

ANNUAL REPORT 2023

Published in June 2024



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INTRODUCTION

This report reflects our achievements during 2023 and our plans for 2024.

Our thanks go to the many volunteers, employees, funders, and supporters for helping children over the last 12 months, enabling them 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 Please also follow us on: – @friendshipproj on twitter and Instagram or on Facebook: www.facebook.com/TheFriendshipProjectForChildren

CHAIRMANS REPORT

My report is focused primarily on our activities and achievements in 2023, our last financial year, plus our plans for 2024. Last year saw a major historical event with the coronation of King Charles III, and it was good that the focus of the weekend was volunteering in the community. Highlighting how important our sector is to everyone in the country, and what valuable work volunteers contribute to society. Regrettably both Ukrainian and Middle East wars bring stress, disruption, and sadness to so many people, with considerable impact to the innocent children caught up in these tragic events. Whilst our focus is on local children in need we have particular empathy for the children impacted, with little respite available.



The current economic position has continued to impact all charities, and we are not immune to this, with referrals/need increasing and funds depleting. Gaining more volunteers & funds is key.

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 1,600 children helped over this period. Our longest standing older friend volunteer has retired at 86, after 26 years' service. Please do read more about her story in this report.

I would particularly also like to thank our operations team for supporting new colleagues in the last 12 months, and covering extended areas whilst we recruited new members of the team. Sarah Edge from Rugby left us as she moved to full-time work, and Hannah Peattie had family commitments which meant that she was unable to continue in her role. Tarragon Kelham is thanked for achieving a significant uptick in our social media whilst she was with us and she is wished well for the future. We have been joined by Kate Meek as Area Coordinator for Bedworth, Nuneaton & North Warwickshire, and Sam Spencer for Rugby & District.

During the last twelve months we have recently welcomed Nishi Mehta as trustee for Operations portfolio, and along with her background in inclusivity and diversity we are delighted to have her join our board.

We have held various collective fun events, with photographs in our recently published newsletter. We were also able to hold our Christmas party with venue donated kindly at the clubhouse of Old Leamingtonians, with over 100 attending.

Trustee vacancies

We are looking to further strengthen and improve diversity of our trustee board, and key skills identified as needed are social media/marketing strategy, QA/Compliance/Risk, and Fund Raising Events. If you know of anyone in these areas that would be interested, then we would be delighted to discuss further.

In 2023 the highlights of what we achieved:

- ✓ We have helped 98 children in Warwickshire directly during 2023, and many more in the wider family and school's environment positively.
- ✓ Continued 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 85 still matched by end of 2024, though the quality is still more important than the numbers matched.
- ✓ Recruitment of 2 new replacement area coordinators in Rugby & District, and Bedworth, Nuneaton & North Warwickshire areas.
- ✓ Aim to increase the numbers supported and reduce our waiting lists. Target to have 85 still matched by end of 2024, though the quality is still more important than the numbers matched.

- ✓ Our budget was to raise £85,000, achieved £78,054, with anticipated expenditure to be £90,707, whereas costs amounted to £92,762, overall net deficit of £14,708, covered from reserves.
- ✓ Identified additional grant funding and seek business nominations as their charity of the year.
- ✓ Recruited a trustee for Operations with specific skill set areas and improve our experience in diversity and representation.
- ✓ Attended periodic networking events to increase the profile of the Friendship Project.
- ✓ Improved our social media presence, by recruitment of part time person to support this.
- ✓ Organised regular sessions through the year for Safeguarding Training for volunteers, both as refreshers and also for new volunteers, online and face to face.
- ✓ Continued to hold periodic Older Friends get-togethers/training/support sessions.
- ✓ Continue to encourage and support training for the operation team.
- ✓ Recruit additional Group Supporters, as required as our Older Friend volunteers increase.
- ✓ Held training day for the Operations team with focus on inclusion and diversity

In 2024 we are aiming to achieve

- ✓ Continued 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 85 still matched by end of 2024, though the quality is still more important than the numbers matched.
- ✓ Specifically, to increase the number of Older Friends as volunteers, particularly in Nuneaton, Bedworth & North Warwickshire, plus Rugby and district, with recruitment of new area coordinators now established in these areas.
- ✓ Our budget is to raise £105,500, with anticipated expenditure to be £105,241.
- ✓ Identify additional grant funding, with assistance of paid fund raiser, and seek business nominations as their charity of the year.
- ✓ Recruit additional trustees as identified in certain specific skill set areas.
- ✓ Recommence work with our Trusted Charity project, when we have trustee lead in place for this.
- ✓ Attend periodic networking events to increase the profile of the Friendship Project.
- ✓ Further improve our social media presence. Recruit new part time person to support this.
- ✓ Organise regular sessions through the year for Safeguarding Training for volunteers, both as refreshers and also for new volunteers, online and face to face.
- ✓ 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 Friend volunteers increase.
- ✓ Safeguarding Training for trustees to be delivered.

Our 40h Anniversary

In 2026 we are on track to achieve our 40th anniversary, a fantastic feat, so ideas and help for planning for this would be most welcome. If you know of any organisations that may be prepared to sponsor this anniversary year, please let me know. The organisation started in 1985 as a concept trial, and then became a registration charity in May 1986. I have been part of this journey since inception, and would just like to say a personal **Big thank you** to 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

Email: cheryll.rawbone@friendshipproject.co.uk

Safeguarding Report 2023/24

Esther Jones - Safeguarding Trustee
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Another year has whizzed by and it remains my pleasure to be the Trustee of The Friendship Project with responsibility for safeguarding and ensuring, along with my fellow Trustees, that we enact our values by placing the welfare of children at the centre of what we do.

We couldn't do what we do without our wonderful volunteers, and it remains my privilege to see so many of them at the safeguarding training sessions I deliver. This year's sessions have been offered both online and face to face. I'm always impressed by how well each and every volunteer engages with these sessions, and I feel confident that volunteers are really clear about the importance of talking to their Area Coordinators about any concerns or worries, whether big or small. If you are a volunteer who has shared a worry, thank you!

How we recruit our volunteers has been under review this year. Safer Recruitment is about ensuring we only recruit people who are suitable to work with children and young people and it's a vital part of creating a safe and positive environment for friendships to blossom, as well as tangibly demonstrating our commitment to keeping children safe. The review of the procedures led to them being re-written into a clearer format and the addition of a preface to make clear our commitment to the safeguarding of children and to ensuring suitability decisions will not be based on factors such as gender, ethnicity or sexual orientation, indeed, we welcome applications from people of all backgrounds! The procedure was also updated to ensure clarity regarding how parents could raise any concerns and to add in a process for ensuring Younger Friends can talk to someone they feel comfortable with if they aren't enjoying their outings.

