



# Annual Overview 2017/18

Charity No 326021 | Company Registration 1596400

We are delighted to present our Annual Overview 2017/18, in which we share with you some of the inspiring stories, positive impacts and key achievements from our work. This is a year in which we had much to celebrate.



Amanda Forshaw - Chief Executive  
Paul Desborough - Chair Of Trustees

Our Adoption service was inspected by Ofsted and judged to be Outstanding in all areas. Our Concurrent Planning service was awarded a contract to work with 4 North West Regional Adoption Agencies. Our ACE project helping ex-offenders to rebuild their lives was awarded 3 more years of funding by the Big Lottery. Our Learning Disability services supported more people than ever before in their own homes and in our day projects. Our Community Centre hosted a growing number of diverse events and activities. These are just a few highlights, with many more showcased in this report. None of this would have been possible without the hard work of our fantastic staff and volunteers, and contributions from our funders and supporters. Thank you to everyone who has helped us to reach out to so many people.

## Adoption

Outstanding...Outstanding...Outstanding!!!  
You can't get much better than that!



In December 2017, we received the report of the Ofsted inspection that took place in November; we are extremely proud to say we were judged Outstanding both overall, and in EVERY category. This is an exceptional result, reflecting the wonderful work undertaken by our committed and dedicated staff team.

"Everyone is very friendly and welcoming."

"They got back to us really promptly; they were friendly and explained the process really clearly at each stage."

"We have found our adoption journey with Caritas Care to be wonderful. It was thorough, and we were supported, encouraged and prepared to be adoptive parents. They are a fantastic agency to deal with; I cannot recommend them highly enough."

"You made the process seem so enjoyable and easy. Thank you for making our family complete."

"The support that we have received is truly outstanding"

Read our full report here:  
<http://caritascare-iadopt.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Caritas-VAA-report-10029230-Final.pdf>

46 children placed with Adopters

47 Adoption orders granted

24 Support groups

15 Training Events

32 Adopters approved

6 miles travelled

55 Visited Locations with 300+ people engaging

155 Information Events

102 Hub

31 Meet the Adopter

## Dear Adopter Campaign scores a hat-trick

We were delighted to take home 2 PR industry awards with our PR partners Viva PR for our Dear Adopter campaign. Not only were we thrilled to be presented with the Charity/Not for Profit Award at the PRCA Dare Awards (North) in May, but then go on to win a silver in the 'Not for Profit Campaign of the Year' category at the CIIPR Pride Awards in November 2017 was amazing. The judges, a panel of senior industry experts, said: "Dear Adopter is a truly unique campaign that the judges applauded for its thoughtful approach and overwhelmingly positive feedback from all aspects. Well done Viva & Caritas Care for a great campaign!"



To add to our growing list of successes, Adopter Fiona, was crowned Adoption Champion of the Year at the 2017 National Adoption Week awards. Fiona Dunn was speechless when she was announced as the winner for her work with our Dear Adopter campaign. Fiona, who was up against three other finalists, has been one of the key figures in Caritas Care's Dear Adopter campaign. Her campaigning has led her to appear on local television and on BBC Radio 2's Jeremy Vine show.



## Concurrent Planning



New tender makes our Concurrent Planning Service the largest of its kind in the country! The Concurrent Planning Service concluded a successful two year contract, during which they placed over 60 babies and young children. In October 2017, following a re tendering process, the service was contracted by four North West Regional Adoption Agencies: Adoption Counts, Adoption Now, Together for Adoption and Adoption Merseyside (comprising 20 Local Authorities) and Blackpool Council, the first joint regional commission of its kind.

"We are really pleased that Caritas Care and Adoption Matters have been recommissioned to provide concurrent adoption placements across the region. The new service will work with the four new Regional Adoption Agencies in the North West and Blackpool Council. The contract is for 86 placements to be provided over the next two years which is a significant increase on the previous commission. This is credit to the success of the programme in enabling many children to be placed with their adoptive families as early as possible over the last three years. We look forward to working closely with the concurrency team in achieving this new goal."

**Tracey Coffey, Chair of the North West Adoption Leadership Board**

Department for Education funding  
In October 2017, we were awarded funding to develop our Concurrent Planning Service in two new regions: Yorkshire and Humber and Staffordshire and Stoke. This is an exciting opportunity for this successful service.

