an incredible legacy; the second was that I would be working with colleagues to deliver a fairly rapid "return to normal". The second point demonstrates just how wrong you can be! What has become clear over recent months is that the ground has shifted under us. The complex interactions of the impact of an enduring pandemic and changes in practice in both the family courts and local authority care planning have made an already challenging environment unpredictable and even more difficult for VAAs. Which makes the leadership role of CVAA even more critical.

Maggie Jones and Sam Mercadante have worked with Trustees and other members of CVAA to turn an existing 3-year strategic plan and discussion piece about the nature of adoption in the 21st century into a dynamic contribution to thought leadership in the adoption sector. Its content has made it onto the agenda for the Children's Minister, Vicky Ford, been discussed with her officials at DfE and been fed into the Government's Care Review. Partners including ADCS and their Regional Adoption Agency leaders and the Nuffield Family Justice Observatory have engaged in developing both its core principles and implications for future practice. If the national debate about permanence and adoption's role in it is moving on, then we owe it to the children and families involved to ensure that the skills, expertise and evidence embodied in voluntary adoption agencies is at the heart of the conversation. The priority themes that are central to our view of 21st Century Adoption are:

- Engagement of birth families
- Meaningful contact to support a child's developing identity
- Swift placements for children with adoption as their plan
- Delivery of the right support at the right time add to the sector's ongoing commitment to the core tasks of recruiting, training and supporting adopters and facilitating their match with some of society's most vulnerable children.

All of this is far too important to be left to chance, so the leadership role of CVAA needs to remain a priority.

I would like to thank all the Trustees and other members who contributed their time, expertise and patience to my induction to the world of VAAs across the four nations. It gave me a wonderful insight into the commitment, innovation and excellent practice that has been developed over the years, and also to the real, ongoing challenges we face. It also confirmed the value of the offer CVAA makes to its members.

Petra Jodlova has coordinated the move of the Practice Programme into a virtual world with such success that uptake and engagement in training and development hit an all-time high in 2020-21, so thanks to all who supported the changes to the programme and provided content. It has gone from making the best of a forced change to being seen as the way forward, which might also be said of the annual conference in November 2020, which this year was run as a two-day virtual event with expert speakers from the USA, Italy and East Anglia, and, most importantly, inspiring adopters and a group of adopted young people from Scotland. The large and engaged audience was able to participate in debate, contribute ideas and help shape the future in ways that would have been far more limited if we had followed a traditional conference format. We also managed to bring VAA chairs and CEOs together in January in numbers that would have been unthinkable if it had been a "real" event. The feedback received about the value of the challenging input, the space it provided to discuss the threats and opportunities (now and for the future), and practical solutions people have found to common problems suggest it would be worth repeating the format.

Looking ahead, CVAA will contribute to the government's ongoing Care Review, will monitor the continued impact of the pandemic on courts, and work with partners to better understand why fewer children are having adoption put forward as their permanency plan. These are all big issues and CVAA will need to harness the collective strength of the VAA sector to challenge government thinking on adoption, enhance the mutual support members offer each other, support partnerships within the sector and with others who share our ambitions for a loving forever home for every child. We saw with the two rounds of DfE grant funding for VAAs this year that the government will listen and respond when an argument is well made – so we will keep the needs of the sector squarely in their sights!

During the year, the board bid farewell to Jan Fishwick, who was also Vice-Chair of the Board, and Carolyn Oliver, both of whom have contributed enormously to the world of adoption in general and the ongoing development of CVAA in particular. They will both be missed. However, fortunately for us all, Satwinder Sandhu has taken on the Vice-Chair role and the Board has been further

strengthened by Brenda Farrell from Barnardo's and Wendy Keidan from St David's in Wales, so we are moving back up to full strength.

Finally, thanks to Maggie and the CVAA staff team for all their incredible hard work (I hope you haven't been too isolated!), and to all the Trustees who have given their time to helping lead the work of CVAA and ensure it is embedded in reality.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andrew Webb". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly informal style. The letters are connected, and the ink appears to be on a light-colored, possibly textured surface like paper.

Andrew Webb

Chair of CVAA

June 2021

2. Treasurer's Report

I appreciate that it is now becoming a cliché to say this, but it has been another unusual year for all of us and CVAA is no exception to that.

Last year I shared with members that we had a budget deficit to overturn of nearly £39K and gave the reasons why that had come about. I am delighted to share this year that this has been turned around to present us with a £32K surplus in the year end accounts.

It is a remarkable achievement that has been aided by the reduction in hours of our CEO Maggie Jones, by the reduction in rent achieved through moving office premises and through a reduction in the cost of web support all of which were planned to bring our budget back into line over a two-year period. However, the provision of a surplus is the result of a general reduction on expenditure brought about by our response to the implications of the pandemic, with working from home and virtual delivery being two of the main factors. Great credit though must also go to Petra and the success of the Practice Programme during this period.

Delivering high-quality training virtually has brought in a welcome income and set the scene for more efficient ways of delivering services to members in the future, which is likely to entail a mixed approach.

Despite this fantastic achievement by the team, it is worth pointing out that our actual income was slightly down on the previous year as the number of memberships fell. Membership numbers may go down again in the future, so we need to adopt a prudent approach going forward.

With this in mind the board have been giving consideration to undertaking some low-risk investment of a proportion of our reserves. It is hoped that this will generate a small income stream to supplement our core business.

As usual there are a number of people to thank for their support throughout the year:

Last year our accounts required an independent examination at the year-end rather than a full audit and the same is true this year. This was carried out once more by Paul Woodburn from the auditors Wallwork, Nelson and Johnson. I would like to thank Paul for his thorough oversight of our accounts and for the resulting reports which outline that the accounts produced were a true and fair view of the Charitable Company's affairs and can be presented for approval to the members as such at the Annual General Meeting of members on 15th September 2021.