The Local Authority Designated Officer, or 'LADO', is responsible for dealing with concerns about adults who work with children. We consulted with the LADO about aspects of our recruitment procedure and were pleased to have our processes described as 'robust'. The LADO offered advice about being more explicit about the fact we will undertake 'rigorous checks' and we updated the policy accordingly.

Over the next year, I plan to review the training needs of our Area Coordinators: There are lots of changes going on within Local Authorities at the moment and I want our Area Coordinators to remain confident in knowing where to turn for information and support.

As ever, if you have questions, comments, or feedback on any aspect of our safeguarding procedures or policies, get in touch!

Esther Jones

Fundraising Report 2023/24

Richard Barrett - Fundraising Trustee

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We are extremely grateful to all our grant funders, corporate, and individual donors and who supported us in 2023 through grants and large and small donations. We would also like to thank our cash donors, plus any donations not listed.

- | | |
|---------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| ✓ 29th May 1961 Charitable Trust | ✓ Masonic Charitable Foundation |
| ✓ Amazon Smile | ✓ Mr & Mrs Owen |
| ✓ Anonymous donors | ✓ Mr & Mrs M Parton |
| ✓ Aubrey Allen | ✓ Mrs Susan Weetman |
| ✓ Bedworth Belles | ✓ NFU Mutual |
| ✓ Canon & Mrs G Farran | ✓ O'Brien Trust |
| ✓ Charities Trust | ✓ Redrow Homes |
| ✓ Claverdon Fields Charitable Trust | ✓ Shipston WI |
| ✓ Coventry & District Cricket Club | ✓ St Margaret's Circle |
| ✓ Dulverton Trust | ✓ Sumo Games |
| ✓ BM & SJ Hall | ✓ Terence Hague |
| ✓ Easy Fundraising | ✓ The Four Acre Trust |
| ✓ F C Stokes Trust | ✓ The Higgs Charity |
| ✓ Flecknoe WI | ✓ The National Lottery Community Fund |
| ✓ George Pragnall | ✓ Thomas Flavell & Sons |
| ✓ Heart of England Community Foundation | ✓ Various donations In Memory of Toby Burwell |
| ✓ High Sherrif of Warwickshire | ✓ Warwickshire CrimeBeat |
| ✓ Just Giving | ✓ Warwickshire Police & Crime Commissioner |
| ✓ King Henry VIII's Endowed Trust - Warwick | ✓ Welcome Break |
| ✓ Kingsley Smith | ✓ Widget Software |
| ✓ Leamington & District - Santa Sleigh | |
| ✓ L&Q Foundation | |
| ✓ Maud Elkington Trust | |

Thanks also to

- ✓ Gallagher – Insurance Risk Management and Consultancy, for their ongoing support in providing office services including printing of guidelines, plus meeting facilities free of charge.
- ✓ Leamington Lawn Tennis and Squash Club regularly allow us to use their meeting space free of charge – thank you.
- ✓ SSD in Stratford Upon Avon for storing our archiving free of charge.

Like all charities, The Friendship Project relies on donations from the general public for a significant amount of its income. If anyone reading this can spare even just a pound or two, or perhaps help to organise a fundraising event to help towards our valuable contribution to society, then please do feel free to contact me. There are several methods in which you can donate to us, listed below, with further details on our website.

Other methods to donate are:

- Charities Trust through Payroll Giving, Sponsor Me, and Match Funding
- One off card donations
- Cheque
- Registering with Easyfundraising (see right)
- In person with a staff member via the Square app
- Using our QR code shown on the right



Our QR code



AGM Report 2023/24

Amez (Amrit) Bass - Social Media & Marketing
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I recently joined The Friendship Project in January. Since my first post in February, I have specifically focussed on improving the quality and design of Facebook Posts and increasing engagement. Facebook has our largest online following; therefore, prioritising consistent engagement on this platform first was paramount. Posts are uploaded frequently, 2 to 3 times a week, depending on updates. For instance, 3 posts are uploaded if the charity has received new funding or has an upcoming event. The regular posting schedule is Wednesdays and Fridays. Content is created on Canva and uploaded to Facebook using The Meta Planner. Posts consist of photographs, testimonials, funding updates, and colours that reflect the 'brand identity'.

Posts are also uploaded to Instagram, LinkedIn and X. However, these platforms each require differing strategies to increase growth and engagement. See 'Next Steps' for further details.

Facebook Statistics, 8th February - 25th April

Reach = 34.7% Increase

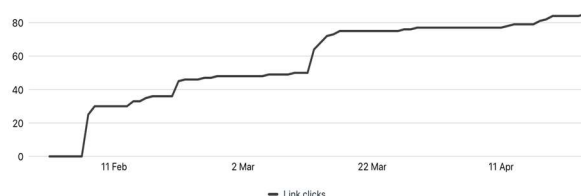
Link Clicks = 1.2% Increase

Total

24,195 ↑ 34.7%

From organic

23,707 ↑ 32%



Top Performing Posts

Highest reach on a post ⓘ

Facebook post
Apply Here:
[https://friendshipproject.co.uk/about/older-](https://friendshipproject.co.uk/about/older-people)
7 Feb 2024, 04:00
This post's reach (4,891) is **1,369%** higher than your median post reach (333) on Facebook.

Highest reactions on a post ⓘ

Facebook post
Exciting News! :) We're thrilled to announce we've received a grant of £13,500 from the...
6 Mar 2024, 03:30
This post received **308%** more reactions (49 reactions) than your median post (12 reactions) on Facebook.

Highest comments on a post ⓘ

Facebook post
Exciting News! :) We're thrilled to announce we've received a grant of £13,500 from the...
6 Mar 2024, 03:30
This post received **500%** more comments (6 comments) than your median post (1 comment) on Facebook.

Audience

Leamington Spa	1
Warwick	11.6%
Stratford-upon-Avon	11.5%
Rugby	7.6%
Coventry	5.7%
Nuneaton	4.6%
Kenilworth	2.8%
Birmingham	2.7%
Shipston on Stour	2.2%
Southam	2.2%

Next Steps

Increase the organic growth of our Rugby Audience.

