



## ANNUAL REPORT 2020

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## INTRODUCTION

This report reflects our achievements during 2020 and our plans for 2021, though these may be subject to change depending on the success of the “Government roadmap”, and to the ongoing ramifications of the COVID-19 pandemic. Our thanks go to the many volunteers, employees, funders, and supporters for helping children in need throughout the various lockdowns in the last twelve months to have some much-needed fun, aiding their personal development, confidence, and improving their self-esteem, and in particular coping with their new challenges.

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

The overall purpose of the Friendship Project is to improve the social and emotional well-being of children, aged 6-16, disadvantaged by virtue of their own or family circumstances. An Older Friend provides experiences lacking in the child's life, builds a trusting relationship and raises the self-esteem of their Younger Friend. Volunteers, over the age of 18, are drawn from Warwickshire communities and come from all walks of life. They are carefully vetted as to their suitability for this work, including DBS checks.

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

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

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

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

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

One-to-one befriending carries a potential risk in relation to child protection. Safeguarding procedures, in relation to recruitment, vetting, briefing, training and supervision of volunteers are given the highest priority and kept under constant review with Children's Services. The Friendship Project is an Associate Member of the Warwickshire Safeguarding Children's Board and an Assistant Head of Service acts as an Advisor to our Trustees.

There is quality research available advising the importance of early intervention to help both mental and physical health outcomes in later life, making our contribution in the sector extremely valuable.

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

## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

My report is focused primarily on our activities and achievements in 2020, our last financial year, plus our plans for 2021, our 35<sup>th</sup> year, with hopefully an opportunity to celebrate our Coral anniversary later in the year, if the government restrictions allow. Additionally, how we have met and are approaching the ongoing COVID-19 challenges.

First and foremost, I would like to extend a big thank you on behalf of all the children (Younger Friends) that we are supporting and have helped to all our excellent current and past volunteers, employees, benefactors/funders, and trustees. Without whose dedication our small local charity could not continue to help the lives of children in need throughout Warwickshire. Since 1986, we estimate that there have been more than 1,500 children helped over this period.



At the end of February 2020, we were welcomed to Leamington Tennis and Squash club where I was honored on behalf of the charity to accept the Queens Award for Voluntary Service, and it was brilliant that we were able to celebrate, before the pandemic took hold, with so many volunteers, operations team, supporters, and funders. It was a tremendous accolade for us and a fitting tribute to all involved, and it does seem a long time since we were able to be together safely in this way.

In the autumn our Area Coordinator in Rugby, Kelly Furness, resigned, and is thanked for her contribution to the charity, and in particular her interest in safeguarding, our Trusted Charity Project, and helping to expand our volunteer base in Rugby. The remaining members of the operations team have kindly stepped up to cover the Rugby area, as we decided that we would wait to recruit until there was an easing of government lockdown conditions, when it will be possible to make effective training and integration into the team more attainable.

I would particularly like to commend our operations team for the way in which they have adapted to work with new conditions and continued to support our volunteers and vulnerable children in Warwickshire despite the additional challenges throughout the pandemic. We had to suspend our planned collective events during 2020, though we were able to deliver our younger friends activity packs, Easter eggs, and Christmas presents.

We have successfully recruited two excellent new trustees in 2020, Sarah Stallard, who is taking the portfolio of HR, and Louise Hasler who has taken the portfolio of Risk & Compliance and is working on our Trusted Charity ambitions. Our Hon Secretary, Michelle Machin, is stepping down in 2021, though continuing to volunteer for the charity going forward with helping with social media and remains in place whilst we look to recruit a replacement. She is thanked for all her significant contributions including stepping in when we were without a treasurer to dealing with salaries and expenses. Recently joining us as trustee designate with portfolio for Operations is the ably qualified Gurmaj Dhillon, who is welcomed to the team.

### The Highlights of what we have achieved in 2020 are as follows: -

- ✓ Continued to provide the invaluable 121 volunteer support and fun for disadvantaged children in spite of the challenges presented by the current pandemic, without needing to furlough our operations team, who continued to work, showing great resilience throughout the year.
- ✓ We were presented with the Queens Award for Voluntary Service in February 2020
- ✓ Owing to the restrictions with COVID-19 when we had to suspend face to face meetings in March, and we have successfully pivoted to online, telephone and pen pal support.
- ✓ Get togethers for our volunteers have continued via Zoom, with wellbeing, craft, and chat

- ✓ Safeguarding training has been refreshed and undertaken, and a new scheme established over two consecutive sessions delivered online.
- ✓ A new Pen Pal/online matching service has been established for those volunteers not able to complete their training for face-to-face meetings, as a transition stage, which means that we have still been able to give support for new children referred.
- ✓ COVID Risk Assessments have been introduced alongside Q & As for volunteers
- ✓ Trustees have met more frequently to review our activity and financial position.
- ✓ Our budget income was £65,000, with target £70,000, which were set prior to the pandemic, and it was always going to be difficult to achieve, as the impact of COVID-19 become more serious. We are pleased that we were able to raise £52,526, with our expenses lower owing to COVID-19 restrictions meaning there were less volunteer and operational team expenses, our carry forward for 2021 is similar to 2020.
- ✓ Two new trustees were recruited and appointed.
- ✓ We have had an increase in the number of volunteers coming forward, and once we are able to complete the checks and training this will put us in a good place for 2021 and increase in demand.
- ✓ Sustained 80 friendships during the year, with 67 continuing into 2021, which mirrored the position at end of 2019 start of 2020 pre pandemic, which is amazing considering recruitment restrictions.
- ✓ Our pipeline of volunteers is stronger than ever going into 2021.
- ✓ Christmas presents for YFs were organised as we could not hold a party event in 2020.
- ✓ Continued to promote the Friendship Project, throughout the County; this was face to face at the start of the year then continued Zoom online attendance for various networking events, plus presentations on zoom to local Rotary too.
- ✓ Recruited 2 new trustees for portfolios of HR and Compliance.
- ✓ Our Ops team o started work on the Trusted Charity Project, which is now being lead by Louise Hasler, Trustee.
- ✓ Updated our publicity and marketing information following achieving the Queens Award.

#### **In 2021 our plans include the following: -**

- ✓ Continue to provide the invaluable 121 volunteer support and fun for disadvantaged children. Aim to increase the numbers supported and reduce our waiting lists. Target to have 80 still matched by end of 2021, though the quality is still more important than the numbers matched.
- ✓ Specifically, to increase the number of Older Friends as volunteers, particularly in Stratford and district, Rugby, and North Warwickshire areas
- ✓ Increase the number of Group Supporters
- ✓ Our budget is to raise £65,350, with target income of 70,000.
- ✓ Recruit a trustee for Hon Secretary role, and identify a new vice-chairman too
- ✓ Continue work with our Trusted Charity project.
- ✓ Recruit a new Area Coordinator for Rugby and district
- ✓ Reinstate post COVID-19 restrictions the roll out of personal visits to YFs and their carer/parent to for safeguarding and to validate worth. To potentially to extend this to include anonymous case studies to support fund raising.
- ✓ Attend periodic networking events to increase the profile of the Friendship Project.
- ✓ Further improve our social media presence
- ✓ Organise two more sessions through the year for Safeguarding Training for volunteers, both as refreshers and also for new volunteers.
- ✓ Continue to hold periodic Older Friends get-togethers/training/support sessions.
- ✓ Complete the Procedures Manual including Trustees Responsibilities too, in "How to" format for contingency planning.
- ✓ Continue to encourage and support training for the Operation team.
- ✓ Recruit additional Group Supporters, as required as our Older Friends increase
- ✓ "CIO" status, has been put on hold, as we are awaiting confirmation that the Queens Award can be moved across to the new entity, and also for funds to allow this to take place.