Thanks also go to Trevor Hogg from our accountants TPA Accountancy for helping to keep us on track throughout the year and to Lisa Parkin at ARC Adoption NE who has been fastidious when it comes to paying our bills and ensuring our income arrives in a timely fashion.

I am also indebted to the support of the Finance Sub-Committee whose challenge and advice has been invaluable at junctures throughout the year.

Lastly, but not least, I would like to thank our members for their unwavering support, particularly through their acceptance of the small increase in membership fee this year. I am sure this reflects the value that we all see in our membership and the gratitude we have for the phenomenal service we receive from the CVAA team.

No doubt the year ahead will bring fresh challenges to us all, but CVAA is in a strong position to once more help us through these in order to continue our wonderful work with the children and families we serve.



Terry Fitzpatrick

Treasurer

June 2021

3. Strategic Report – CVAA Activities and Achievements 2020-21

The voluntary adoption sector faced serious difficulties at the beginning of the financial year, with the first lockdown leading to a complete cessation of placement activities to protect children, families and staff from the risks of Covid-19. CVAA lobbied swiftly and effectively for government support to enable agencies to continue their vital work supporting adoptive families through the pressures of lockdown and furlough. All CVAA members moved quickly to establish an impressive range of online services, using technology with imagination and care to deliver effective support to families and preparation for new adopters. The CVAA staff team and Board of Trustees have remained focussed on providing the best possible support to members through this turbulent year, ensuring government was aware of the achievements of VAAs and their challenges in maintaining the vital work of finding forever homes for the children who need them.

Achievements against priorities set for 2020-21

Alongside our members, and all organisations working for children and families, CVAA has had to change its plans for the year and respond flexibly to the challenges of the pandemic. Trustees reviewed the Year 2 priorities of our Strategic plan in March 2020, placing several on hold to create capacity to work with members and government to sustain adoption services across the UK. CVAA has continued to provide an effective and authoritative voice for VAAs, advocating for the sector, influencing government and other key decision-makers across the social care system, adapting and extending support to members through the difficulties caused by the pandemic.

Our priorities for 2020-21 included:

1. Supporting members to manage the impact of the pandemic on children, families and their organisations

It was a worrying time as face-to-face services closed for the lockdown in March 2020. Agencies were concerned to maintain progress on adoptions and to continue their support for adoptive families who were also under greater strain as schools and therapeutic services closed. As it became clear that the disruption was going to be much longer than first envisaged serious concerns arose about the viability of placements and therefore of agencies' sustainability.

VAAs rose to the challenges immediately developing a set of online support services for adopters at all stages of their adoption journey, providing support to families and where possible, with the agreement of local authorities, creating safe processes for children already matched with adopters to meet and move in with their new families. As the lockdown continued CVAA took action at national level to support agencies.

- **Grant Aid:** CVAA lobbied vigorously for grant aid to enable VAAs to continue their vital work through the pandemic when income was badly disrupted and the immediate future uncertain. We achieved a positive result with the governments in Scotland, Wales and England providing grant aid to VAAs, in England this totalled almost £6m and enabled all front line services to be maintained through the pandemic. No agencies closed through the year although the strain on reserves has been severe and will have longer term implications for agency sustainability.
- **Medicals:** The medicals required for both adopters and children were badly disrupted as the NHS prioritised Covid related services and minimised direct contact between general practitioners and patients. This caused distressing delays for children and prevented adopters being fully approved. CVAA worked with DfE and other children's charities to inform and influence the Department for Health and Royal Colleges to get adoption related medicals prioritised and a covid safe process which would enable adoptions to proceed.
- **Partnerships to influence Government:** CVAA met Government on a weekly basis, both alone and in partnership with charities working in children's social care to ensure timely information exchange and ensure Ministers were fully briefed about the impact of the situation on the most vulnerable children.

2. Influencing the Comprehensive Spending Review and policy on adoption

CVAA developed a set of practical actions which could be taken to tackle a number of long-standing problems within the adoption system to inform the DfE's Spending Review submission. These "quick win" proposals addressed the long waiting times for children with more complex needs, early help for families, improved support for birth families and greater access to support for VAA adopters and special guardians. These themes were developed further in the more comprehensive work which followed.

This year the CVAA Board have developed a policy position paper which sets out an ambitious agenda for the future of adoption and will guide our lobbying and influencing work for the next few years.

Adoption has evolved significantly since its height in the mid-20th century, and our growing understanding of children's needs and experiences have informed policy and practice changes in recent decades. However, there are still many systemic concerns to be tackled if adoption is to continue to provide a positive permanency option for 21st century children who cannot safely grow up in their birth families.

The report, **21st Century Adoption** sets out four key themes that must be addressed in order to modernise adoption. Within each theme, we set out our ambitions for change followed by initial thinking to define the challenges and identify potential solutions.

- i. **A 21st century adoption system** with structures and processes that are collaborative, fit for purpose, and put children's needs at the centre.
 - a) **Ambition 1:** The adoption and permanence system has coordinated system leadership with common principles and improvement goals that are underpinned by robust data.
 - b) **Ambition 2:** The voices of those affected by adoption and special guardianship are at the centre of decision-making and reform.
 - c) **Ambition 3:** Cross-organisational systems work seamlessly so that all of a child's needs are met without delay or bureaucracy.
 - d) **Ambition 4:** Resources follow the child, enabling all statutory obligations to be met and decisions to be taken solely based on the best interests of the child.
- ii. **Serving 21st century children** by ensuring that every child has a permanent family.
 - a) **Ambition 5:** There is consensus across children's social care and the courts on the benefits of adoption and the children for whom adoption is the best permanency plan.
 - b) **Ambition 6:** All barriers are removed for timely, well-supported permanency placements, with waiting times, reversals, and disruptions all reduced significantly.
 - c) **Ambition 7:** No child leaves care without a permanent family.
- iii. **Supporting 21st century families** through strengthening the contribution that both permanent and birth families make to children's development.
 - a) **Ambition 8:** Children achieve strong identity development and lifelong wellbeing because they are supported by permanent families and enabled to maintain important relationships.
- iv. **Building 21st century permanence support** by ensuring that every child and family receives the right support at the right time.
 - a) **Ambition 9:** Early intervention helps counteract neurological impacts of toxic stress, improve executive functioning, and promote supportive relationships.
 - b) **Ambition 10:** Care-experienced children and adults are enabled and empowered to access lifelong, consistent support that is appropriate to their needs and life stage.

