

Charity registration number: 1163906



Kinship Carers UK

Trustee Report

For the year ended 31st March 2024



Kinship Carers UK Legal and Administration Information

Charity Number: 1163906

Directors: Don Beckett, Chair (appointed 2017)
Victoria Smith (appointed 2015)
Susan Sztybel (appointed 2015)
Donna Weaver (Appointed 2020)
Clare Whittaker (appointed 2019)

Chief Executive

Enza Smith MBE (appointed 2015)

Treasurer

Jane Hinton (appointed 2016)

Principal Registered Address:

43 Somers Road
Barbourne
Worcester
WR1 3JJ

Bank:

NatWest Bank
1 The Cross
Worcester
WR1 3PR

Kinship Carers UK

Directors' Report

Year Ended 31ST March 2024

The directors present their report and account for the year ended 31 March 2024.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in notes to the accounts and comply with the charity's governing document.

1. Structure

Kinship Carers UK was established on 5th September 2011. Kinship Carers UK became a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) on the 8th of October, 2015.

2. Charitable Objectives

Kinship Carers UK's objectives are to promote better care, upbringing and establishment in the life of children, in particular by:

- Promoting the role of kinship carers and, in particular, the care by grandparents at all levels, particularly in circumstances of family breakdown, single parenthood or other difficult conditions;
- Supporting and advising kinship carers, grandparents and friend and family carers who act as, or intend to act as, carers, particularly in the above circumstances.
- The relief of children, their carers, and carers' families in the area of benefit by providing facilities in the interests of social welfare for recreation and leisure time occupation to improve their quality of life.

Kinship Carers UK champions the vital role of friend and family carers, known as kinship carers or connected families when they take on the challenging role of permanently parenting someone else's child. Everything we do is designed to improve the day-to-day experiences of kinship families by empowering and supporting them. We listen to what they say about their situation and identify positive changes that can be made.

3. Mission Statement

Kinship Carers UK helps kinship families succeed by promoting loving and supportive relationships between children and young people and their kinship families. We provide independent support, information, and advice. Current kinship families offer prospective kinship carers and those who work with them a wealth of relevant experience.

4. Our Vision

Around 300,000 children in the UK are raised by family and friend carers. These children have suffered similar adversities to those in the care system, yet the support they receive bears little, if any, relationship to their needs. There will always be a need for some children to be cared for away from their natural parents, so we are helping to create a world where every unique kinship family we meet is recognised and supported.

- All kinship care families receive the support, encouragement and opportunities they need to enjoy their lives
- There is recognition of the support that children coming into kinship care are likely to need to address traumatic experiences of abuse, neglect, harm and serious family dysfunction
- Provision for kinship children with the right help and people in their lives who believe that every kinship family can thrive.

We do this by:

- **Combatting the isolation** and stress that kinship families encounter daily and helping children stay connected to their families and communities.
We give kinship families free and confidential support, including advocating for the kinship families.
- **Giving kinship families a stronger voice**
Informing, empowering and supporting kinship families, children and young people in their care through projects and campaigns which directly benefit them
Ensuring that children who have experienced the loss or removal of their parents get the help and support they need to move forward with their lives.
- **Generating information** such as support materials and educational literature for kinship carers and professionals, including social workers, teachers and health care professionals, to improve the lives of kinship families.
- **Continuing to be a well-managed charity** and, in the near future, operating from a fixed location and achieving long-term financial stability
- **Setting up more support groups in the UK** and offering support and training to support group leaders virtually and face to face. Continuing to facilitate the Kinship

carers support groups both face to face and virtually, always striving to find new ways in which we can help them. Likewise, I will continue to work alongside other relevant organisations to convey up-to-date information.

5. Our Values

We are independent: We always act and speak in the best interests of kinship carers and the children in their care, and we are not compromised by any political or commercial interests.

We are engaged: We actively listen to and talk with kinship carers, their children, and young people in their care, as well as other people and organisations, with expertise and insights that can help.

We are transparent and accessible. Our website, www.kinshipcarersuk.com, and publications communicate what we do, why we do it, and how we spend the donations we receive.

Kinship Carers UK's long-term aspiration is to develop and refine the service and provide a blueprint that can be duplicated in other areas of the country with a growing need.

6. What We Have Achieved

Kinship Carers UK champions the vital role of kinship carers 'friend and family carers' when they take on the challenging role of permanently parenting someone else's child.

We have offered the following:

- **Supported Families**

We have supported over 1200 families to date throughout England. These are families that we meet either regularly or in times of crisis within their lives. Most families have orders such as Special Guardianship Orders, Child Arrangement Orders, Kinship Fostering, Carers with private arrangements, and grandparents sharing the responsibility of caring for their grandchildren.