Potential Photography Workshop to support the quality of photographs when on 'outings'.

Gaining more followers and engagement on Instagram through a tailored strategy.

LinkedIn to be prioritised for Networking opportunities.

Operations Report 2023/24

Ruth Blunt – Operations Team Leader

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General

We have welcomed two new Area Coordinators to the Operations Team this year. Kate Meek joined us in September as the AC for Nuneaton, Bedworth and North Warwickshire. Kate has lots of experience of working in the childcare sector, but she also has experience in administration, interviewing, counselling and safeguarding. With Kate's experience and enthusiasm, we are confident that we will continue to recruit new volunteers and promote the Friendship Project in the north of the county.

Sam Spencer joined us in March as the new Area Coordinator for Rugby and District. Sam was an Older Friend many years ago, so she has a good knowledge of what we do and brings with her a wealth of experience of dealing with people from all walks of life, organising events and creating connections with organisations in the local community.

We have also appointed a new Marketing and Social Media Assistant to take responsibility for our social media and marketing content. Amrit (Amez) Bass joined the Friendship Project in January. She works 4 hours per week and is responsible for managing and developing our social media and marketing content to raise funds, recruit volunteers and promote the Friendship Project so that we can continue to support more children and young people throughout Warwickshire.

We've had to reject a couple of volunteers this year because we were unsure of their suitability. They didn't take the rejection particularly well and came back with what could be described as passive aggressive, possibly even manipulative, language in their responses. Having taken advice from Esther Jones, I contacted the LADO, who suggested that we should ensure on our application form that people declare if they have any medical or mental health issues which may impact on their work and be explicit that we will undertake rigorous checks with the right to refuse applications on any number of grounds. She said that should dissuade those who may be hiding something and also prepare people for possible rejection that they might not have expected. Most of this was already mentioned in our Volunteer Recruitment Policy and on the OF Application Form but we have now reviewed the wording on our policies to incorporate the LADO's suggestions.

Following feedback that a number of YFs were spending a lot of time on their mobile phones during outings, we have updated our Guidelines and the Friendship Agreement to state that both Older Friend and Younger Friend (if applicable) should only use their mobile phones on an outing for photographs or for emergency use to contact the carer etc.

We continue to receive numerous referrals for children and young people needing support. We have had to end some friendships where the relationships between the OF and their YF, or the YF's family, have become too complex. The majority of our friendships are well-established and continue to run smoothly. Our volunteers do an amazing job and they are very well supported by the Group Supporters and the Area Coordinators. The feedback we continue to receive is that giving the young person some quality time away from sometimes difficult home situations, really does improve their confidence and self-esteem. It is also hugely rewarding for our volunteers, knowing that they are having a positive influence and making a difference to a child's life.

I would like to thank everyone in the Operations Team for their continued hard work and dedication. I would also like to thank our wonderful Group Supporters and volunteers as without them, we couldn't do the amazing work that we do.

Current Friendships

Warwick and District – 23

Stratford and District – 17

Rugby – 13

Nuneaton, Bedworth, North Warwickshire – 12

Total number of current friendships – 65 (with a further 11 awaiting interview or awaiting matching)

Training

Myers Briggs Training (Internal) – July 2023

Diversity and Inclusion - Appropriate Language (CM Talent) - July 2023

Wellbeing That Works (Auburn Coaching) – ongoing (RB only)

Trusted Standard (NCVO) – September 2023 (RB only)

Health & Safety - Personal Safety for Lone Workers (Virtual College) - November 2023

Safeguarding Refresher Training (Internal) – February 2024

Events

1/7/23 – Kenilworth Fire Station Event

23/9/23 - Craft Event

26/11/23 – Christmas Party

20/4/24 – Fishing Event

18/5/24 – Fishing Event

13/7/24 – Alpaca Event

28/9/24 - Craft Event

November 2024 - Christmas Party (date tbc)

Marketing and Social Media

We now have some new case studies on our website and Amez has been updating our Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram posts. Our Facebook engagement has increased by almost 35% since Amez joined us and she is currently working on strategies to increase growth and engagement on Instagram, X and LinkedIn. Having someone who can focus on promoting the Friendship Project to raise funds and recruit more volunteers is essential so that we can continue to support more children and young people throughout Warwickshire. This is particularly important in Rugby and the North of the county where we need to boost our volunteer numbers.

AGM Report 2023/24

Fiona Roche – Area Coordinator for Warwick District
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Older Friends: 23
Younger Friends: 24
Pipeline: 6

In General

In July 2024 I had been the Warwick Area Coordinator for 10 years! I feel very proud to have been part of the project for this long. I continue to really enjoy my role, recruiting, training, matching and supporting friendships. I would say that this year it has been quiet an effort to maintain numbers, as fast as I have matched, friendships have also ended. The numbers of Older Friends and Younger Friends has stayed at the same level despite this activity. This winter I did have to work reduced hours for a couple of months as mother became unwell and then died. The Friendship Project team were extremely supportive during this time. They covered my absences and were very kind to me of which I am really appreciative and grateful for.

Friendships

Friendships matched 11

We have some great new friendship that started this year. We have a brother and sister who now both have their own friendship. When the carer check up was completed the feedback was: "We couldn't have asked for 2 better Older Friends, they are both amazing. The bond between each YF and OF is fabulous. They've got so much in common even though they are different ages." Mum even asked had either of them been OFs before because they are so good at it, which they hadn't! The friendships are definitely making a difference as mum doesn't have time for any 1-2-1 with 4 children on her own to look after.

Friendships ended 12

4 natural end
1 reached 17
1 safeguarding reasons
1 OF illness
3 YF family reasons
1 OF work commitments
1 OF moved to USA

Pipeline 6

I have 2 matches set up to start in May. The other 4 I hope to happen during June. 2 of these friendships are Older Friends who have come back after a 6 month break having completed friendships of 5 and 6 years.

Joan Bolton longest ever volunteer

A really big thank you to our oldest (87) and longest standing volunteer of 27 years, Joan Bolton! She has had 4 friendships over the years and left quite an impression. I entered Joan into the WCAVA awards this year and she was presented with the Highly Commended for the Lifetime Achievement Award. Congratulations Joan!