CVAA will continue the work begun this year with members, adopters, adoptees and partners to build consensus about the need for change and pressure for action to modernise adoption so we can better meet the needs and aspirations of vulnerable children and their families today and in the years to come.

3. Establishing the CVAA Data Project

Work has progressed at pace this year on developing the templates for CVAA's annual data collection and setting up the systems and processes to enable data to be collected securely and analysed efficiently. Our newly appointed data analyst, Justin Fenty, has worked alongside a group of data professionals from across the membership to pilot and refine the data collection process and determine which metrics will be of most use to members for their planning and future decision making. We look forward to the publication of the first report in summer 2021 and to using what the powerful evidence of VAAs' impact in CVAA's lobbying and influencing work.

4. Expanding and developing the Practice Development programme

As Covid-19 became more of a pressing concern in March 2020, we quickly moved the Practice Programme online to continue providing members with opportunities to connect with colleagues, pursue CPD, and develop their practice. The Programme, led

by Petra Jodlova, responded quickly to the changing environment and introduced the new virtual Practice Programme with a series of 5 free 'rapid response' webinars for members, which tested the appetite for virtual training with 261 attendees. The response was overwhelming, and the Programme rapidly developed to provide welcome learning and connections for colleagues across the whole membership and external adoption professionals. As a consequence, CVAA have trained more adoption staff than ever before, organising 39 training events and engaging 1,245 participants in a wide variety of expert-led seminars and practice exchange sessions; an increase of 154% on 2019-20.

We continued to encourage more members to actively contribute to the Programme by delivering events. In 2020-21, nineteen members (73% of the membership) participated in delivering the Practice Programme, which is a 73% increase from previous financial year. Twenty-one members (81% of the membership) have been confirmed to participate over the course of 2021-22.

We have received excellent feedback on how our practice webinars are managed and delivered. Adoption practitioners appreciate the easy access to a great variety of topics and the opportunity to network despite restrictions on social gathering due to Covid-19. After one year of delivering the Practice Programme virtually, we are confident that most practice events will remain online, with some bigger events being delivered in person once this is possible. Online delivery is extremely cost-effective, affordable, and easily accessible for our audience of adoption social workers managing busy caseloads whilst being keen to learn and develop their practice.

Membership services

In 2020-21 we have continued to extend our support to members through the Practice Programme and also by the expansion of our policy and information service, and continuation of key membership events.

We have continued the CVAA Policy Briefing series and monthly newsletters to provide an easily accessible way for members to stay informed about policy developments in adoption, the wider permanency landscape, and the voluntary sector. In addition, our Policy Manager, Sam Mercadante, developed weekly bulletins to ensure members were fully briefed and kept up to date with the rapidly changing Covid announcements and developments which might affect their work. We have continued to strengthen CVAA's online presence through Twitter and blog posts, promoting the value of adoption, the achievements of member agencies and the excellent services they offer families, and the work of CVAA on members' behalf.

The annual conference was held virtually in November 2020. It was CVAA's first international conference, with speakers from the USA and Europe contributing to an inspiring event, and the best attended yet. VAA leaders heard from a wide range of speakers about cutting edge research and practice issues that are central to modernising adoption for the 21st century, including lifelong identity, relationships with and support for birth family members and neurological development in early childhood.

The CVAA Trustees' Event in January 2021 was our best attended yet and looked at the impact of Covid-19 on organisational sustainability, the opportunities for closer collaboration and partnership working and the power of IT to enhance service delivery and operational effectiveness. Delegates heard from experts on voluntary sector consortia and mergers and member agencies who had successfully implemented IT strategies and developed effective partnerships to extend and develop new services.

Interagency fee

The Interagency fee rose again in line with CPIH inflation from 1st April 2020 to keep pace with the rising costs of placements. Local authorities and RAAs have all paid the new rate, and, after lobbying by CVAA, both the ADCS and LGA recommended that the fee should be paid at the point of match to support the cash flow position of VAAs. Local authorities all make their own arrangements for payments, but over half of them have paid on match on at least one occasion.

The level playing field is now re-established in Scotland and Wales. In England, CVAA continues to work with RAAs, ADCS, and the LGA to argue robustly for the level playing field and stress the negative impact on the most vulnerable children of delays caused by consecutive decision-making which seeks to minimise placement cost.

The revised arrangements for the fee developed by the CVAA/ADCS working group are now operational, and CVAA will continue to work across the UK to promote the value of VAA placements and the adopter choice that VAAs provide.

Lobbying and influencing

Despite regular changes in staffing and leadership at the Department for Education, CVAA has maintained regular communication with officials and Ministers. We have met regularly with the adoption team throughout 2019-20, along with writing to Ministers to ensure that they are taking account of the voluntary adoption sector's essential work.

The Department for Education's regional adoption agency (RAA) programme has continued in 2019-20, with 12 RAAs 'going live' during the year. CVAA has continued to be actively involved in representing VAAs' interests in relation to the programme at all levels and has established good communication channels with the RAA leaders' group. We have also worked closely with the RAA leaders on the DfE-funded national recruitment campaign. CVAA's CEO and a number of trustees sit on the National Recruitment Steering Group and have ensured that the national campaign takes account of the voluntary sector's expertise and perspective.