- **Virtual and Face to Face Support Groups**

- Four weekly online support group
- Five support groups in Worcestershire covering Malvern, Kidderminster and two support groups in Worcester, both daytime and evening.
- Support groups are regularly attended in two other areas of the country: Cheltenham and Dudley.

During support groups, we offer adults advice, emotional support and encouragement. Some sessions offered are bespoke training to carers on the following subjects:

- Adoption and special guardian support fund
- Compassion fatigue and self-care
- Kinship Legal Law Q & A
- Therapeutic Parenting for Kinship Carers
- Positive mental health
- Protective Behaviours
- Understanding Attachment
- Understanding Kinship
- Understanding Disabilities

- **Kinship Community cafe**

Kinship Community Café has been a great success. We host 12 cafés annually with guest speakers from various professional backgrounds, providing carers access to people they might not usually meet. The popular Kinship Community Café offers carers a virtual space to connect with other kinship carers. This group has seen significant interest, and the diverse range of guest speakers has been a valuable resource for carers who may not have the opportunity to attend specialised kinship training.

- **Kinship Carers UK Friends**

Kinship Carers UK Friends comprises 12 volunteers, including adults we have previously supported. The friend group's role is to provide feedback and insight into improving our charity's work, fundraising, and supporting activities that support our charity's aims and objectives.

- **Advocacy Service**

Our advocacy service has been a life-saving link for several kinship carers. We have supported carers in meetings with professionals, such as Child in Need meetings, Child Protection meetings, Family Conferences, and meetings with schools that help teachers understand the issues that the children face. The increase in virtual meetings has enabled us to widen our support to places nationwide. We have also successfully provided Mackenzie's friend support to carers in court.

- **Peer Support Programme**

The peer support programme has been very successful. Our experience has shown us that each carer has their own identity and story; likewise, so have the children. We carefully identify carers with a wealth of knowledge from their circumstances in life and encourage them to share, identify with and support others.

- **Virtual Support Group**

We understand that attending support groups is difficult for carers for many reasons. Our demand for virtual support groups has increased dramatically since 2020. We host three to four weekly support groups, plus our Kinship Community Café, and engage with carers from all over the UK.

- **Advocacy Support**

We have offered advocacy support virtually. Kinship Carers have found this support very helpful, and it has helped carers use the support we have given them to act confidently and independently. Advocacy is a significant part of our activity after the support group activities. We have supported potential family and friend's carers through the court process, gaining valuable experience in legal processes.

We have successfully supported carers, leading to successful results for everyone working collaboratively with carers and professionals to seek the best outcome.

We have supported carers and their children and young people in schools by helping teachers understand how the trauma the children have faced in the past impacts their school lives and that they are not 'naughty children' but children who need therapeutic support, as with any other looked-after child.

- **Activities**

We also encourage families to meet in safe, open-air environments and use various media to communicate, as well as pen pal activities such as sharing letters and photos and communicating with each other using safe media.

While it is important to have family time, it is also essential for carers to step out of the role of carer for an evening and have some 'me time'. This year, we have had several 'adult only' evenings. They proved very successful, and we will build on them in the future when it is safe to do so. Alternatively, we offer virtual social evenings for kinship carers to befriend other carers in a secure environment, which has also proved very successful.

- **Collaboration with Other Organisations and Raising Awareness**

- **Kinship Care Alliance, Family Rights Group, Coram Baff**

Kinship Carers UK has worked successfully with the Kinship Care Alliance, Family Right Group and Coram Baff. The Alliance comprises a group of organisations that subscribe to a set of shared aims and beliefs on the issue of kinship care. Our work aims to prevent children from unnecessarily being raised outside the family, to enhance outcomes for children who cannot live

with their parents and who are living with relatives and to secure improved recognition and support for family and friend carers.

- **Raising awareness**

This year, Kinship Carers UK has focused on raising media awareness by encouraging carers to share their experiences with kinship anonymously. We have had great success with our social media sites and are proud of the positive response.

7. Future Plans

Our key objectives for this coming year are to:

- Continue supporting kinship families with bespoke support and training by understanding their needs and finding solutions.
- Further develop high-quality support materials online, continuing to offer phone and online support.
- Further develop support groups nationwide, building support groups where needed.
- Further develop the youth and family activities
- Continue working with other agencies, universities and businesses to influence policies for the next generation of kinship carers.
- Continue to develop our infrastructure and work with volunteers from all walks of life.

8. Our Future Aims

Our aims for the next three years explain our beliefs, main priorities, and how we will benefit kinship families.