Events attended

- Team Away day
- Cava volunteer fair
- Christmas Party
- Zoom get togethers
- Face to face get togethers
- Presentation to Sing it Loud Choir – charity of the year
- Attended Midlands Excellence Awards
- Better Together workshop
- Radio interview for Capital FM
- FP Christmas tree – won friendliest tree award!
- Charity of the year for Thomas Favell Solicitors

Finally

I have 2 new Group Supporters, Arianna Piani and Amanda Truner now in my team of 6. I would like to thank them all for the great work they do supporting their Older Friends.

It has been a pleasure to help train and start working with Harriet. We are establishing a good team in the South. I am looking forward to working more with our 2 new Area Coordinators Kate for The North, and Sam for Rugby. The social media work from Taggie and now Amez is really positive and I hope by working with Amez we can build our profile and recruit more OFs in Warwickshire. The whole Ops team is great to work with and Karen is a super star administrator!

Case Study

The Story of Our Longest Serving Older Friend: Joan Bolton

Our longest serving Older Friend is Joan Bolton who has had 27 of volunteering for the Friendship Project. It's hard to believe it but Joan is 88 years young!

She recently received a Highly Commended Award at the WCAVA Warwick District awards.

We'd like to pay tribute to the fantastic contribution she's made to The Friendship Project and to the lives of her Younger Friends by telling you a little more about her.

Born and bred in Warwick, Joan attended Coten End Primary School followed by Shottery Girls School. She then went on to successfully complete 2 years of teacher training at Westwood College. During her career, she taught at Shrubland Street Primary School, Clinton Primary School and then for 18 years at Bishops Tachbrook School.

When Joan retired, back in 1997, her neighbour encouraged her to join the Friendship Project, and she has been with us ever since!

Her first YF was an 8 year old boy called *Jake, who she supported until he was 15 years old. Along with many activities such as exploring the local countryside and canals, fossil hunting and cycling, Joan introduced him to bowling down at the bowling green in Leamington. He was a very talented bowler, Jake played regularly with the Royal Leamington Spa Men in matches, and was selected to play for the county junior bowling team. Joan remembers being extremely proud of Jake's achievement when he was presented with a trophy for winning the junior club competition.

Next, was *Clare whom she befriended from the age of 6 to 16 years old. Clare had some real anger issues and at times was excluded from school, but when she was out with Joan they got on very well

and she behaved well too! Clare's father wrote, "Joan is a lovely lady, Clare has benefited a great deal, she is a very demanding kid, not easy to live with at times. But Joan lifts her up, brings her out of herself, my Clare loves Joan and always looks forward to seeing her. She has helped in so many ways, has Joan." Clare as a young girl wrote, "I love going out with Joan, I look forward to seeing her. I have lots of fun with her. Thank you Joan."

In 2012 Joan became an Older Friend to *Esme, who was then 6. She also became an Older Friend to Esme's younger sister *Sarah and took the two girls out together. The children were cared for by their grandparents, who were extremely happy with Joan taking the girls out. They trusted her totally and considered her one of the family. It gave them a well needed break. So instead of slowing down, Joan took on more by supporting 2 young girls. She had a lovely time with them, visiting local farms and parks, cycling down the greenway and doing crafts and baking.

Joan says the best part of being an Older Friend is the enjoyment she gets from "taking the kids out and going to do things I wouldn't normally do without them". Joan had the support of her late husband Keith who joined in with some of the outings, as well as her little dog Charlie, whom the children love.

In addition to being an Older Friend, Joan has worked for the Volunteer Bureau in Leamington Spa and also was a respite carer for children in Coventry, providing emergency respite care for children in need.

Joan is a very modest lady who has given a huge amount of time to supporting children in the local community. We are very privileged to have her as an Older Friend. Thank you, Joan!

**names of children have been changed.*



AGM Report 2023/24

Harriet Crawford – Area Coordinator for Stratford,
Alcester and Shipston

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Older Friends: 19

Younger Friends: 20

Pipeline: 1

In General

It has been a good year for new friendships and established ones. It has also been really great to get to know some of my Older Friends better and I really enjoy catching up with them bi-monthly to listen to the experiences and opportunities they are giving their Younger Friends every week.

I have been working closely with Fiona Roche to support friendships over the south and we have been catching up to chat about any issues or support needed from each other.

Events attended

- Safeguarding training (May and Oct)
- Bi- monthly ops Meeting
- Pensioners lunch meeting in North end
- Linked in at The Coventry Theatre Delivered by The M Guru (Gus Bhandal)
- Together for Better – Charity Networking event at Chesford Grange hotel.
- WI meeting in Temple Grafton
- Team Away Day (Myers Briggs and Equality and Diversity training)
- Christmas Party
- Face to Face get togethers
- BNI meeting for the South Warwickshire group
- Friendship Project events

Friendships

It has been really great to get a few more volunteers in the Stratford town Area and also to be able to work with the a few more local primary schools. All friendships are going really well and communication between Older Friends and parent/guardians are working well.

Sadly we have lost a few friendships.

1 Friendship ended due breakdown in communication between parent and volunteer.

1 Friendship ended due to the Older Friend relocating to Durham for her husband's new job.

1 Friendship ended due financial difficulty and was unable to have the time to support Younger Friend.

1 Friendship has ended due the Older Friend sadly not communicating with me at all so we had to end it for that reason.

2 Safeguarding concerns which have been dealt with by myself with support from Ruth Blunt and Esther Jones.

Marketing

Walton and Wellesbourne magazine did an interview with myself to try and help us recruit more volunteers in south Warwickshire area. It was published in the March issue.

Myself and Fiona went to a charity networking event run by Warwick Events to support local charities with recruitment, social media and charity management. It was a really great day and it gave us the opportunity to meet other charities in the area and see how we can support each other for a common goal.

Summary

Overall a really great year. I have really enjoyed working with the team.

Over the next 12 months it would be good to get more volunteers in the Stratford town area as we are getting quite a few referrals from local schools in that area. And to continue supporting the existing friendships.

Case study 1

I am a father of two children, both now in or around their 30's. I myself had a challenging upbringing and as a result I am only too aware of the positive influence those in your wider circle, not necessarily family, have on your life and your approach to it. It was with this background I volunteered to help the Friendship Project, specifically, in response to a Social Media post asking for males to be matched with boys. I met my Younger Friend when he was 10. He is 12 now. He had been identified for the project by the school. A was quiet and reserved at first. He lacked confidence and was very reluctant to try anything new. I was told he had coordination issues and therefore didn't 'do much'. I am fortunate enough to own a smallholding, complete with goats, horses, donkeys and many, many birds of all types. He has built a particular bond with the massive male goat we own! Now this goat scares most adults. I taught A how to scratch him between the horns and they became the greatest of friends!