CVAA has been making a strong and consistent case to government and other stakeholders that the RAA programme will only succeed in improving waiting times and sufficiency if a whole-system approach is taken which recognises and builds on the strengths of all placement providers in cooperation, rather than fragmenting relationships and creating competitive barriers to joint working. We have also made this case at the Adoption and Special Guardianship Leadership Board (ASGLB), where CVAA have continued to play an active role in ensuring that the experience and expertise of VAAs was recognised in the 'blueprints' developed on support services for both special guardian and adoptive families and in addressing waiting times for children. The ASGLB has focussed on the robustness of the data used to track placements and better co-ordination between the activities of the courts and social care sectors. CVAA has also supported greater input by VAAs to Regional Boards, building understanding of the contribution VAAs can provide to finding homes for the children who wait the longest, including sibling groups.

CVAA have worked with Celtic members to influence the devolved Governments, achieving success in agreements on the interagency fee for both Wales and Scotland and holding a policy roundtable with officials from the Northern Ireland Assembly Government.

CVAA have continued to work with the DfE on the Adoption Support Fund, highlighting delays and difficulties in access as well as celebrating the excellent work done by members using the Fund to provide life-changing therapeutic interventions for children and families. We have also worked collaboratively to find solutions: in February 2020, we hosted a roundtable event with leaders and practitioners from across the adoption and permanence landscape to discuss the future of the Fund and recommendations for its improvement. Delegates were committed to making the Fund even more effective and efficient for children and families. Though delayed by the pandemic, we were able to discuss the report that came out of this event with Government in July 2020 and make recommendations for the autumn 2020 Spending Review.

Over the course of 2020-21, too many children continued waiting for too long to be placed with their forever families. In England, as of 31 December 2020:

- There were 2,020 children waiting with a placement order but not yet placed
- 1,010 children had been waiting longer than 18 months, of whom 750 (74%) had at least one 'harder to place' characteristic

However, VAAs continued to work as hard as ever to place and support a large minority of these children:

- As of 31 December 2020, VAAs in England had placed 450 children – 20% of all children placed in the first three quarters of 2020-21, and 10% more than were placed by VAAs in the same period of the previous year
- VAAs in England approved 540 adopters in the first 3 quarters of the year – 23% of all adopters approved in that time, and an increase of 13% from the previous year

Based on the available data, the year-on-year decline in ADM decisions, placement orders, and adoption orders appears to have continued in 2020-21. CVAA has been actively involved in discussions at a national level to understand the complex dynamics that are driving this and develop proposals for action, alongside working with the courts to address the worrying reduction in permanency orders of all kinds granted during the year.

Priorities for the year ahead

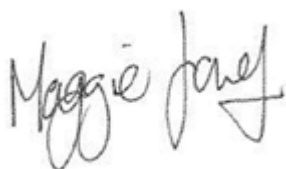
2020-21 was extraordinarily difficult for everyone working in frontline service delivery and has left a legacy of unprecedented levels of uncertainty for VAAs. CVAA will continue to work closely with members to identify risks and challenges, provide support and opportunities for connection, and ensure that agencies can continue to provide critical services to children and families. With many placements still delayed and fewer children than ever being considered for adoption, we know there is much to do in the coming year to affirm adoption as a positive life-enhancing choice for children who cannot return to their birth families and tackle the waiting times and other barriers which stand in the way of speedy placements with forever families.

In the year ahead, our priorities will include:

1. Building support across the membership and with partners for the changes identified in our 21st Century Adoption Position paper.
2. Supporting members to work together across the UK overcoming the isolation imposed by Covid restrictions and developing new collaborations.
3. Consolidating the data programme and delivery of the first comprehensive Sector Data report
4. Developing and launching the CVAA Aspiring Leaders Programme, delayed due to the pandemic.

Every day this year brought new and heart-warming evidence of the total dedication and commitment VAAs have to the children and families they serve. The speed of change, willingness to try any form of new service delivery which might work for adopters and the huge expansion of adoption support provided by dedicated staff at all times of the week has been truly awe inspiring. Never have we been more proud of our sector, as we saw our principles and values being put into practice with such positive impact on the lives of so many vulnerable families. CVAA have done all we can to support this vital work and I am hugely grateful to the CVAA staff team and Trustee Board for their unstinting support, without which none of the work outlined above would have been possible.

We have all kept children at the heart of our response to this difficult time; and together we have made a difference.



Maggie Jones
Chief Executive Officer
June 2021

4. Celtic Nations' Report

There have been two meetings of the Celtic Nations agencies this year; November 2020 and March 2021. Both meetings were conducted virtually and chaired respectively by Stephen Small (St Andrews Children Society) and Sue Brunton (Barnardo's Scotland). The membership of the CVAA Celtic Nations group includes Margaret Moyes (Scottish Adoption), Paula Harkins (St Margaret's C&F Care Society), Wendy Keidan (St David's Children's Society), Stephen Small (St Andrew's Children's Society), and Maggie McSorley (Family Care Adoption Services). We have very much appreciated the support from Maggie Jones who provides information and guidance on matters impacting across all four nations. Through wise counsel she has assisted us drawing together common themes across the UK nations as well as areas of diversification in response to individual national trends and priorities whilst always having the child central to any strategic policy direction. This theme of cohesion amongst the nations alongside identification of any specific differences in policy or practice was very much central to the meeting in November, which Andrew Webb attended. The discussions focused on the CVAA Comprehensive Spending Review paper and themes highlighted at the annual conference. Areas of commonality included the following:

- Children are still waiting too long for a placement, especially those with hard-to-place characteristics.
- Adoption in the 21st century must embrace increased openness for birth families and children who have been adopted. It was acknowledged that there needs to be more engagement with birth families to support lifelong identity.
- Adoption for older children must be seen as a viable permanency option, with lessons to be learnt from a national and global perspective.

Issues with a common and meaningful set of comparator data across the four nations was discussed alongside the recognition that data is vital to understand trends and drive forward performance. Consistency across all the nations in achieving some commonality in key data sets was acknowledged as fundamental to the work of CVAA as a representative national body. The VAAs across all Celtic nations must rise to the challenge of demonstrating value for money and the uniqueness of their service delivery. We will continue to work with statutory sector colleagues about the cost-effectiveness of early placements which promote positive outcomes for children.