- ✓ Complete the review of publicity and marketing materials including the Queens Award logo

### Trustee vacancy

We are looking to recruit a new Hon Secretary, as our existing one needs to stand down for work reasons, though it is appreciated she is going to assist with social media going forward instead. If you know of anyone who may be interested in joining our trustee team in this capacity, then we would be happy to talk further. There will be training and handover available too. Please contact me on my email below or 07769 727418 for more information.

### Big thank you.

Whilst writing my report I would like to again personally thank both past and present the many Older Friends, Group Supporters, volunteers, operations team, employees, and trustees, who give their time freely to help our Younger Friends have important 1-2-1 attention, emotional support, friendship and the opportunity to explore new activities and have some fun, particularly through these most challenging times.

**Cheryll Rawbone**

Chairman

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# Safeguarding Report

Trustee - Esther Jones

My name is Esther Jones and I took over responsibility for safeguarding within the Project at the 2020 AGM. I took over from the previous lead, John Hancock, who I had the pleasure of knowing when volunteering as an Older Friend for the Project (2006 to 2017), and while delivering safeguarding training to my fellow volunteers (on and off since 2015).

Prior to taking over, I spent some time reviewing the safeguarding practices of the project and was really impressed with how the operations team have placed the welfare and wellbeing of our Younger Friends at the centre of the Project's work. For example, the volunteer induction training session weaves important messages regarding the volunteer's responsibility to keep their Younger Friend's safe throughout, and not just as a stand-alone tick box covering 'child protection'. I will be formalising this review by using the NSPCC Safeguarding Checklist to ensure we have a recorded annual audit of safeguarding practice against best practice standards. This will help us stay up to date with current guidance and legislation.

Once I was in the role, I worked with the operations team to update the 'glovebox' guidance provided to volunteers. I wanted the guidance to be crystal clear for volunteers so that they knew exactly what is expected of them, so we turned the guidance into a decision flow chart. More recently, I updated the child protection and safeguarding policy and procedure, so we had a clear policy statement and the procedure regarding what to do if concerned about a Younger Friend matched the glovebox guidance.

As with almost everything over the last year, a good part of our work became virtual. We have continued to meet with Calvin Smith from Warwickshire County Council, virtually, who provides us with updates and guidance on the local safeguarding agenda. I have been able to attend the virtual operations team meetings, whose enthusiasm for continually improving practice has not been dimmed despite the difficulties of the last year. And we have successfully shifted our safeguarding training session for volunteers onto Zoom, ensuring volunteers old and new have been able to access key information regarding what safeguarding means to the project. The training has been such a success that we will be including virtual sessions within the training schedule for the foreseeable future. Over the next year I will be looking at training for the operations team to ensure they are able to stay up to date with the latest safeguarding information.

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# Grant, Trust, & Local Fund-Raising Report

Trustee – Richard Barrett

Due to the COVID 19 pandemic 2020 proved to be a difficult year for fundraising as all our main sources of income fell, resulting in a reduction in our overall income of over 25% from 2019 levels. We are thankful for the reserves that we brought forward from 2019, that enabled us to continue our work supporting disadvantaged children across Warwickshire during the pandemic, despite our falling income.

Many grant providers froze their funds, while others focused their grants on supporting those organisations and individuals most severely impacted by the pandemic. However, we were successful in applying for the Government's emergency support for charities and in attracting new funders in The National Lottery and the L&Q Housing Group.

We are very grateful for the continuing support of existing grant funders, The Warwickshire Police and Crime Commissioner, The King Henry VIII's Endowed Trust, The Heart of England Community Foundation and the 29<sup>th</sup> May Charitable Trust.

Our donations and events fundraising income reduced significantly from the 2019 level, although 2019 had been an exceptional year with Croft Primary School raising almost £11,000 for the Friendship Project. We were delighted by the fundraising activities that supporters ran on our behalf during the year. Of particular note was Grace and Sam's 350-mile cycle challenge which raised over £2,000 a magnificent result for which we are most grateful. We are thankful too to all who contributed to other fundraising activities in 2020.

We were pleased to welcome new corporate supporters CR Callum Limited and Procure 4 during the year and look forward to working with them further in 2021.

We are extremely grateful to all our corporate and individual donors who have supported us through large and small donations and for the ongoing support of all our grant funders:

- |   |                                       |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| ✓ 29th May 1961 Charitable Trust        | ✓ L & Q Group                         |
| ✓ Amazon Smile                          | ✓ Manchester United Foundation and    |
| ✓ Anonymous donors                      | Leamington Spa Supporters Club        |
| ✓ Barratt Homes West Midlands           | ✓ Mr & Mrs. M Parton                  |
| ✓ Mrs. R Benion                         | ✓ Passioneers Limited – Make Good     |
| ✓ Bodies & Co                           | Grow                                  |
| ✓ Coventry & District Cricket Assoc     | ✓ Procure 4                           |
| ✓ Coventry Building Society             | ✓ Ridge Lane WI                       |
| ✓ CR Callum Limited                     | ✓ Sam and Grace                       |
| ✓ Gallagher Ltd                         | ✓ Sorooptimists Kenilworth            |
| ✓ Garfield Weston Charitable Foundation | ✓ Terence Hague                       |
| ✓ BM & SJ Hall                          | ✓ The Alan Edward Higgs Charity       |
| ✓ Hatton Park WI                        | ✓ The National Lottery Community Fund |
| ✓ Heart of England Community            | ✓ UK Corona Virus Resilience Fund     |
| Foundation - Harry Payne Fund           | ✓ Village Voices                      |
| ✓ King Henry VIII's Endowed Trust -     | ✓ Warwick Court Leet                  |
| Warwick                                 | ✓ Waitrose                            |
| ✓ Jaguar Land Rover                     | ✓ Warwickshire Police & Crime         |
| ✓ Lapworth Ladies Super Club            | Commissioner                          |



Thanks also go to Gallagher Insurance Broking Limited who continue to give administration support, postal mail shots and loan of equipment and to Leamington Lawn Tennis and Squash Club for hosting the presentation of our Queens Award for Voluntary Service and use of their meeting room.

Despite COVID we have continued to raise our profile, particularly through social media, Facebook and our website, alongside attending local networking events, virtually and in person when permitted. It has been particularly pleasing to see how this activity has resulted in significant growth in the numbers of volunteers coming forward to be Older Friends.