A likes to design things. He has an incredible capability for detail! He said he wanted to make a den and had designed it accordingly in his head! We constructed a lovely little den in the woods by the stream on the site picked (very carefully) by him. We then set about camouflaging it with military style netting! When we built it, it was the first time he had used a screwdriver or indeed screws. He also learned to use a hammer and watched me saw various bits of wood. He helped level the ground with a shovel. When we had finished the den, I suggested we could take a little gas stove over and cook ourselves some sausages.

I have a small buggy on the farm. It's essentially a quad with a cab. An agricultural vehicle for use in the fields. A loves riding in it and we use it a lot. I asked him if he would like to learn to drive it. Of course he would. He loved it and what a great thing to tell the other boys on a Monday morning. I videoed him so he could settle any doubter's minds!

Bikes. A couldn't ride a bike when he came to me. Eventually, his parents asked me if I might be able to teach him. He didn't have a bike so we bought a second hand one. By this time A and I had built up a lot of trust, so when I told him there was nothing I could do other than hold him to start he listened! It honestly took about 5 minutes of false starts and minor falls before he had mastered it. We had a lot of laughs learning. He gave up making a fuss when he fell over a long time ago so was happy to laugh with me when he was in a heap on the floor.

Cars. I own a couple of classic cars. A was interested from the outset. Early on I took him to a classic car meet. I have very rare cars. He was so proud to be sat in the cars. He kept asking me to divert in the hope one of his mates would see him! Anyway, he took lots of pictures to show them and thrived on the attention the other classic car owners gave him at the meet.

In the workshop we have made a light sabre, a box, wool holder (a birthday present for his mum). All designed in detail by A. He was so proud of it. I have also taught him to use other tools in the workshop. He loves using a hammer on the anvil and was amazed to discover if you hit a piece of metal enough it gets hot!

We enjoy so much together. In between all the exciting things described above, I often find us just sitting and talking. Initially I was worried I wasn't doing enough with him but actually now realise these 'quiet, reflective' sessions are probably more important than anything. Sometimes we sit on

top of the hill and just chat while admiring the view and the nature around us. We have built a real bond. I confess, I have probably got as much out of it as he has. I love sharing my life with him and he laps it up.

A has blossomed over the past two years. Some of this is just growing up but of course I like to think some is because of his time with me. He is much more confident, much more willing to try new things and much more resilient. He also believes in himself more. I hope I have shown him what is possible in life. He now has a lot to tell those other boys on a Monday morning. Long may it continue.

Case Study 2

I started writing to C during lockdown and we used WhatsApp until July 2021 to keep in touch. I took him den building and started a three year friendship seeing each other most Saturdays. We involved ourselves that year in activities such as disc golf, visiting the 'Farm' near Snitterfield and going to see the Christmas lights near Coventry.

In 2022 outings included visiting the butterfly centre and going to Charlecote Park, where I have volunteered for over 10 years. We were shown round the Vulcan bomber at Wellesbourne.

Other activities have been going on the big wheel and seeing the classic cars in Stratford. The motor museum was amazing and we joined the Friendship Project at the veterinary nurses training centre at Moreton Morrell.

Watching the boat race in Stratford and visiting Redwings Equine Sanctuary where I used to work were excellent as was the Riding for the disabled association visit in Rowington.

This year in March we watched the gymnastics display in Leamington Spa and involved ourselves in some activities the following week.

Christmas parties and burger bars even Warwick University and bowling. Our friendship has gone from strength to strength and I really feel that C's confidence has grown a lot over the past 12 months. We really enjoy our time together.

AGM Report 2023/24

Kate Meek – Area Coordinator for The North,
Nuneaton and Bedworth

Kate.meek@friendshipproject.co.uk



Older Friends: 12

Younger Friends: 13

Pipeline: 1

In General

I joined the Friendship Project in September 2023; I have loved every minute so far. The people on the team are very friendly and I know they are only a phone call away if I need any advice about anything. I have matched one friendship from start to finish which felt wonderful and the friendship is going very well. I am getting to know the existing friendships I have in my area too.

Group Supporters

I have two group supporters Judy and Elizabeth (Kay) who help me to look after our Older Friends, checking in with them every few months to make sure all is ok. Judy also does the DBS applications for the North. Judy has been a tower of strength to me as she has been with the project for many years, she has been very helpful, especially when recently I had to have time off due to an unexpected operation.

Events attended

1. Safeguarding training
2. Meetings with other AC's
3. Bi-monthly Ops meetings
4. Funding Fair in Nuneaton
5. Presentation to Mothers Union
6. OF's social get together for my area

Marketing

Due to the high levels of referring we have in North Warwickshire; it remains one of my main priorities to recruit more volunteers. I regularly reach out on social media, covering Facebook and all the local communities on social media. I have been out and about putting posters up and recently spent the day with Judy reaching out to villages and their surrounding communities. We will be doing more of this in the coming months to get our name known to the general public and future volunteers. I have, and will be, asking schools if they can add our poster into their weekly/monthly newsletters too. I am in the middle of talking to our local rotary club to see if they can help in any way. They might have us to do a presentation for them. This will be ongoing for the following year, to get our name out there a bit more in the hopes of recruiting more volunteers and possible funding too. Last week, I did my first presentation at a Mothers Union meeting. This went very well and to my surprise, raised over £80 on the night too. I am hoping to do a few more presentations over the coming year to raise awareness to our project.

Fundraising

In addition to my employment with the Friendship Project I also work part time at Welcome Break. I put a bid in and managed to secure a grant of £600 for our charity. This was a lengthy process, but I was very proud of the outcome for The Friendship Project.

Friendships

Most of the friendships have remained since I joined and all are very happy with their friendships, both the Older Friend, Younger Friend, and Carer. I have lost two friendships since I joined, both were having difficulties when I took over my role. One friendship the OF was getting far too involved with the family dynamics and the other was an elderly lady that had been matched with a child that proved to be too much for her. Otherwise, all is going well.

Case Study 1

MK is a lovely, retired lady who used to be a teaching assistant. She gets on well with children and likes to be active and be out and about. MK's children had both grown up and left home but MK knew she had more love/caring left in her. MK saw our advert on Facebook and decided to apply. MK was matched with her YF in June 2022.