The operation of Linkmaker across the Celtic nations was discussed, with differences highlighted in respect of its operation in England which does not have a Register. There was a consensus on the importance of protocols and systems to support Linkmaker as a family-finding platform. The challenges of the platform were acknowledged, particularly where there is no consistency applied in respect of criteria to place children. There is also increasing evidence of families becoming very demoralised when they receive no feedback on children they have expressed an interest in.

The debate on different family-finding strategies across the nations was continued at the second meeting of the Celtic nations. Scotland's Adoption Register (SAR) is undertaking research on the placement of English children with Scottish adopters. The Scottish Government is aware that the children's hearing system does not always work in the best interests of adopted children, which can result in adopters preferring the placement of children from England. Northern Ireland trusts are not supportive of children from England being placed with families living in Northern Ireland, primarily because of associated support costs.

Wales have adopted the National Adoption Service Family Finding Strategy which promotes exploring families living in Wales prior to extending the search across the UK. There are clear timescales in place for this to occur, with all children being placed on the Adoption Register Wales/Linkmaker within a month of the placement order, or earlier if there is no identified placement within

Wales. CVAA are seeking to adopt a position which is consistent across all four nations, and which meets the needs of children. It is acknowledged that there are challenges in achieving this level of commonality within the variances of each nation's policy directives.

CVAA's influencing agenda within devolved governments has been addressed with an agreed consensus that the work on 21st century adoption offers a clear dialogue for change.

There is a Scottish Permanency Taskforce focussed on adoption practice and managed by CELCIS (The Centre of Excellence for Look-after Children in Scotland) and all the voluntary agencies are represented on this group.

Inevitably, much of the focus of all the Celtic Nation agencies over the past year has been on sustainability during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Northern Ireland

Family Care Society had a difficult start to the year because of the pandemic, but an improving financial position with some placement activity and monies received from the Lottery support fund enabled all staff to return to work during the year.

Family Care Adoption Services have seen an increase in enquiries from prospective adopters during the year, which bodes well for a sustained number of approvals. Staff morale has remained good, with all staff working hard collectively to deliver services both virtually and face-to-face as restrictions have been eased.

Scotland

The voluntary sector in Scotland (St Andrew's Children's Society, Scottish Adoption, St Margaret's C&F Care Society and Barnardo's) reported some variances in overall performance by year end. Generally, enquiries from prospective adopters were up, with St Margaret's seeing a significant increase of 64% during the year. Placement activity was variable, with St Andrews meeting their pre-Covid year-end target and the other 3 agencies projecting a downturn in overall placements made. The majority of placements made by Scottish Adoption were of children from England.

Overall, by year end the position in Scotland was far more positive than was originally predicted at the start of the pandemic. However, there remains a downward trend in the numbers of children adopted: 233 children in 2019 compared to 286 in 2018.

All agencies reported on the dedication of their respective teams during this unprecedented year, with morale reported as good. Services were moved at speed to be delivered predominately online. This has proved successful, with some consideration of a blended approach to service delivery going forward.

In general terms, adoption is still seen as a positive destination for children who cannot be cared for safely and permanently in their birth families. There is a real sense that the voluntary sector is well regarded by local authority colleagues and relationships between the two sectors are collaborative and productive.

Wales

St David's Children Society experienced financial uncertainty during the early part of the financial year with no placement activity. The Society recovered well, ending the year with a surplus and maintaining a healthy reserves position. Whilst the Society did not meet its pre-Covid placement targets, a combination of grants, placement activity and strong performance by AFA Cymru contributed to good year-end results. Targets were exceeded in respect of approval of adopters, with a healthy pipeline moving forward into 2021/22.

Investment in IT capacity ensured a smooth transition from face-to-face to predominately online service delivery. This blended approach has worked well for families. There has been an increase in post-adoption support activity during the year, with some intense interventions required to maintain placement stability.

The staff team have worked incredibly hard, and have creatively responded to the needs of families during an unprecedented year.

Relationships with statutory sector colleagues in the National Adoption Service have remained positive, with an agreed approach in several key areas such as the safe movement of children to their adoptive families, conducting face-to-face assessment visits and working with Welsh Government on the easing of regulations. A pilot placement strategy has been agreed with one region in respect of the commissioning of an agreed number of adoptive placements. This pilot went live on 1 April 2021.

At year end, Wales was projecting a general downturn in the numbers of placement orders made by 8% (some regional variances) with a coinciding downturn in the number of SBPA decisions. Wales does not collate data in the same way as England on SGOs, so it is difficult to accurately assess whether this corresponds to a rise in this permanency option, but equally there is nothing in the

presenting data to suggest that adoption is not being utilised appropriately for children who are unable to live with birth family members.

Wendy Keidan

On half of the Celtic Nations Group

June 2021

5. Trustees Annual Report

5.1 Trustees

Directors Name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year
Ray Shostak	Chair	Resigned 17 th September 2020
Andrew Webb	Chair	Appointed 17 th September 2020
Jan Fishwick	Vice Chair	Resigned 2 nd March 2021
Satwinder Sandhu	Vice Chair	Appointed as Vice Chair 2 nd March 2021
Carolyn Oliver		Resigned 2 nd March 2021
Terry Fitzpatrick	Treasurer	
Jeanne Kanuik		Resigned 1 st June 2020
Stephen Small		
Norman Goodwin		
Wendy Keidan		Appointed 17 th September 2020
Brenda Farrell		Appointed 2 nd March 2021
Judith Vaughan		Appointed 17 th September 2020

Name of Company Secretary

Maggie Jones

Name of Senior Staff Members

Chief Executive Officer: Maggie Jones

Registered Office

C/o ARC, Unit 29, The Business Innovation Centre, Wearside,
Sunderland, SR5 2TA

Bankers

CAF Bank Ltd, 25 King's Hill Avenue, King's Hill, West Malling,
Kent, ME19 4JQ.