As lockdown restrictions ease, we look forward to continuing our work and to growing our friendships, supporting more disadvantaged children. This will require us to raise further funds as our costs grow, but we are confident that we can grow our income again through the support of our donors and grant funders.

Fundraising is a team effort and thanks go to the whole team for all their hard work in supporting our fundraising.

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# Marketing Report

Trustee – Angela Truman

## Events

Events have clearly been something lacking in the past year owing to restrictions placed by the pandemic so the focus to raise awareness of the Friendship Project has focused more in other areas.

## Social Media

In response to the inability to host events during the pandemic there has been big push, particularly in the last 6 months to grow our following and connections on social media. This is proving successful, and since the beginning of March we have a dedicated volunteer making all on the posts across LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. It is hoped that through better profiles on social media it will assist with volunteer recruitment and community fundraising.

With the Friendship Project turning 35 years old this year, this is our big project:



## PR

The comprehensive list of local publications and radio stations continues to be updated to act as a tool in helping to distribute our stories across the whole of Warwickshire. Historically, North Warwickshire featured less publications to approach than other areas of Warwickshire to share the Friendship Project story, and this has been addressed with a raised awareness of some parish and village titles which now feature on the list.

When a press release is written the Area Coordinators distribute it to their own local press.

Darwin Media Company wrote and distributed a press release for the Friendship Project in December detailing how the Friendship Project was continuing during lockdowns. Feedback on this coverage was good.

Anne Marie Lambert kindly donated free online cookery classes for our Younger Friends – this article received good coverage in mid and south of the county.

Several case studies were featured explaining how our older and younger friends were staying in touch during the pandemic.

Local Radio continue to be very supportive of the charity, with several interviews being aired with Older Friends and Area Co-ordinators.

### **Local Businesses**

Barrett Homes donated £1000 from their local community fund.

Callum Designs, a prestigious car design and engineering company business based in Warwick, donated 100 Hot Wheels cars to the Friendship Project which have been distributed amongst the Younger Friends. Press Release attached.

In January 2021 Callum also donated £1500. They continue to support the Friendship Project and would like to offer visits to Younger Friends to see the cars once face-to-face group meetings are allowed.

Alsters Kelley law firm in Leamington Spa has chosen the Friendship Project as their appointed charity for the year.

All donations and partnerships with the Friendship Project have been celebrated in the press and across all social media platforms.

## **CAR DESIGN AND ENGINEERING COMPANY REACHES OUT TO HELP VULNERABLE CHILDREN CHARITY**

14th October 2020



To celebrate its one-year anniversary, a design and engineering business which creates bespoke products has partnered with Warwickshire-based charity, the Friendship Project For Children to donate 100 Hot Wheels toy cars to local children within the project.

Callum Design's donation marks the beginning of a growing partnership between the two organisations, with Callum hoping to instil its enthusiasm and passion for cars into the next generation and raise awareness of careers in automotive design and low volume craftsmanship.

The design and engineering business recently presented its first car project, the Aston Martin CALLUM Vanquish 25 by R-ReforGED, which will be built at its Warwick facility. Co-founder, Ian Callum, who as well as an avid Hot Wheels fan, was keen to do something locally as an alternative way of celebrating its first year in business.



Supporting the local community seemed far a more appropriate way to celebrate our first year in these times," says David Fairbairn, Callum director. "We've also an opportunity to generate some sparks of interest in automotive design and manufacture as a possible career for these young people. Typically, they wouldn't get access to the design or prototype department of a major manufacturer. When conditions allow, we plan to show them first-hand the broad scope of roles available. We think they might be surprised."

The Friendship Project matches children and young people – who are in need, for a variety of reasons – with an older friend volunteer who spends time with them, on a weekly basis enabling them to enjoy activities such as sports, arts and crafts or music. For some, even playing in the park or going to the cinema is something they couldn't otherwise get to experience.

"We really appreciate the Hot Wheels cars that Callum has donated," said Angela Truman from The Friendship Project. "Giving young people a behind-the-scenes look at what goes into designing and making cars has the potential to spark new career ideas and is something I know many are already excited about."

Callum also plans to help the charity in other ways, lending its design skills to create posters and brochures for The Friendship Project. "It's important we attract more volunteers as we have a growing need for children in Warwickshire who require extra support and guidance," added Angela. "Having designers of this calibre for our charity will definitely help us the get the message out.

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# Quality Assurance/Compliance Report

Trustee - Louise Hasler

My role as a trustee is to lead in all areas of quality and compliance, supporting compliance with legal requirements and Charity Commission Guidelines. The following is a summary of what I have focussed my efforts on since my appointment was approved at the AGM 2020; our Chairman shares with me sector news that supports me in my role but if anyone has any insight into how we may be able to further improve quality assurance and compliance I would welcome a direct approach with any suggestions you may have.

## 1. Trusted Charity Mark

The Trusted Charity Mark is a status that can be sought from the National Council for Voluntary Organisations which demonstrates achievement of the Trusted Charity standards. This nationally recognised award offers both users and funders external verification of the quality and credibility of an organisation. Since my appointment at the AGM 2020, I have been working to identify gaps in our evidence, taking each of the defined areas one as a time. With the help of our Human Resource Trustee, Sarah Stallard, excellent progress has been made with the Managing People section, with new versions of pre-existing documents/ new documents being created (Anti Bribery Policy, Bullying Prevention Policy, organisation chart and Employee Handbook.

The relatively small size of the Friendship Project means that some of the evidence proposed is not merited by the scale and nature of our operation; it is worth the heavy investment of time in the self-assessment stages to ensure that our submission is the best it can be. More investment will be made in furthering our Trusted Charity Mark submission, as time allows.

## 2. Trustee Job Descriptions and 'How to' Documents

Trustee job descriptions have been developed and are now included in the Procedures Handbook. These job descriptions are useful in respect of external scrutiny and also when a vacancy arises. We are now working on 'how to' documents which summarise in more detail the work of individual trustees in order to create contingency, particularly when someone needs to pick up tasks without the benefit of a handover.

## 3. Risk Register

Having taken on responsibility for the Risk Register, I have updated it to better reflect the status quo. At the February Trustees' meeting it was agreed that the Risk Register should be reviewed at each quarterly meeting of the Trustees and that any item with a residual risk of higher than 9 would be automatically discussed in order to identify anything that additional that could possibly be put in place to mitigate for the risk.

## 4. Conflict of Interests Policy

The most recent Charities Governance Code sets out an expectation that for reasons of transparency even small charities have a conflict-of-interest policy and that employees and trustees should be required to declare conflicts of interest annually. A policy was drafted based on a template from the Chartered Governance Institute and approved at the February trustees' meeting.

The agreed process is that the Honorary Secretary will circulate the declaration of interests form to employees and trustees in advance of the Annual General Meeting and collect forms for consideration

by the Trustee for Quality and Compliance who will make a report to the AGM. A register of conflicts of interest will be maintained by the Trustee for Quality and Compliance and this will be available on request via the Honorary Secretary.