MK said, "I was surprised that we share the same birth date, only some years apart! I've worked with children from babies to 16-year-olds. We have had many adventures from baking a cake for her Mums birthday to trampolines! My Younger friend had grown in confidence and looks forward to our time together."

The Younger Friends Mum tells us that the teacher at her school has observed that since the friendship started AM is more confident and is taking part in more school activities. Mum also said, "We could not have wished for a better friendship for our daughter, the impact has been massive. AM always used to spend all her time in her room, but now she comes downstairs and talks to me, the outings have given us a conversation point."

We asked AM how she felt about MK, she told us that she always looked forward to going out with MK and loves to do crafts, baking, playing in the park and going to Ash End Farm. AM said MK feels like her grandmother and always listens to her and helps her to concentrate. AM told us it's always good to have peace away from the house and her two brothers.

This friendship is going from strength to strength with both OF and YF enjoying each other's company almost every week.

Case Study 2

This is a lovely friendship that is working out very well for 9-year-old twins, that were both referred to us at the same time. They are a boy and a girl. Initially the male twin was matched. Then after a few months the partner decided she would also like to be an OF, so she was matched with the other twin.

Since the twins have been a YF to their OF's they have lots of fun times either going out together or separately, usually every Thursday. Some of the outings they love to do together are going to the Red Kangaroo Park and the Wave in Coventry. In the winter months, they have visited the OF's house sometimes to cook, pizza and a board game is something they all have fun doing together. TM likes to go to the Climbing wall activity with her OF, whereas K enjoys going to the Soft Play at Bermuda with his OF. It is great that they have the best of both worlds and can go out together or separately, depending on what they have planned.

When we speak to the OF's they both really enjoy this aspect of their lives. They are both professional people with responsible jobs but can have fun on a weekly basis with their YF's.

When we have spoken to Mum, she tells us that she gets on well with the OF's and knows that if the twins have a worry they will confide in their OF. K has Autism and Mum said he sometimes "kicks off", But his OF knows how to calm him down if this happens on their outings. Mum said that the friendship had made a huge difference to the family. It gives her some time to herself and both children come home happy and with a better attitude.

We also spoke to the YF's, they told us that K loves to play football with his OF and both love going to the Wave and Red Kangaroo. K told us his OF "listens and understands me, he helps me to calm down." TM said they were respectful, and both had a lot of patience with them. Both the YF's said that they were very kind and the keep them safe.

This friendship is going very well and both Mum and the OF's know that if there was ever a problem, I am only a call away.

AGM Report 2023/24

Sam Spencer - Area Coordinator for
Rugby & District

sam.spencer@friendshipproject.co.uk



Older Friends: 13
Younger Friends: 13
Pipeline: 3

In General

As I am new to the Friendship Project team, I have been gathering knowledge and gaining experience. Previously, sixteen years ago I was an older friend for the Rugby area, so I thought sharing this experience would be relevant.

After my family dynamics changed and we adapted to a new family routine, I wanted to give back and fill my spare time at the weekends. Luckily, I discovered the Friendship Project and became an Older Friend to a young boy. At home there were other siblings and he lacked attention, which he only received by his bad behaviour or refusal to go to school. At first, we took baby steps getting to know each other properly. We both enjoyed our first outing to visit a local park where he and I played on every piece of equipment, during which he had a huge smile on his face. Unbeknown to me, he had never enjoyed this experience before. We ended the park visit with ice-cream and planned our next few outings on the drive home. Over the coming months our friendship grew as he began to trust me. Time spent together was fun for us both and we became an effective team especially at sport or laser quest. His behaviour improved as his confidence and self-esteem grew. His school attendance and learning improved and he was making new friends. This experience changed his outlook on life, as it did mine and I remember our time together fondly.

When the opportunity arose to work for the project, I was thrilled to become the Area Coordinator for Rugby. I have spent time, learning how the procedures and project work through Ruth, Karen and the AC team. Everyone has been welcoming and happy to share their experiences and knowledge. This week I am taking part in a second interview with Harriet. The OF is from Rugby, my area, so it is great to be involved at this stage. This was a true learning experience, making me confident for the future Rugby matches.

Recently I had the opportunity to attend a local BNI meeting in Rugby, which was a valuable experience. The other attendees were a variety of local business owners, who were looking for a new nominated charity to support. I enjoyed conversations speaking about our charity to people and collecting useful contacts. Writing and timing a speech, about all the amazing parts of our FP Project, in sixty seconds was a fun task to complete.

I have been prepping my future work plan to complete, once my knowledge and training is in place. This will be to gather community links through local schools, businesses and promoting our Social Media page, through my own.

I am looking forward to experiencing our events coming up and learning from them.

Case study 1

I have been an Older Friend for the Friendship Project for almost 2 years. I have been matched with an 11 year old boy called R during that time. Before becoming an Older Friend I was the Area Coordinator for Rugby, and then a Group Supporter and so have been involved with the project for 5 years. I was also an Older Friend over 25 years ago when I was 19 to help me get experience to go to University to study to become a Social Worker.

When R and I met at the matching meeting he was very chatty which his Mum thought was a good sign he liked me. We made plans of things he had wanted to do but hadn't had an opportunity to so we started with a trip to Kaspas and then a trip to Jump In the session after. We then built up a list of things he wanted to try and foods he wanted to try. R loves food, especially chicken, and likes spicy food, so food usually is part of each session. We have done some activities as one offs or seasonal activities like visiting Warwick Castle for Halloween, Warwick Castle Christmas Light Trail, Walking with Alpacas, and Tropical Birdland. Other activities are regulars like our monthly swimming sessions, trips to Pepes and other restaurants, trips to the Cinema and Trips to the quiet sessions at The Wave. We have also teamed up with another friendship to do fun activities like bowling and the Escape Rooms at Houdinis in Coventry. We had fun in the Escape Rooms but got locked in both times and there has been talk about going back to do them again now we know how some parts work. Teaming up with another friendship has add an extra dimension to our friendship and means we can take the other young person out when their Older Friend went on an extended holiday. This helps the boys build another friendship and get to know another adult and have a friend in another school.

R likes to do fun activities with me and whilst he is interested in some places like Museums and the National Space Centre when I mention then he says he doesn't want to go and so I have realised they might be a bit like school but we will wait and see. The Dungeons at Warwick castle were a definite hit and I would recommend walking Alpacas with the Alpaca Pals as long as you don't mind getting a bit muddy.