Independent Examiners

Wallwork Nelson & Johnson, Chandler House, 7 Ferry Road Office Park,
Riversway, Preston, PR2 2YH.

5.2 Statement of Trustees Responsibilities

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Report of the Trustees and the Financial Statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Practice). Company law requires that

Trustees prepare Financial Statements for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of the state of the affairs of the company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including income and expenditure for that period. In preparing these Financial Statements, the Trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently.
- Observe the methods and principles in the charity SORP.
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent; and
- prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Charity will continue in business.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Charity and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The Trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the Charity's website. It is important to bear in mind that legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of Financial Statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

In so far as the Trustees are aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the Independent Examiner is unaware.

The Trustees have taken all the steps that they ought to have taken as a Trustee-Director in order to make himself or herself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the Independent Examiner are aware of that information.

The Chief Executive is appointed by the Trustees to manage the day-to-day operations of the Charity. The Chief Executive is charged with the duty of accounting to the Board and making recommendations on plans and policy.

5.3 *Structure, Governance and Management*

The Charity is a Company limited by guarantee (Company number 5275491) and a Charity (Charity registration number 1108318) and is governed by its constitution.

The Trustees are responsible for the management of the Charity and they form the Board. The Board meets at least four times a year. Appointment to the Board is by election of the members by a simple majority. Trustees are elected from the member agencies. The Chief Executive attends all meetings of the Board.

Appointment and Recruitment of Trustees

Members of the Charity nominate Trustees in accordance with the Constitution. An annual audit identifies gaps in representation and nominations to address these are sought. Members can be co-opted to the Board for a period before nomination. Job Descriptions and Person Specifications have been agreed for the Chair, Treasurer, Vice Chair and Trustees to provide clarity about the role and responsibilities.

Trustees Induction and Training

New Trustees undergo an induction process to brief them on their legal obligations under Charity and Company Law, the content of the Memorandum and Articles of Association, the recent financial performance of the charity and the financial projections. Trustees are encouraged to attend training events where these may aid their appreciation and understanding of CVAA and facilitate their functioning as Trustees. During 2017-18, CVAA carried out a survey to test our compliance with the new Charity Commission-endorsed Charity Governance Code.

Organisation

All members of the Board undertake tasks on behalf of CVAA as is illustrated elsewhere in this report. In summary:

- Officer positions on the Board
- Chair or member of a subgroup
- Delivery of training

- Representation of CVAA at a national level e.g. meetings with the Department for Education (DfE); meetings with Ofsted
- Contact with the media.

CVAA recognises the time that the Board give to these issues; as a small organisation, it would not be possible to meet all the demands without such voluntary contribution. In addition, ARC have provided financial management to CVAA which has been very much appreciated. All members of staff report either directly or indirectly to the Chief Executive and the Chief Executive reports to the Chair.

Risk Management

A risk register is maintained and discussed by the full Board at each meeting, new mitigating actions proposed where the level of risk is judged to have increased; new risks are proposed and added to the register, or closed, as necessary. For 20/21 a separate register has been maintained for risks arising from the Covid 19 pandemic and the impact on CVAA and its membership.

Much of the Charity's approach to risk is determined by a thorough appreciation of the environment in which the Charity operates, and by ensuring that appropriate, experienced, and qualified members of staff are recruited and further are appropriately trained.

5.4 Objectives and Activities for the Public Benefit

Summary of the objects of the charity set out in the Constitution (governing document)

CVAA's objects (the Objects) are

"to develop standards of excellence in all matters relating to adoption, good practice and management throughout the voluntary sector for the benefit of the public, and in particular to maximise the contribution of Voluntary Adoption Agencies by influencing policy and practice of adoption in the UK at the National, Regional and Local levels and to directly increase the number of children successfully placed for adoption by promoting liaison and collaborative partnership working practices between voluntary adoption agencies and all other stakeholders"

The Trustees confirm that they have referred to the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit when reviewing the charities aims and objectives and in planning future activities.

The focus of our work: a summary of the main activities in relation to these objects

Representation	of member voluntary adoption agencies' views at local, regional, and national levels across all sectors
Promotion	of the voluntary adoption sector's commitment to achieving appropriate and timely permanence for children
Liaison	between voluntary organisations and statutory agencies by encouraging networking opportunities and forums for members
Development	of CVAA as a national partnership that responds to the needs of all member agencies whilst acknowledging those of the statutory agencies we work with.
Support	of member agencies by maintaining a national database, collection, and analysis of voluntary adoption agency statistics, maintaining the interagency fee, encouraging internal efficiencies, providing advocacy and consultation on adoption matters, driving upwards standards of excellence and promoting collaborative working practices.

5.5 Reserves Policy

Charity Law requires that the Directors and Trustees should have a policy for holding reserves. The purpose of the policy is to enable any monies which belong to CVAA and which are not required in the immediate future for the running of the charity can be used to generate further income.

The Reserves Policy will:-

- preserve the viability of CVAA as a Charity and Company Limited by Guarantee

- enable the Charity to meet its legal objects
- provide seed capital for strategic developments should this be required pending receipt of an awarded grant or new income stream
- provide confidence to supporters and donors seeking to give financial support to a prudently controlled charity
- ensure that, consistent with the objects, mission statement and values of CVAA proper ethical consideration be afforded to all matters of investment
- ensure that the reserves are at a level sufficient to discharge all the Charity's obligations should the Charity cease its operations

Desired level of Reserves

In the preparation of the accounts, there has been consideration of the level of reserves which the charity needs to maintain in order to ensure that it would be in a position to meet all of its liabilities should it at any time cease to operate. The value of the reserves required will vary during the year. In calculating the value of reserves there needs to be regard for the following:

- Contractual notice periods of the officers of the charity
- Travel expenses payable to any of the member organisations whose representatives are Trustees of the Charity
- Settlement of any other commitments where notice is required to end the contractual arrangement
- Other costs payable and due to third parties