## **5. Cyber-Security Guidance**

National Cyber Security Centre guidance on cyber-security and working from home was received in October 2020; some amendments have been made to the Procedures Manual to reflect this.

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## HR Report April 2021

Trustee – Sarah Stallard

In June 2020 I joined the Friendship Project as HR Trustee as I really wanted to help support a local charity. In the midst of a global pandemic, it has been unfortunate that I haven't been able to meet anyone in person however I would like to thank everyone for making me feel so welcome. Video calls are now normality and although they are not the same, I am grateful I have been able to meet people virtually and build an understanding of how the project works and operates.

Over the last 12 months I have reviewed all the HR documents, handbooks, and policies to check they are up to date and updated them where necessary. I have also added some additional policies and documents to support the Trusted Charity Mark application. These include:

Organisational chart

Bullying Policy

Anti-Bribery Policy

Amended parental bereavement leave information in employee handbook in line with latest legislation

Advised on COVID practices, PPE, policy, and risk assessments

I have conducted one to one meetings with the area-coordinators and will continue to do this on a 6 monthly basis. It was great to talk to each of the co-ordinators and get to know them better and learn more about what they do and what is going on in their areas.

I look forward to advising and supporting the team throughout 2021.

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# Area Coordinators Report Warwick District

Fiona Roche

**Older Friends:** 31 (3 Rugby)

**Younger Friends:** 34 (2 Rugby)

**Pipeline:** 11 (1 Rugby)

## In General

It has been a very different year this year! It has been one of my busiest in the 8 years I have been with the Friendship Project. I have seen a big increase in OF applicants particularly in the 25-35 year age group. My youngest OF is 21 and eldest is 86 years old!

## COVID-19

Even though we have been in lockdown for half the year and had restrictions throughout, work has continued in the Operations team. There has been a lot of extra communication and support for our existing Older Friends. With regular phone calls and emails to check how they are doing. Emails with ideas of how to communicate remotely with their YF. Reassurance when the Older Friends were not getting responses from their YF. Understanding that some OF's didn't feel up to contacting their YF's due to the stress of being locked down and how it was affecting them personally.

Zoom has become a big part of the day, with new volunteers being interviewed by Zoom instead of face to face. This has been fantastic as it gave us the opportunity to meet our volunteers and get to know them and get most of the interview process done. We have had Zoom Operations meetings, catch up's with Older Friends and regular Get togethers for our volunteers.

Risk Assessments have been a big part of the job. Making sure everyone is aware of what they can and can't do. That the families understand this responsibility too. It has changed several times and we have constantly updated all the volunteers and families.

Now that we can see people in gardens, I have been to do the 2<sup>nd</sup> interviews for 5 of Heather's new OFs. It has been great to be out and do some face to face with these new volunteers, a nice change from Zoom!

## Events attended – all via Zoom or Teams

- Get together Zooms
- Safeguarding training Zooms
- Early Help Networking group
- Motivation Mondays Talk Business
- Well being webinars by Illuminate
- Charity networking – Talk Charity
- Early Help family meetings.
- OF and YF activity Zooms

## Older Friend and Younger Friend activity Zooms

This was a first for us to have an OF and YF group activity zoom. We held six 1 hour sessions. They were led by Katrina McDade, a family learning tutor from the Warwick Council that I had made contact with. It was quite a challenge getting everyone logged on so that they could be seen and heard as a lot of them hadn't done zoom before or were sharing devices with other members of the family. Katrina read stories, had a picture quiz, music making using recyclables, self portraits with pastels (which she supplied and I sent to all the OF's and YF's). The feedback was that it was very much enjoyed by everyone.

## Remote Pen Pal friendships

With lots of new volunteers who had been interviewed and done their safeguarding training we felt that the next progression was to get them matched remotely rather than wait around until we could do this face to face. This was also on the back of the success that some friendships were having by being Pen pals and doing Whatsapp calls, so we thought we would give it a go. A zoom meeting was set up with the referrer, YF, OF, carer and Area Coordinator. I matched 5 pen pal friendships and they are all going really well. I am now organising for them to have a meeting in person at school so they can become full face to face friendships and start outing's. It has been a good way to keep volunteers involved and also with the YG's who have anxiety, a gentle way to get to know each other..

## New Group Supporters

Now that the Warwick district has 31 friendships which is going to grow to 42 in the next few months, I am very please to have a team of 6 Group supporters. I have recently recruited 2 new Group Supporters, Gilly and Kerry. They all do an amazing job keeping in contact with their OFs or which I am very grateful. We all met on zoom for some training and a catch up.

## Radio Interviews

I have done 4 radio interviews over the last year. I arranged for 3 Older Friends to speak on the interviews too.

## Summary

It has been great to be able to keep working all year with my colleagues and volunteers. I have got to know the carers more which I feel has been very beneficial to supporting the friendship. I am now going to have a busy few months as I have 16 (5 Pen pals) to organise face to face friendships once restrictions allow us to meet in schools or homes. Thank you to the team and to Cheryl for her support through this tricky year.

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## Case study 1

It was my first time, I was completely new to the idea of becoming a Older Friend. I was told that the 10 year old boy that I was befriending had ADHD and lots of energy, had problems with authority figures and had had a Older Friend before but it had not really worked out. I was then introduced to a quiet, subdued young man, quite small for 10 years, who immediately struck me as really wanting to be liked.

Our first trip out was to the local park with a football, which we kicked around for a while and then sat on some logs and talked about him, me and what we each enjoyed doing. I was left with the impression of a sweet, sensitive boy who loves his mum and his sisters (most of the time). We then had some running races and played tag around the park proving that he certainly did have boundless energy.

Our friendship gradually grew as we fell into a habit of about 90 minutes of some sort of activity each week either football or tag in the park, swimming, cycling (another Older Friend gave us a bike that their young friend had grown out of) and then a trip to McDonald's or KFC which would give us the opportunity to sit and talk for half an hour while he ate.

I knew we were doing well when his behaviour started to deteriorate. He was sufficiently relaxed with me to sulk when he didn't get his way, primarily when I said it was time to go home, or when he tried a trick on his bike but could not pull it off. We gradually learnt how to deal with each other. Sometimes I would buy him the extra drink or sweets we wanted, but he also learnt that a sulk was never going to persuade me to his point of view.

My work often takes me away from home. I send him postcards from wherever I go in the world, thinking this might raise an interest in the world outside of Leamington. He loves to browse the photos on my phone when we get back together again. But he has no interest in the places I go to. He does, however, love to know more about the people I meet and the animals in the different countries. What I thought might raise an interest in geography and the world has not, but it has drawn out his interest in people, his sensitive caring self.

This past year has been challenging. A weekly facetime call when we are not allowed to meet. Invariably he is playing on his X-box while we speak, leading to some prolonged periods in which our conversation goes nowhere. But I soon realised that he was never keen to finish the call even when neither of us had anything more to say. Just seeing each other and me being there while he played seemed to be important.