We have also done cooking and baking activities at my house and are looking forward to the Summer so we can go Strawberry and Raspberry picking again and baking with yummy fresh berries.

R has grown in confidence since we have started being friends and he is happy to tell me activities he doesn't want to do and I like it when he comes up with suggestions of things he wants to do or films he wants to watch. R now has some new friends who live nearby so he can go to the park and go to their houses and it's nice to see him getting out there with his friends and having fun. R is from a family with 4 other siblings who all have health issues and/or additional needs, so the family is very busy and activities and meals out for a family of 7 can be very costly. R is well supported emotionally by his parents and he loves his family very much, especially his younger siblings. My friendship with R enables him to get out in the community more, try new opportunities and experiences and have fun. He enjoys it and so do I.

I get a lot out of seeing R happy, laughing, trying new things and when he achieves something new.

When we went walking with Alpacas he was so proud that the Alpaca called Orlando liked him and walked well for him. You could see him in the photos that his head was always next to R and far away from me. All through the walk he kept talking with him and saying "alright mate."

Last year we did a short walk at Draycote Water after school and R would like to be able to build up to walking all the way around it so in the Spring we will start doing some shorter canal walks to build up to the 5 miles to walk around Draycote.



Case Study 2

L & I love spending our time together. We chat about school, his drama school & auditions for the shows they do. We chat about family & the various activities both of us do. L is very clever & knowledgeable; he tests me about how tall certain structures are or how much things weigh! We both loved Rugby Museum when they were showing people's lives & how they lived in the Victorian era. L was amazed & appalled how poor people lived. I feel as if am giving something back into society by being involved in the Friendship Project. L certainly brightens my day when I meet him & gives me another purpose in life.

The Friendship Project for Children

REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER: 517684

Financial Statements

For the year ended 31 December 2023

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6	Statement of financial activities
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The Friendship Project for Children Trustees' Annual Report for the year ended 31 December 2023

Full Name:	The Friendship Project
Other names:	The Friendship Project for Children
Registered charity number:	517684
Principal address:	Myton Park, Myton Lane, Warwick, CV34 6PX
Trustees:	Cheryll Rawbone, Chairperson Ken Smith, Honorary Treasurer Jon Gibbons, Honorary Secretary Chris Buck Richard Barrett Esther Jones Patricia Miller, Ashima Rani Chander Nishi Mehta, appointed 23.11.2023 Angela Dawn Truman, resigned 7 th June 2023
Honorary Treasurer:	Ken Smith
Honorary Secretary:	Jon Gibbons
Bankers:	Lloyds TSB, Stratford upon Avon

Independent examiner: 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 for Children Trustees' annual report (continued)

for the year ended 31 December 2023

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 befriending to children in need, to help them improve their confidence, self-esteem, and to allow them to have some fun, sadly lacking in many of their lives.
- ✓ We have helped 98 children directly during 2023, and many more in the wider family, school and community environment.
- ✓ Our Newsletter published in May 2024 for the previous year work gives some fantastic stories of success, and the benefits of our service, to both volunteers and the children we help.
- ✓ We held several successful outside events including craft event, and a Christmas party again at OLRFC with over 100 attending the latter event. There are pictures in our newsletter.
- ✓ Safeguarding training has been undertaken online, including refresher training. Our policies and procedures have been reviewed and updated too.
- ✓ New team members have been successfully recruited to replace colleagues who have left the charity.
- ✓ Our income achieved was £78,054, lower as some grants delayed, against previous year of £67,629, though with expenditure higher at £92,762, with salaries being the greatest difference £51,679 from £42,962 with extra employee, plus wage increases. Older Friends' expenses up to £26,967 from £22,751, with more volunteers claiming expenses, and increased costs of going out for food, trips etc. The carry forward to 2024 reserves of £30,890, was slightly lower than 2022, was, though still leaving us with the ability to continue, with some established funding in our pipeline, albeit with much lower reserves. This includes restricted funds.
- ✓ We have adjusted our reserves policy as we go into 2024 to 3/6 months expenditure to more reflect the reality of our position, and lead time for grants. We meet regularly to consider whether we have sufficient funds for continued operation.
- ✓ Our work force has been expanded to include a part time person to improve social media presence so as to aid both recruitment and fund raising.
- ✓ We have expanded our fund raising resources to include a professional fund raiser, as there are increasing demands on the grant funding bodies, reducing our success rate, and to support the need to widen our fund raising net.
- ✓ SSD in Stratford have kindly continued with free basic archive storage.
- ✓ We have postponed adoption of CIO status, as previously agreed, owing to lack of funds, and want to focus on our core delivery.

The Friendship Project for Children Trustees' annual report (continued)

for the year ended 31 December 2023

Financial Review

The charity made an overall deficit of £14,708 in the year, ending the year with total reserves of £30,890. The deficit was largely due to the timing of grant income as The Project received £18,000 of grants in January 2024, most of which had been expected to be received in December 2023. Had these been received in December rather than January, The Project would have reported a small surplus for 2023.

Recognising, the increasing challenges of raising funds from grant providers and the need to provide greater resilience to the charity, in late 2023, The Project commenced working with a professional fundraising consultant to assist with our grant applications. We are pleased to report that this is increasing our income in 2024.

The Trustees have reviewed the financial position of the charity in light of the current economic environment and the forecast costs of its operations and fund raising. They believe that with the funding commitments made and plans for 2024, the charity has the necessary funding to continue providing its services for at least the next 12 months. The trustees review this at each of their quarterly meetings.

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, including restricted funds, of a minimum of three to six months forecast expenditure. A proportion of these funds are held in an interest earning deposit account.