Steps to Establish the Reserves Policy

To maintain appropriate levels of reserves the Trustees have determined that: -

- any legacies, which have no restriction placed upon them by the terms of their donation, are considered to be general reserves
- expenditure plans agreed by the Board are examined at quarterly intervals by the Treasurer and the Finance & Audit Committee and funds required to finance such may be removed from general reserves as necessary for the attainment of its broad objects; funds may, from time to time, be designated for specific purposes

Monitoring and Reviewing the Policy

The Trustees have agreed that:-

- day-to-day operational responsibility for the implementation of this policy be vested in the Treasurer and the Finance & Audit Committee and (supported by the finance professionals in his/her agency)
- monitoring is undertaken, on a quarterly basis and reported to the next meeting of the Board
- the policy is subject to at least an annual review by the Board specifically to confirm the level of Reserves required for the year ahead to meet all obligations

5.6 Investment Policy

CVAA will invest the reserves appropriately with any investment to be of low risk. An appropriate balance is to be struck between income and capital growth to enable CVAA to support its charitable works and help achieve its objects.

5.7 Independent Examiners

The Trustees will commission an independent examination of the financial operations of the charity each year from a qualified auditor.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies. This report was approved by the Board of Management on 8th September 2020

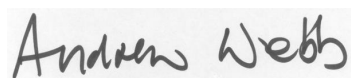
5.8 Financial Review

The incoming resources of CVAA for the year ended 31 March 2021 were £285,833 after the deduction of resources expended of £324,689; the net position of the charity was a surplus of £32,465.

The retained unrestricted funds of the charity are £545,078.

Approved by order of the Board of Trustees and signed on its behalf by

Signed

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andrew Webb". The signature is written in a cursive style with a grey rectangular background behind it.

Andrew Webb

Chair of Trustees

30th June 2021

6. CVAA Members

Action for Children Adoption
Adopt Together (Faith in Families)
Adopters for Adoption
Adoption Focus
Adoption Matters
Adoptionplus
Adoption UK (Associate member)
ARC Adoption North East
Barnardo's
Birmingham Children's Trust
Caritas Care
CCS Adoption
Coram Capital Adoption
Diagrama Foundation
Families for Children
Family Care Adoption Services (Celtic member)
Family Futures CIC
IAC – The Centre for Adoption
Nugent Care
PAC-UK (Associate member)
Parents and Children Together (PACT)
Scottish Adoption (Celtic member)
SSAFA
St Andrew's Children's Society (Celtic member)
St David's Children's Society (Celtic member)
St Francis' Children's Society
St Margaret's Children & Family Care Society (Celtic member)
Yorkshire Adoption Agency

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Consortium of Voluntary Adoption Agencies UK Limited ('the Company')

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Company for the year ended 31 March 2021.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees of the Company (and also its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the Company are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your charity's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5) (b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Company as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
4. the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities (applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)).

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Paul Woodburn
FCA
Wallwork Nelson & Johnson
Chandler House
7 Ferry Road Office Park
Riversway
Preston
Lancashire
PR2 2YH

Date: 30 June 2021

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021**

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted fund £	31/3/21 Total funds £	31/3/20 Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM					
Charitable activities					
Membership costs		222,145	-	222,145	204,474
Conference & Other income		26,609	-	26,609	22,044
DfE Grants		-	-	-	58,640
Investment income	2	<u>194</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>194</u>	<u>675</u>
Total		248,948	-	248,948	285,833
EXPENDITURE ON					
Charitable activities					
Training workshops		-	-	-	6,415
Membership costs		216,483	-	216,483	259,634
DfE Grants		-	-	-	58,640
Total		<u>216,483</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>216,483</u>	<u>324,689</u>
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)		32,465	-	32,465	(38,856)
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS					
Total funds brought forward		<u>512,613</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>512,613</u>	<u>551,469</u>
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		<u><u>545,078</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>545,078</u></u>	<u><u>512,613</u></u>

**CONSORTIUM OF VOLUNTARY ADOPTION
AGENCIES UK LIMITED (REGISTERED NUMBER: 05275491)**

**BALANCE SHEET
31 MARCH 2021**

	Notes	31/3/21 £	31/3/20 £
CURRENT ASSETS			
Debtors	6	14,685	101,400
Cash at bank		<u>553,280</u>	<u>421,202</u>
		567,965	522,602
CREDITORS			
Amounts falling due within one year	7	(22,887)	(9,989)
		<u>545,078</u>	<u>512,613</u>
NET CURRENT ASSETS			
		<u>545,078</u>	<u>512,613</u>
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES			
		<u>545,078</u>	<u>512,613</u>
NET ASSETS			
		<u>545,078</u>	<u>512,613</u>
FUNDS	9		
Unrestricted funds		<u>545,078</u>	<u>512,613</u>
TOTAL FUNDS		<u>545,078</u>	<u>512,613</u>

The charitable company is entitled to exemption from audit under Section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 for the year ended 31 March 2021.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2021 in accordance with Section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

The trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for

- (a) ensuring that the charitable company keeps accounting records that comply with Sections 386 and 387 of the Companies Act 2006 and
- (b) preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company as at the end of each financial year and of its surplus or deficit for each financial year in accordance with the requirements of Sections 394 and 395 and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the charitable company.

The notes form part of these financial statements

continued...

**BALANCE SHEET - continued
31 MARCH 2021**

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to charitable companies subject to the small companies regime.

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on 30th June 2021 and were signed on its behalf by:

.....
T Fitzpatrick – Treasurer and Trustee

The notes form part of these financial statements

continued...

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparing the financial statements

The financial statements of the charitable company, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)', Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' and the Companies Act 2006. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, with the exception of investments which are included at market value.

Income

All income is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities once the charity has entitlement to the funds, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

Expenditure

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to that expenditure, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all cost related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

Taxation

The charity is exempt from corporation tax on its charitable activities.

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the trustees.

Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the financial statements.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

2. INVESTMENT INCOME

	31/3/21	31/3/20
	£	£
Deposit account interest	<u>194</u>	<u>675</u>

3. TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS

There were no trustees' remuneration or other benefits for the year ended 31 March 2021 nor for the year ended 31 March 2020.

No Trustee or any other person related to the Charity had any personal interest in any contract or any transaction entered into by the Charity during the period.

Trustees' expenses

During the year payments made to the value of £291 were made to 2 Trustees or their employing organisations for travel expenses (£4,269 in 2020, paid to 8 Trustees or their employing organisations).

4. STAFF COSTS

The average monthly number of employees during the year was as follows:

	31/3/21	31/3/20
Management and Administration	1	1
Direct Charity Workers	<u>3</u>	<u>5</u>
	<u>4</u>	<u>6</u>

The number of employees whose employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs) exceeded £60,000 was:

	31/3/21	31/3/20
£80,001 - £90,000	<u>-</u>	<u>1</u>

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

5. COMPARATIVES FIGURES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2019

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted fund £	Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM			
Charitable activities			
Membership costs	204,474	-	204,474
Conference & Other income	22,044	-	22,044
DfE Grants	-	58,640	58,640
Investment income	<u>675</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>675</u>
Total	227,193	58,640	285,833
 EXPENDITURE ON			
Charitable activities			
Training workshops	6,415	-	6,415
Membership costs	259,634	-	259,634
DfE Grants	-	58,640	58,640
Total	<u>266,049</u>	<u>58,640</u>	<u>324,689</u>
 NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)	(38,856)	-	(38,856)
 RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS			
Total funds brought forward	<u>551,469</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>551,469</u>
 TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	<u><u>512,613</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>512,613</u></u>

The notes form part of these financial statements

continued...

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

6. DEBTORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	31/3/21	31/3/20
	£	£
Trade debtors	11,517	98,714
Prepayments and accrued income	<u>3,168</u>	<u>2,686</u>
	<u>14,685</u>	<u>101,400</u>

7. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	31/3/21	31/3/20
	£	£
Trade creditors	328	-
Other creditors	372	-
Accruals and deferred income	<u>22,187</u>	<u>9,989</u>
	<u>22,887</u>	<u>9,989</u>

8. ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted fund £	31/3/21 Total funds £	31/3/20 Total funds £
Current assets	567,965	-	567,965	522,602
Current liabilities	<u>(22,887)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(22,887)</u>	<u>(9,989)</u>
	<u>545,078</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>545,078</u>	<u>512,613</u>

9. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS

	At 1/4/20 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31/3/21 £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	447,613	32,465	480,078
Closure costs	<u>65,000</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>65,000</u>
	<u>512,613</u>	<u>32,465</u>	<u>545,078</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>512,613</u>	<u>32,465</u>	<u>545,078</u>

The notes form part of these financial statements

continued...

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

9. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

Net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	248,948	(216,483)	32,465
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>248,948</u>	<u>(216,483)</u>	<u>32,465</u>

Comparatives for movement in funds

	At 1/4/19 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31/3/20 £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	480,054	(32,441)	447,613
Closure costs	65,000	-	65,000
Training & sector development	6,415	(6,415)	-
	551,469	(38,856)	512,613
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>551,469</u>	<u>(38,856)</u>	<u>512,613</u>

Comparative net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	227,193	(259,634)	(32,441)
Training & sector development	-	(6,415)	(6,415)
	227,193	(266,049)	(38,856)
Restricted funds			
DfE grants	58,640	(58,640)	-
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>285,833</u>	<u>(324,689)</u>	<u>(38,856)</u>

The notes form part of these financial statements

continued...

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

9. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

A current year 12 months and prior year 12 months combined position is as follows:

	At 1/4/19 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31/3/21 £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	480,054	24	480,078
Closure costs	65,000	-	65,000
Training & sector development	<u>6,415</u>	<u>(6,415)</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>551,469</u>	<u>(6,391)</u>	<u>545,078</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>551,469</u>	<u>(6,391)</u>	<u>545,078</u>

A current year 12 months and prior year 12 months combined net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	476,141	(476,117)	24
Training & sector development	<u>-</u>	<u>(6,415)</u>	<u>(6,415)</u>
	476,141	(482,532)	(6,391)
Restricted funds			
dfe grants	<u>58,640</u>	<u>(58,640)</u>	<u>-</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>534,781</u>	<u>(541,172)</u>	<u>(6,391)</u>

Unrestricted Designated funds:

The Trustees have decided that it is prudent to set aside a sum of money which would be required to cover the closure costs should the Charity cease to operate. This designated fund is currently £65,000.

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021**

10. RELATED PARTY DISCLOSURES

There were no related party transactions for the year ended 31 March 2021.

**CONSORTIUM OF VOLUNTARY ADOPTION
AGENCIES UK LIMITED**

**DETAILED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021**

	31/3/21 £	31/3/20 £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS		
Investment income		
Deposit account interest	194	675
Charitable activities		
Membership fees	165,897	204,474
Conference & Other income	26,609	22,044
Online webinar	56,248	-
DfE ALB Data Grant	-	58,640
	<u>248,754</u>	<u>285,158</u>
Total incoming resources	248,948	285,833
EXPENDITURE		
Charitable activities		
Staffing	156,662	202,328
Practice event costs	5,432	11,963
ICT & other costs	21,673	12,716
Overheads	2,828	4,773
Accountancy fees	2,000	1,916
Property costs	8,805	20,109
Travel costs	1,432	14,547
Financial management	10,074	8,578
Consultancy	2,695	4,888
Members events & AGM	-	9,820
Board & Trustees expenses	291	4,269
Bad debts written off	-	28,782
Legal fees	4,591	-
	<u>216,483</u>	<u>324,689</u>
Total resources expended	216,483	324,689
Net income/(expenditure)	<u>32,465</u>	<u>(38,856)</u>