Everything we do is designed to improve the day-to-day experience of kinship families, the children in their care, and their future lives. Kinship Carers UK is a voice for all Kinship families; we listen to what they say about their experiences, identify with them what improvements can be made, and work in partnership with those who can help us bring about positive change.

Long Term Aspirations

The long-term aspirations for Kinship Carers UK are as follows:

- To establish a permanent base from which to work.
- Working from this location, we will continue supporting Kinship carers with education support, counselling, and training to provide a supportive and nurturing environment for families that encourages and promotes communication, positive behaviour patterns, cooperation and mutual respect.
- We will also support the families and provide rest to the carers by offering opportunities to participate in enjoyable and motivating activities and experiences with the children in their care.

9. Funding and Support

We are immensely grateful to everyone who has supported Kinship Carers UK for their generosity and belief in our work.

Organisations who have directly supported us through activities include:

- The Eveson Charitable Trust
- Beacon lodge
- The National Lottery Awards for All
- Turner Trust
- Garfield Weston
- Scentsy

10. Governance and Management

The Board of Directors held four meetings during the year. The directors serve for three years, after which they put themselves forward for re-appointment. The Board of Directors keeps the skill requirements under review and may appoint a person as a trustee in areas beneficial to the charity's running. New Directors are sought by dialogue with directors and advertising. Newly appointed directors serve for a maximum of 3 years, and the Board will not have less than three directors, as written in the charity's governing document. Each new director receives a copy of the CIO documentation and documentation that outlines their role and responsibilities. The Chief Executive Officer also has meetings with new directors to ensure each person clearly understands their role.

The Board of Directors is responsible for setting Kinship Carers UK's policies. The directors elect a chairperson, and the chief executive officer is accountable to the Board of Directors for executing these policies.

11. Volunteers

All of our work would not have been possible without the hard work of our volunteers, including our directors, support group leaders, youth group workers, administration, fundraisers, and volunteering staff. We are very grateful to all our skilled and dedicated volunteers who continue to play a vital role in supporting Kinship Carers UK and kinship families.

With special thanks to the following:

Debbie Elwood	Nicola Stobbs
Dr Alison Prowle	Naomi Murray
Dr Bradley Crook	Sarah Dillon NATP
Jane Hinton	Sarah Naish
Joanne Wareham	

12. Risk Management and Internal Controls

The Board of Directors ensures that Kinship Carers UK has appropriate financial and operational control systems. The Chief Executive Officer identifies significant risks to which the charity may be exposed; the Board of Directors reviews and addresses all risks.

The directors are responsible for preparing the Directors' Report and Financial Statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards. Directors must ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Commission standards.

CIO requires the directors to prepare financial statements for each financial year, which give an accurate and fair view of the movement of funds, including income, expenditure, governance and taking reasonable steps to prevent and detect fraud and other irregularities. The directors are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the financial information included on the Charity Commission's website.

13. Declaration

The directors declare that they have approved the directors' report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's directors

Signatures	<i>Enza Smith</i>	<i>Donald Beckett</i>
Full Names	Enza Smith MBE	Donald Beckett
Position	Chief Executive	Chair
Date	5 th October 2024	5 th October 2024

Charity registration number: 1163906

Section A Receipts and Payments

Receipts	23/24	22/23
Awards	£6,443	£34,400
Donations	£1,652	£2,636
Consultancy	£50	£0
Collections / Raffles	£0	£0
Gross Income	£8,127	£37,036
Payments		
Home Working & Wages	£0	£0
Salaries	£20,571	£20,889
Travel	£24	£871
Bank Charges	£72	£80
Office & Equipment	£204	£457
Communications	£1,910	£1,966
Family Activities	£271	£614
Youth Club	£0	£0
Insurance	£397	£419
Website	£333	£198
Promotions	£0	£45
Training	£10	£0
PPE	£0	£0
Total Payments	£23,792	£25,539
Net of Receipts (Payments)	£15,665	£11,497
Transfers between Funds	£0	£0
Cash Funds from the start of the period	£39,590	£28,093
Cash Funds this year end	£23,925	£39,590

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

	23/24	22/23
Cash Funds [Unrestricted]	£23,925	£39,590
Other Monetary Assets	£0	£0
Investment Assets	£0	£0
Assets retained for the charity's own use	£0	£0
Liabilities	£0	£0

Notes

1. The accounts were prepared on a receipts and payments basis.
2. All receipts and payments for the period were treated as unrestricted.

Declaration

The trustees declare that they have approved the charity accounts above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Signatures	<i>Enza Smith</i>	<i>Jane Hinton</i>
Full Names	Enza Smith MBE	Jane Hinton
Position	Chief Executive	Treasurer
Date	5 th November 2024	5 th November 2024