When we could meet, we were restricted to walking or cycling from his home. It worked out well in the summer months, we even had a few evening swims in the river. But things got harder as the evenings drew in and we found ourselves out in the cold and dark.

He will be thirteen this month. No longer the small 10-year-old I met just 2 ½ years ago. The bike that was a little big for him will be too small soon. He seems to have grown rapidly this last year, in stature and in himself. I am racking my brain now to think of new activities to do with a teenager rather than a young boy and am a little nervous about the teenage years to come.

I was touched just last week when he proudly told me that he had only had one fight at school so far this year. They used to be daily occurrences that he would boast to me about. We've had a number of conversations about whether hitting someone was a good thing or not and about how to avoid getting into conflict. I am proud of him, about how he is developing as a person and how he is learning to harness his energy and control his temper. I would also be lying if I didn't say I get a bit of a boost myself when I think that I may have had a small part to play in that.

## Case Study 2

My connection with the Friendship Project started in 2018. Following retirement from my teaching job, I had started enquiring about charities that would allow me to continue supporting children. I think I met someone from the Friendship Project at an open-air event in Leamington Spa at a time when people were still able to mingle without face masks.

For a number of reasons I did not start volunteering until autumn 2019. Let me say at this opportunity that the Friendship Project carries out a very careful selection and preparation process and does a great job trying to match a Younger Friend (YF) and Older Friend (OF) with similar interests. The follow-on support and advice is excellent too and one never has to feel 'at sea' as an OF. Thank you all: most especially my fellow OFs, my insightful group supporter Tim and the ever-responsive and supportive Fiona!

I stated that I would like to support a girl aged 7-9 years of age. Fiona, the Area Coordinator, gave me two profiles to read. While I didn't know at this point very much about R and the reasons why she had been referred to the Friendship Project, some of the general remarks rang a bell and I was keen to meet her and find out whether we could form a friendship. I still remember sitting in a room with Fiona, plus the deputy head teacher of R's school and R's Mum. It was good to listen how R's Mum and the professionals in the room envisaged R could benefit from the Friendship Project. R was called into the room. I remember her looking a little stunned. I could imagine that she found the somewhat formal scene a little mystifying. To be fair, I did not feel exactly relaxed at this moment. Reflecting on this, I think it is probably good that such a meeting has a slight air of formality. Neither R nor her Mum nor I had to agree to anything other than undertaking to 'give things a go' and seeing what we may feel after a few meetings. How could we have known at this point that it would be a successful 'match'?

So, on October 10th 2019 I took R out for the first time. I had packed some of my art materials and we were going to find something to draw, followed by a warming drink. By that point I had already met some other Older Friends (OF's). One bit of advice from an experienced OF was to 'start the friendship in quite a simple way. Don't be too ambitious'. This turned out to be very useful advice. The weather was already quite cool. We went to Jephson Gardens and found that the subtropical plant house was open. We each drew some of the fabulous leaf shapes. It became obvious on this occasion that R was a chatty little seven year old who talked quite freely about various day-to-day experiences.

We did manage to visit some outdoor places such as local parks and Hatton Country Park, but the days were already getting shorter and cooler, so it was important to find inside spaces. We did visit museums (I can recommend the MAD museum in Stratford-upon-Avon), went to 'Cheeky Monkey', saw some animation films in the cinema, played Ten Pin Bowling and went to the swimming pool. The absolute highlight of activities was probably the clip and climb at Newbold Comyn. In a way I got to know R particularly well, when we both did some painting. As I did not have my own home at the time, we relied on public spaces. I made several telephone calls to libraries and other public bodies asking for a space to paint. In the end it was the Temperance Café in Bath Street who offered us part of their big basement room for an hour or two at a time. In fact they showed real interest in R's bright art. R's spontaneous help in tidying up our table and crockery at the end of our visits made her a popular visitor. Needless to say that the fabulous cakes in the café greatly enhanced these Saturday morning sessions. It was during painting that R wanted to talk about some of the truly difficult times she and her family had experienced. There was no prompting from my part, but it was the informal and quiet setting that encouraged her to share some events of the preceding year from time to time. She also talked of the effects of bullying that she had experienced at school but she showed already remarkable inner resources. It is also credit to her school for keeping an eye on difficult dynamics and being very supportive of R.

As we got into March 2020 we could obviously not meet up face-to-face any longer due to the pandemic. We exchanged a few letters and post cards. Talking on the phone was not always straightforward and her internet and IT resources were in demand for her older sibling's home work. Of course there was a much anticipated short period of socially distanced walks at the end of 2020, puzzles and treasure hunts, before everything went back into lockdown again.

R now has her own mobile telephone and from February 2021 we have been able to arrange times for chats and online activities much more easily. So, for R and myself this latest lockdown proved less challenging and we have managed to paint garden pots and other objects online and we have read each other some great stories. In fact we both felt very comfortable in each other's company when we recently took an early opportunity to meet face-to-face and played crazy golf in St Nicolas Park. R expressed in an Easter card which she sent to me 'Thank you for everything you have done for me'. This is lovely to hear and the sentiment is entirely mutual!

R has had very good progress reports from her school recently and I can sense that she is going from strength to strength at home and at school! Her confidence and resilience have greatly increased during the 18 months of knowing her.

### Photos from the Warwick District





## Area Coordinator – Stratford district

Heather Shipley

**Older Friends:** 25 (9 Rugby)  
**Younger Friends:** 26  
**Pipeline:** 14 (3 Rugby) Total: 39 (12 Rugby)

### In General

How lovely it has been to have so many new volunteers wanting to have a YF! The new volunteers have said that they have been thinking of volunteering for a while and the COVID pandemic made them realise how many families need support and that they wanted to help. It has been a very busy time interviewing and trying to get hold of referrals to answer questions and arrange online meetings. Referrals are still very slow coming through for Stratford and Alcester.

I have enjoyed supporting the current OF's and interviewing/matching new OF's in Rugby. I will be glad when the new AC is on board, so that our Rugby volunteers can be supported by their own AC.

### COVID-19

I have been grateful to be able to keep working throughout the last year. During the lockdowns, I was busy supporting our volunteers with activities to do online and post, attending online Wellbeing Webinars and Get Together' s, and supporting our families with regular phone calls, emails and sending them activity packs in the post.

I worked on increasing our marketing communications: Instagram competitions for our YF's and regular updates to all social media. My thanks to Michelle for taking over social media posting and scheduling – the posts are looking great!

I worked on various press releases: Volunteers keeping in touch during lockdown, Funds Raised, Volunteers helping with home schooling, as well as case studies.

I also worked with Kelly and Karen on reviewing our current documents and putting together new documents for Social Media for Trusted Charity status.

It has been frustrating trying to get hold of referrers during the pandemic and this has meant that some OF's have waited a long time to be matched. This is also not a bad thing as it allows for volunteers to be totally sure that they want to be an OF and gives them the opportunity to listen and talk to other volunteers on online calls and understand our Safeguarding training.