This policy will be monitored and reviewed annually.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees:



Signed

Date 3rd June 2024

Cheryl Rawbone, Chairman

Independent Examiners Report to the Trustees of The Friendship Project for Children

Year Ended 31 December 2023

I report on the accounts of the charity for the year ended 31 December 2023, 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: 3rd June 2024

The Friendship Project for Children

Statement of Financial Activities

For the year ended 31 December 2023

		Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	2023 Total Funds	2022
	Note	£	£	£	£
Incoming resources					
Grants	2	20,191	43,428	63,619	49,475
Donations	3	12,091	-	12,091	12,707
Fundraising events	4	2,164	-	2,164	4,759
Investment income	6	180	-	180	688
Total incoming resources		34,626	43,428	78,054	67,629
Resources expended					
Salaries, NI	10	33,210	18,469	51,679	42,962
Staff expenses		3,674	1,325	4,999	3,944
Volunteer expenses		6,333	20,634	26,967	22,751
Insurance		3,675	-	3,675	3,616
Events/Christmas parties		791	-	791	1,137
Other expenditure	11	4,301	-	4,301	3,589
Independent examination fee	13	350	-	350	350
Total resources expended		52,334	40,428	92,762	78,349
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources		(17,708)	3,000	(14,708)	(10,720)
Gains & (losses) on investments	6	0	-	0	(3,977)
Total funds brought forward		31,048	14,550	45,598	60,295
Total funds carried forward	9	13,340	17,550	30,890	45,598

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 for Children

Balance Sheet

For the year ended 31 December 2023

	Note	£	2023 £	£	2022 £
Current assets					
Cash at bank and in hand		33,112		47,692	
Debtors	7	607		304	
		<u>33,719</u>		<u>47,996</u>	
Current liabilities					
Creditors	8	(2,829)		(2,399)	
		<u></u>		<u></u>	
Net current assets			30,890		45,598
Net assets			<u>30,890</u>		<u>45,598</u>
The funds of the charity					
General Funds			13,340		31,048
Restricted Funds			17,550		14,550
Total Funds	9		<u>30,890</u>		<u>45,598</u>

The trustees declare that they have approved the accounts above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees:



Signed:

Date: 3rd June 2024

Cheryl Rawbone, Chairperson

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 – i.e. 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 2023	Total Funds 2022
	£	£	£	£
Warwickshire Police & Crime Commissioner	-	10,200	10,200	8,000
King Henry VIII Endowed Trust	-	4,250	4,250	3,900
29th May 1961 Charitable Trust	6,000	-	6,000	-
Heart of England 29th May 1961 Charitable Trust	1,000	-	1,000	-
Heart of England - High Sheriff of Warwickshire	500	-	500	-
Maud Elkington Trust	2,000	-	2,000	-
L&Q Foundation	-	6,957	6,957	-
Heart of England Dulverton Trust	-	5,000	5,000	-
The Higgs Charity	-	12,000	12,000	-
Masonic Charitable Foundation	4,366	-	4,366	-
Four Acre Trust	4,325	2,021	6,346	-
IFT O'Brien Trust	2,000	-	2,000	2,500
Warwickshire Crimebeat	-	3,000	3,000	-
National Lottery Community Fund	-	-	-	9,650
AVIVA Community Fund	-	-	-	5,000
Stratford Town Trust	-	-	-	6,000
Warwick & District Council	-	-	-	12,500
Warwickshire Police Charitable Trust	-	-	-	1,925
	<u>20,191</u>	<u>43,428</u>	<u>63,619</u>	<u>49,475</u>

3. Donations

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds 2023	Total Funds 2022
	£	£	£	£
Anonymous Donors	1,000	-	1,000	2,000
Aubrey Allen	2,500	-	2,500	-
Bates Trust Claverdon	1,500	-	1,500	1,000
FC Stokes Trust	1,500	-	1,500	1,000
Charities Trust	1,540	-	1,540	2,400
Mike & Stella Parton	1,000	-	1,000	-
Stour Valley Lions	500	-	500	-
Memory of Toby Barwell	607	-	607	-
George Pragnell	500	-	500	-
Donations under £500	1,444	-	1,444	6,307
	<u>12,091</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>12,091</u>	<u>12,707</u>

4. Fundraising Events

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds 2023	Total Funds 2022
	£	£	£	£
C Rawbone Rugby Shirt	500	-	500	-
Just Giving	1,274	-	1,274	-
Leamington & District Christmas Sleigh	339	-	339	-
Amazon Smile	52	-	52	-
Warwickshire Police Cadets	-	-	-	2,696
Anonymous	-	-	-	1,000
Fundraising Events under £1,000	-	-	-	1,063
	<u>2,164</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2,164</u>	<u>4,759</u>

5. Investments

Our Investment Account with M&G Charibond was closed in 2022, due to increased investment risk in the current economic climate. Monies were moved to a lower risk deposit account with Lloyds Bank.

6. Debtors

	2023 £	2022 £
Insurance Prepayment	607	304
	<u>607</u>	<u>304</u>

7. Creditors

	2023 £	2022 £
Volunteer Expenses	2,137	1,836
Staff Expenses	251	213
Independent Examination Fee	350	350
Events Christmas Party	90	-
	<u>2,829</u>	<u>2,399</u>

8. Movements in Funds

	Opening Balance £	Incoming Resources £	(Resources expended) £	Transfers £	Closing Balance £
General funds	31,048	34,626	(52,334)	-	13,340
Total General Funds	<u>31,048</u>	<u>34,626</u>	<u>(52,334)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>13,340</u>
Restricted Funds					
Warwickshire P&CC	2,000	10,200	(9,650)	-	2,550
National Lottery	9,650	-	(9,650)	-	-
King Henry VIII Endowed Trust	975	4,250	(4,163)	-	1,062
Warwickshire Police Charitable Trust	1,925	-	(1,925)	-	-
L&Q Foundation	-	6,957	(6,957)	-	-
The Higgs Charity	-	12,000	(3,000)	-	9,000
Four Acre Trust	-	2,021	-	-	2,021
Dulverton Trust	-	5,000	(2,083)	-	2,917
Warwickshire Crimebeat	-	3,000	(3,000)	-	-
Total Restricted Funds	<u>14,550</u>	<u>43,428</u>	<u>(40,428)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>17,550</u>
Total Funds	<u>45,598</u>	<u>78,054</u>	<u>(92,762)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>30,890</u>

9. Staff costs and numbers

	2023 £	2022 £
Wages, NI & Pension	51,679	42,962
	<u>51,679</u>	<u>42,962</u>

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

The average weekly number of part time employees during the year was 6 (2022: 5)

10. Other expenditure

	2023 £	2022 £
Telephones	521	469
Printing, stationery & advertising	377	388
Database / IT	461	273
Payroll	763	1307
Fundraising	1500	-
Storage of documents	-	483
CIO Accreditation	-	212
Sundries	677	458
	<u>4,301</u>	<u>3,589</u>

11. 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 £3,678.

The management committee and other trustees did not receive any remuneration during the year (2022: nil).

12. Independent examination and accountancy services

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

13. Controlling parties

The charity is under the control of the management committee.

14. 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.