## Centre for Adoption Support

Children's choir goes from strength to strength!  
The Centre for Adoption Support choir master, Rosie Shields won a coveted NODA (National Operatic and Dramatic Association) award for her recent performance as the Witch in 'Into the Woods' performed at The Brindley Theatre, Runcorn in 2017. Rosie leads the Centre's choir sharing her vocal training and talents with choir members. The choir was established in 2016 and grew from 9 to its current 33 members, all of whom are either adopted, have adopted siblings or have parents in the profession.

"We are so delighted for Rosie in receiving this prestigious award. It is very much deserved and we are so lucky to have her as part of our choir."

**Anne Fleming, CfAS Service Manager**

After some friendly introductions and some vocal warm ups led by the fabulous Rosie, we are transformed into popstars within the hour. You can physically see kids grow in confidence and self-esteem and parents let go and throw themselves into it. **Adopter**

30 children placed with Concurrent Carers

28 Concurrent Carers approved

14 Adoption orders granted

21 local authorities worked with

## Bespoke Family Finding Service

Over 90% of the children referred successfully places

The Bespoke Family Finding Service continued to grow and provide successful placements for children across the country. The service is for children whom local authorities may find harder to place for a variety of reasons. It offers extensive experience of child specific recruitment offering a bespoke marketing and recruitment plan for children referred.

138 Consultations

502 Attendees Workshops

153 referrals from local authorities

## Fostering

Children's Council  
We are extremely proud of our newly formed Children's Council and of our children who attend and make invaluable contributions. The purpose of the group is to give our young people a voice around the charity's (and national) policies and procedures and to help shape the fostering service that we deliver. The children and young people are given an opportunity to plan and choose events and activities. Their current project is to undertake a cycle event around the guild wheel to raise funds for the charity; this event is due to take place in June 2018.

29 young people in placement

4 new placements

5 Recruitment Information Events

119 hours of therapeutic support sessions

52.5 hours of training delivered



Future Families for Children awarded DfE Funding  
In October 2017 we were successfully awarded funding to launch and develop our new and innovative service Future Families for Children. The Future Families for Children service brings together both fostering and adoption to meet the needs of a particular group of children, aged 4-10. This new initiative provides a route to finding permanent families for those children who are often deemed "too old" to be adopted.

# Learning Disabilities

## Loss and Bereavement Conference

Our Loss and Bereavement Conference took place at Plungington Community Centre on 26 October 2017. The service recognised that many people with Learning Disabilities are shielded from the realities of death to protect them from grieving. Although this is done with the best of intentions, we believe that everyone has the right to hurt; feel; grieve; recover and remember. A lack of information and support for people who have learning disabilities in relation to this subject resulted in our successful awareness raising conference. Receiving 63 participants the event was well attended and fully engaged in 3 workshops during the day including Bereavement Circles, Dealing with loss and talking about it and Planning for your funeral.



“ ‘shows that people have the right to be informed and make their own choices’  
 ‘thank you, we enjoyed it very much...we are at the beginning of an ‘End of Life’ project’  
 ‘everyone can have an ‘end of life’ plan’  
 ‘someone explaining the grieving process’  
 ‘being able to think about people who have died by using the memory board’  
 ‘honesty about death - don’t hide information from us’ ”

## The FX Project

Supported people 33  
 45,250 hours of staffing support annually  
 45,750 hours of support delivered

This year we have been finding creative and exciting activities in the local community to give our young people new things to experience and learn about. Yoga and Sensory dance through drama are two of the new activities we have been engaging in this year.

Getting out in the community is really beneficial to young people at FX and Penny Farm has proved to be a great place for them to visit. We aim to make the session as sensory as possible. Most of the ponies and horses can be stroked and are at an ideal height for wheelchair users. We were lucky to be gifted an ‘adopt a pony’ (called Magpie) and arranged sessions for our young people to help with his grooming and feeding. Some of the young people we support are visually impaired, so benefit hugely from being able to touch Magpie and listen to the sounds and smells of the stables and environment.



## Vision in People (VIP)

VIP has increased the range of sessions, activities and work experience opportunities we can offer to our service users. It has been both exciting and rewarding to see how many of our young people have enjoyed participating. New topics of learning, such as looking after our environment, recycling and health & wellbeing have proved popular, informative and generated a real buzz and excitement amongst our young people.



Work experience is something we have developed this year. A group of young people work weekly at Ribble Steam Railway and help out in their museum. The owners have been so welcoming and praised the work that we have been doing.

VIP Gavin has done amazingly well at his work experience this year. He works at a small local shop and has been learning to use different tools. Interacting with the people around him has helped him to develop his life and social skills. Gavin is proudly showing a bird box he made for his mother.