### Events attended

- Online Get Together' s for new and current Older Friends
- Online Wellbeing Webinars for current Older Friends
- Online Safeguarding Training with Esther and Fiona
- Online Ops Meetings with the Team

### Interviews

I have first interviewed 14 volunteers mostly online and recently face to face outside. I have completed

6 second interviews for Fiona for the Warwick district, I am really enjoying seeing volunteers face to face again! I have interviews to do for Simon (Stratford), Nikki (Stratford) and Anna (Harbury).

## Matchings

I have completed 6 matchings online. 3 of these matchings are going very well (Sally - Rugby, Bob - Stratford and Gwen - Stratford). Andrew (Stratford) was matched with YF 'A' online with the Pastoral School Support and Social Worker. The family are going through a very difficult time and we are not having any communication back from the family. I am working with the referrer to see if we will need to end this friendship and look for another YF for Andrew.

I matched Veronica (Rugby) with a YF and was very pleased with the match. The family really need our support. Veronica then let me know that she will be moving – so we have ended this friendship and when she has settled into the area, hopefully we can match her with another YF. This YF is top of my list to be re-matched.

Gary (Barford) was matched with YF 'S'. We knew from the referrer and conversations/online calls with the YF's Dad that he may not engage with us, but Gary wanted to give the friendship a try. Gary wrote some excellent letters to S and the YF's Dad was very grateful for our support, but unfortunately, S was not able to engage with the friendship, so we have ended it and I am looking for a new YF for Gary.

I set up a matching meeting with Gail and David (Rugby) to be matched with twin girls. Unfortunately, one of the girls showed disrespectful behaviour on the online call and I was not prepared to match her. We have subsequently had another online call with a local school and another potential YF. The online call went really well and 'T' was very engaged in talking with David. We are going to be arranging a matching meeting in school in May.

## Group Supporters

I have two Group Supporters, plus I am Group Supporter some of my OF's.

Email: [heather.shipley@friendshsippproject.co.uk](mailto:heather.shipley@friendshsippproject.co.uk)

## Case study 1

Casey was referred to us in August 2018. Casey was referred to us as he has attachment difficulties due to domestic violence in the home when he was younger and this can cause him to be distrustful of adults. Casey is being supported by school and external professionals for his emotional and anxiety needs. Casey was originally matched with an OF in 2018 and enjoyed seeing his OF until his OF was unable to volunteer anymore as he was moving abroad. Casey was then re-referred to us in September 2019 and he was matched online with Barrie in February 2021. Barrie had completed our interview process and had been ready to be matched for nearly a year! Barrie and Casey instantly found a common interest in super cars. Barrie started off writing cards to Casey and enclosing photo's of Lamborgini's – Casey's favourite cars. They speak regularly online and Barrie also talks to Casey's Mum to keep her aware of how the friendship is going. We have decided to keep the friendship via post and online at the moment, until lockdown eases again in May. We will then meet with Casey and his Mum face to face at school so that they can start enjoying outings face to face.

## Case Study 2

Pam and Chloe have been matched since May '19. Chloe was referred to us in November 2018. Chloe lives in a very busy household and has 4 siblings ranging from 20 to 2 years old. Dad works long hours



and Chloe's sister who is 8 years old, takes up most of Mum's time. They enjoyed regular outings together before lockdown going to the library, playing in the park, having picnics and making jewellery in Pam's art studio. Throughout lockdown, they have stayed friends via: Pam sending photocards with her latest news and photo's of them together, FaceTiming together (when has had its challenges as Chloe's sisters have wanted to get in on the conversation and Chloe did not feel she had the privacy to talk), Pam has made cookies and delivered them to Chloe's house. When lockdowns have eased, they have enjoyed meeting up for picnics, painting nails and decorating cakes outside! They are now planning events for after lockdown, including a visit to the local theatre.

### Photos from the Stratford District



# Area Coordinator Nuneaton, Bedworth & North Warwickshire

Viv Kelsey

**Older Friends:** 15 – one waiting for new match later in year and 5 Rugby OF's  
**Younger Friends:** 15 – 5 Rugby YF's  
**Pipeline:** 2

## In General

Have kept in touch with OF's regularly by phone during the past year, checking on their wellbeing as well as seeing if they have been able to maintain some contact with their YF's.

One OF is waiting a new YF as hers moved out of area about June 2020. Waiting for restrictions to be lifted more and it a bit safer to meet up with new people.

Have met with Innovating Minds which is a charity working with children who predominately come from Domestic Violence backgrounds but work with anxiety, stress. They have offered us access to their online training if we feel it would be relevant for our volunteers.

Currently working with Bank Life Fishing who are a Cambridge family run business who want to give disadvantaged children the opportunity to experience the joys of fishing. They have a lake owner in Rugby who has offered their lake for a day and they are looking to organise fishing for 12 children. In the process of finalising this opportunity. They have chosen us as they spent time in Nuneaton visiting with family in their youth.

## COVID-19

Covid has created problems with keeping in regular contact with the YF's. Often the parent/carer is the main point of contact. The YF's don't always want to engage on the phone or video call. The OF's have maintained a presence to ensure that their YF's are aware that they are still there for them.

During the first lockdown I worked with a new local fruit and veg delivery service and negotiated a discounted price for a fruit box to be delivered to our YF's and their families.

I have a few OF's that have taken up visiting with their YF's but are restricted to walking from the YF's home address.

Most want to wait and be sure that everything is safe and would like to be able to collect their YF's and take them somewhere. Not all areas have good places to walk.

We are undertaking risk assessments prior to allowing OF and YF's to meet face to face.

I have matched 3 new OF's on a phone/text/video basis they have been in contact with their new matches for a few weeks. During the next few weeks I am meeting face to face with the new OF's, ensuring all the paperwork is signed off, once an risk assessment has been conducted they will be matched face to face with their new YF's. The advantage of this for these friendships has been an opportunity for the YF's to see who they will be going out with prior to them just turning up at their house for the first time. I feel that this is positive and beneficial especially for the slightly older children,

## Events attended

- Nuneaton Bedworth Networking lunch group
- Innovating minds looking at services available and working together opportunities
- Bank Life Fishing
- CAVA Nuneaton and Bedworth Networking event

Email: [viv.kelsey@friendshipproject.co.uk](mailto:viv.kelsey@friendshipproject.co.uk)

## Case study 1

A referral came in for a child who has been in care since August 2020 due to neglect and abuse from home environment. Police were involved due to the non engagement of parents. There was a lot of trauma for the children. The youngest of the children was referred into The Friendship Project, he was struggling engaging with everything and the Social Worker who referred into FP has had previous successful referrals with the Project.

At the same time the referral was received we were in the process of signing up an new volunteer who owns a farm. The new OF has children of his own and wanted to give something back to a child who has been less fortunate in their circumstances.

The Social Worker and Foster Carer were very excited when they learnt of the opportunity of matching this young man with the new OF. When the child was informed and asked if it was something he would be interested the Foster Carer reported that he was 'excited, or rather smiled quite a lot which for him is excited'.

Due to covid restrictions our OF's were not permitted to have their YF's in their vehicles, activities were to be outside. The idea with this matching was to introduce the new YF to the outside life of farming and help with all the animals on the farm. The farm bred beef cattle, had goats, chickens, dogs and horses were also on the farm. So there were enough activities to safely be conducted outside. The location of the farm was not that far from where the Foster Carer lived and they were happy to take the YF to the location for a few hours each week.

The YF and OF were matched at the beginning of April 2021, the first visit the Foster Carer stayed to make sure the YF felt comfortable. They have met for a few weeks since. Early reports from the Social Worker are positive. It was felt that from the initial conversations where the YF was asked if he would be interested in this type of friendship he was completely engaged. The OF says he is a delightful young person and although a little bit quiet at the moment he can see that he is really enjoying helping and being with all the different animals.

It is a delightful match to have been involved with. Studies prove that interactions with animals and of course being outdoors has great healing properties and is beneficial to a person's well being both physically and mentally. This opportunity also gives this YF a new skill which he could possibly find useful in later life.

## Photo from the Nuneaton, Bedworth and North Warwickshire District



## **FRIENDSHIP PROJECT FOR CHILDREN**

**REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER: 517684**

### **Financial Statements**

**For the year ended 31 December 2020**

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**The Friendship Project**  
**Trustees' Annual Report**  
**for the year ended 31 December 2020**

<b>Full Name:</b>	The Friendship Project
<b>Other names:</b>	The Friendship Project for Children
<b>Registered charity number:</b>	517684
<b>Principal address:</b>	Myton Park, Myton Lane, Warwick, CV34 6PX
<b>Trustees:</b>	Cheryll Rawbone, Chairperson John Hancock, Vice Chairperson, resigned 3 <sup>rd</sup> June 2020 Ken Smith, Honorary Treasurer Chris Buck Richard Barrett Michelle Machin Jon Gibbons Angela Dawn Truman Esther Jones Louise Hasler, appointed 6 <sup>th</sup> August 2020 Sarah Stallard, appointed 3 <sup>rd</sup> June 2020
<b>Honorary Treasurer:</b>	Ken Smith
<b>Bankers:</b>	Lloyds TSB, Stratford upon Avon
<b>Independent examiner:</b>	Paula Wilson, 2 Hickman House, Hickman Road, Galley Common, Nuneaton, CV10 9NQ

**Governance & management**

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

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

# **The Friendship Project**

## **Trustees' annual report (continued)**

### **for the year ended 31 December 2020**

#### **Aims and objectives**

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

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

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

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

- ✓ Continued to provide the invaluable 121 volunteer support and fun for disadvantaged children despite the challenges presented by the current pandemic,
- ✓ We did not furlough our operations team, who continued to work, showing great resilience throughout the year.
- ✓ Owing to the restrictions with COVID-19 when we had to suspend face to face meetings in March, and we have successfully pivoted to online, telephone and pen pal support.
- ✓ Safeguarding training has been refreshed and undertaken, and a new scheme established over two consecutive sessions delivered online.
- ✓ A new Pen Pal/online matching service has been established for those volunteers not able to complete their training for face-to-face meetings, as a transition stage, which means that we have still been able to give support for new children referred.
- ✓ COVID Risk Assessments have been introduced alongside Q & As for volunteers
- ✓ Trustees have met more frequently to review our activity and financial position.
- ✓ Our budget income was £65,000, with target £70,000, which were set prior to the pandemic, and it was always going to be difficult to achieve, as the impact of COVID-19 become more serious. We are pleased that we were able to raise £52,526, with our expenses lower owing to COVID-19 restrictions meaning there were less volunteer and operational team expenses, our carry forward in accounts for 2021 is similar to 2020.
- ✓ Sustained 80 friendships during the year, with 67 continuing into 2021.
- ✓ Recruited 2 new trustees for portfolios of HR and Compliance/Risk.
- ✓ Our Ops team started work on the Trusted Charity Project
- ✓ Updated our publicity and marketing information following achieving the Queens Award.

**The Friendship Project**  
**Trustees' annual report (continued)**  
**for the year ended 31 December 2020**

**Financial Review**

The charity made an unrestricted deficit of £2,930 in the year with net unrestricted reserves of £50,924.

The Trustees have reviewed the financial position of the charity in light of the impact of the Corona virus upon its operations and fund raising. They believe that with the funding commitments made and plans for 2021, it has the funding to continue providing its services for at least the next 12 months.

**The charity's policy on reserves**

In line with the guidance provided by the Charities Commission the Friendship Project has reviewed and revised its policy on the holding of financial reserves.

The majority of our monthly expenditure relates to the salaries and expenses of our staff and the expenses of our Older Friends.


As our income varies considerably month by month it is important that in order to provide continuity of support for our Younger Friends that we have sufficient financial resources in place for the timely and regular payment of salaries and expenses.

In order to ensure our ability to achieve this, the trustees believe that it is essential to hold financial reserves, excluding restricted funds, of a minimum of six to nine months forecast expenditure.

A proportion of these funds is invested on an interest earning basis with M & G Charity Investments and is repayable on demand.

This policy will be monitored and reviewed annually.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees:

Signed  Date 18<sup>th</sup> May 2021

Cheryl Rawbone, Chairman



**Independent Examiners Report to the Trustees of**  
**The Friendship Project**  
**Year Ended 31 December 2020**

I report on the accounts of the charity for the year ended 31 December 2020, which are set out on pages 6 to 12.

**Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner**

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

It is my responsibility to:

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

**Basis of independent examiner's report**

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

**Independent examiner's statement**

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

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect, the requirements:
  - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; and
  - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Acthave not been met; or
2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Signed:

Paula Wilson, MAAT

Date: 15 May 2021

**The Friendship Project**

**Statement of Financial Activities**

**For the year ended 31 December 2020**

		<b>Unrestricted Funds</b>	<b>Restricted Funds</b>	<b>2020 Total Funds</b>	<b>2019</b>
	<b>Note</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Incoming resources</b>					
Grants	2	8,000	26,900	34,900	39,618
Donations	3	13,042	-	13,042	22,762
Fundraising donations/events	4	6,998	-	6,998	13,171
Gift Aid	5	-	-	-	300
Investment income	6	938	-	938	315
<b>Total incoming resources</b>		<b>28,978</b>	<b>26,900</b>	<b>55,878</b>	<b>76,166</b>
<b>Resources expended</b>					
Salaries, NI	10	17,939	18,014	35,953	35,157
Staff expenses		2,445	1,786	4,231	4,079
Volunteer expenses		4,924	3,495	8,419	20,901
Insurance		3,101	-	3,101	2,825
Events/Christmas parties		115	-	115	435
Other expenditure	11	3,034	-	3,034	5,829
Independent examination fee	13	350	-	350	350
<b>Total resources expended</b>		<b>31,908</b>	<b>23,295</b>	<b>55,203</b>	<b>69,576</b>
<b>Net incoming/(outgoing) resources</b>		<b>(2,930)</b>	<b>3,605</b>	<b>675</b>	<b>6,590</b>
Gains & (losses) on investments		259	-	259	216
Total funds brought forward		53,595	3,348	56,943	50,137
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>	9	<b>50,924</b>	<b>6,953</b>	<b>57,877</b>	<b>56,943</b>