Supported people 83  
 20,200 sessions annually  
 39,700 hours of support delivered



Supported Living 46  
 89,388 hours of staffing support annually

“ I decided I would like to have a party where all my family could come. I talked to the staff in my house and with their help I visited some venues and chose where I would like to have my party. I chose a DJ, had some invitations printed and ordered my cake. When the night came I was so excited to see the room all decorated. When everybody started to arrive I was so happy and had an amazing evening! ”

as he thought his day couldn’t get any better he received a card from PNE with all the players signatures - even the Preston North End Duck made an appearance and gave Chris a signed PNE shirt! Chris was overwhelmed by the whole day and has not stopped talking about it since!! Chris also bought lots of things that he could use for a tombola and raised £57.00 for the charity.

Chris has been planning his birthday party for at least 8 months! He wanted to celebrate turning 50 with his friends. He spent many months preparing for his party to be held at Plungington Community Centre. Chris is an avid Preston North End (PNE) supporter and attends as many matches as he can. He was thrilled to bits when we arranged for PNE to do a shout out for him at half time. Just



Public Servant of the year Award  
 We were thrilled when Stephen, an avid campaigner for people with learning disabilities was named Public Servant of the Year in The Guardian’s Public Service Awards 2017. Stephen Smith won the Public vote for his tireless work over more than 25 years in Lancashire for people who have a learning disability. He progressed from volunteering for the REACT project – promoting the rights of people with learning disabilities – to becoming a Project Worker for the scheme.

## Research in Action (REACT)

13 self advocacy groups supported monthly  
 8 people employed with learning disabilities

“ I was thrilled to just be nominated for this award so to actually win it is a dream come true. It’s important for me to have a voice to encourage people [with learning disabilities] to improve their confidence. I make it my mission to help people understand what good support is, and what it means to have a learning disability. ”



## Children’s Youth Club

Our weekly youth group for young people with additional needs is going from strength to strength with up to 12 young people aged 11-18 years attending each week. Meeting at 6-9 pm every Wednesday with 3 sessions a week in school holidays, the Youth Club has provided facilities where young people can socialise and make new friendships within a safe and supportive environment. Young people enjoy and participate in activities including: arts and crafts; games consoles; trips out to Bowling, Laserquest, local parks and other venues. This initiative is funded by Lancashire Short Breaks.

We received a very positive inspection by POWAR, young inspectors on 15th November.

Over 180 hours of youth club time  
 “I’ve made a lot of new friends” YP  
 “This youth club is simply fantastic and my son loves coming. The staff are kind and helpful and clearly dedicated to what they do. I is making new friends in a safe and stimulating environment.” Parent  
 “I’d ask my friends if they would like to come, I like it here.” YP  
 “They [the staff] always have a laugh with you, they know if something is bothering you and they will help and support you with it.” YP ”



## Community Services

ACE  
 181 people with a life plan put in place  
 1050 people attended awareness workshops in prison & the community  
 362 people worked with

“ When released from prison I honestly didn’t know where I would end up or what I was going to do. Without the support of ACE, I would never have been able to turn my life around. Dan ”



Big Lottery Funding  
 We were delighted to received the fantastic news that ACE had been successful in securing Lottery monies which will be used to support ex-offenders as they leave prison. This now means we can continue and develop our work for a further 3 years to promote positive attitudes and enable individuals to rebuild their lives. It is a massive relief to those currently using the service who say they would be lost without us.

## Homelessness Vincent House

upto 9 months Supported people 59  
 1040 nights Emergency Care  
 237 referrals for Emergency Bed  
 60% secured permanent accommodation on leaving the service  
 100% sustained tenancy in the first 6 months

“ I have found more self confidence and I feel more stable in my self which I firmly believe is to do with all the support given from staff and other residents. Ex-Resident ”

## Plungington Community Centre

Visits to Centre 12,080 regularly  
 4,321 people  
 30 different groups use the centre  
 5 deliver weekly sessions

## Café Emmanuel

4075 customers

## Farewell to Bridging the Gap

On 5 December 2017, Chris and Dale joined Project Workers Jean and Geraldine and a number of volunteers in Carlisle to celebrate Bridging the Gap’s fantastic success in supporting older people to manage their hearing loss. The project started more than 15 years ago and has been hugely popular, particularly in the more rural areas of Cumbria where people often had to undertake lengthy journeys by public transport in order to visit their local Audiology Dept. Sadly, the project came to an end on 31 December last year following the loss of further Bridging the Gap funding and the lack of statutory funding.

Over 15 years of service

## Caritas Care

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