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

# The Friendship Project

## Balance Sheet

For the year ended 31 December 2020

	Note	£	2020 £	2019 £
<b>Fixed assets</b>				
Investments	6		39,215	13,956
<b>Current assets</b>				
Cash at bank and in hand		16,348		47,248
Accrued Income	7	1,950		251
Insurance prepayment	8	259		-
Debtors		1,338		
		<u>19,895</u>		<u>47,499</u>
<b>Current liabilities</b>				
Accrued expenses	9	(1,233)		(4,512)
<b>Net current assets</b>			18,662	42,987
<b>Net assets</b>			<u>57,877</u>	<u>56,943</u>
<b>The funds of the charity</b>				
General Funds			50,924	53,595
Restricted Funds			6,953	3,348
<b>Total Funds</b>	10		<u>57,877</u>	<u>56,943</u>

The trustees declare that they have approved the accounts above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees:



Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: 18<sup>th</sup> May 2021

Cheryl Rawbone, Chairperson

# The Friendship Project

## Notes to the Financial Statements

### For the year ended 31 December 2020

#### 1. Accounting policies

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

#### Incoming Resources

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

#### Resources expended

These have been analysed using a natural classification.

#### 2. Grants

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds 2020	Total Funds 2019
	£	£	£	£
Allan Edward Higgs Grant	4,000	-	4,000	-
Aviva Community Fund	-	-	-	5,000
Warwickshire Police & Crime Commissioner	-	7,500	7,500	7,348
Heart of England Tampon Tax Community Fund	-	-	-	5,200
Stratford Town Trust	-	-	-	7,070
29th May 1961 Charitable Trust	-	-	-	3,000
Masonic Charitable Foundation	-	-	-	5,000
Heart of England C Harry Payne Fund	-	2,000	2,000	2,000
Garfield Weston	-	-	-	5,000
Heart of England 29th May 1961 Charitable Trust	1,000	-	1,000	-
Heart of England Coronavirus Resilience Fund	-	3,000	3,000	-
29th May 1961 Charitable Trust	3,000	-	3,000	-
King Henry VIII Endowed Trust	-	3,500	3,500	-
National Lottery Community Fund / Covid 19	-	7,000	7,000	-
L&Q Foundation	-	3,900	3,900	-
	<u>8,000</u>	<u>26,900</u>	<u>34,900</u>	<u>39,618</u>

# The Friendship Project

## Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

For the year ended 31 December 2020

### 3. Donations

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds 2020	Total Funds 2019
	£	£	£	£
Anonymous Donors x 3	3,000	-	3,000	-
Village Voices	1,350	-	1,350	-
Bodies & Co	4,000	-	4,000	-
BDW Trading Barratt Homes	1,000	-	1,000	-
Playground Games	-	-	-	6,000
Balsall Common Lions	-	-	-	1,200
Heart of England Co-op	-	-	-	1,500
Contract Scaffolding	-	-	-	2,000
Woman Who Achieves Award	-	-	-	1,683
Heart of England 29th May 1961 Fund	-	-	-	1,000
Aubrey Allen	-	-	-	2,500
Retailers Donation Pennies Grant	-	-	-	1,000
Donations under £1,000	3,692	-	3,692	5,879
	<u>13,042</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>13,042</u>	<u>22,762</u>

### 4. Fundraising Events

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds 2020	Total Funds 2019
	£	£	£	£
Croft Preparatory School	-	-	-	10,935
Fundraising Events under £1,000	6,998	-	6,998	2,236
	<u>6,998</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>6,998</u>	<u>13,171</u>

### 5. HMRC Gift Aid

Gift Aid received £0, (2019 - £300)

# The Friendship Project

## Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

For the year ended 31 December 2020

### 6. Investments

Market value of surplus funds is invested in the Charibond Charities Fixed Interest Common Investment Fund ("Charibond") with M&G Investments. Investment income 2020 - £938 (2019 - £315).

### 7. Accrued Income

	2020 £	2019 £
L&Q Foundation	1,950	-
	<u>1,950</u>	<u>-</u>

### 8. Debtors

	2020 £	2019 £
Insurance Prepayment	259	251
Other Debtors	1,338	-
	<u>1,597</u>	<u>251</u>

### 9. Creditors

	2020 £	2019 £
Volunteer Expenses	859	2,532
Staff Expenses	24	228
Independent Examination Fee	350	350
	<u>1,233</u>	<u>3,110</u>

# The Friendship Project

## Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

For the year ended 31 December 2020

### 10. Movements in Funds

	Opening Balance £	Incoming Resources £	(Resources expended) £	Gains & Losses £	Transfers £	Closing Balance £
General funds	53,595	28,978	(31,908)	259	-	50,924
Designated funds	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total General Funds</b>	<b>53,595</b>	<b>28,978</b>	<b>(31,908)</b>	<b>259</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>50,924</b>
Restricted Funds						
Warwickshire P&CC	1,848	7,500	(7,691)	-	-	1,657
HoECF Harry Payne Fund	1,500	2,000	(2,500)	-	-	1,000
HoECF Coronavirus Fund	-	3,000	(2,000)	-	-	1,000
King Henry VIII Endowed Trust	-	3,500	(3,500)	-	-	-
National Lottery CF Covid 19	-	7,000	(5,654)	-	-	1,346
L&Q Foundation	-	3,900	(1,950)	-	-	1,950
<b>Total Restricted Funds</b>	<b>3,348</b>	<b>26,900</b>	<b>(23,295)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>6,953</b>
<b>Total Funds</b>	<b>56,943</b>	<b>55,878</b>	<b>(55,203)</b>	<b>259</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>57,877</b>

### 11. Staff costs and numbers

	2020 £	2019 £
Wages	35,953	35,157
	<u>35,953</u>	<u>35,157</u>

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

The average weekly number of part time employees during the year was 5 (2019: 6)



# The Friendship Project

## Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

For the year ended 31 December 2020

### 12. Other expenditure

	2020	2019
	£	£
Storage of documents	185	152
Telephones	543	531
Printing, stationery & advertising	996	1,016
Database / IT	-	1,938
Payroll	1,213	1,378
Sundries	97	814
	<u>3,034</u>	<u>5,829</u>

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

During the accounting period, the charity obtained insurance cover including Public Liability, Employer's Liability, All Risks for Assets, Personal Accident for volunteers and younger friends and Trustee Indemnity Insurance for a total of £3,241.01.

The management committee and other trustees did not receive any remuneration during the year (2019: nil).

### 14. Independent examination and accountancy services

During the period, the cost of the examination and accountancy services was £350.

### 15. Controlling parties

The charity is under the control of the management committee.

### 16. Glossary of terms

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

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

Creditors:

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