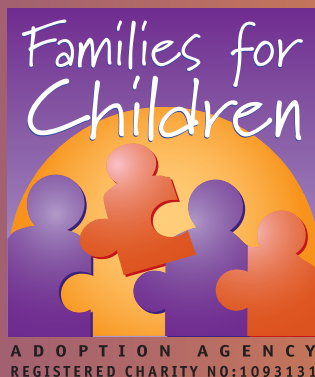


www.familiesforchildren.org.uk



Families for Children
Southgate Court
Buckfast
Buckfastleigh
Devon
TQ11 0EE

Telephone: 01364 645480

Fax: 01364 645499

Email: mail@familiesforchildren.org.uk

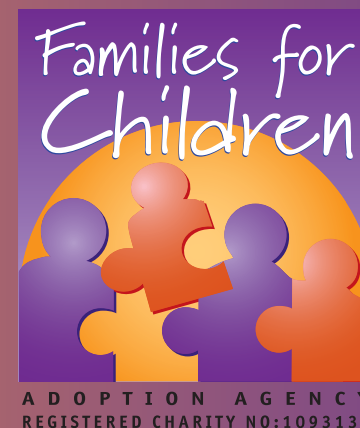
Families for Children Trust Registered in England No. 4460558
A Company Limited by Guarantee not having a share capital
Registered Charity No. 1093131

OUR 2007 ANNUAL REPORT



Families for Children
Adoption Agency

Reg. Charity No. 1093131



Our Team



Presidents

The Right Reverend Michael Langrish, The Bishop of Exeter (Anglican)

The Most Reverend Christopher Budd, The Bishop of Plymouth (Roman Catholic)

Chairman

The Reverend Canon Bruce Duncan MBE

Trustees appointed by Bishop of Exeter

Trustees appointed by Bishop of Plymouth

Mr David Wakely (Honorary Treasurer)

Miss Noreen Byrne

Professor Michael Bond

Mr Peter Moody (until March 2008)

Mrs Ann Barwood

Mr Paul Latham (Vice Chairman)

Rev Canon Bruce Duncan

Mr Cyril Williams

Mr David Howell

Mr Nick Allan

Panel Members

Mr Dean Banks

Professor Michael Bond

Ms Michele Boston

Mrs Claire Clarke

Mr Shaun Hennessy

Mr Jonathan Hepworth

Mrs Janet Matthews

Dr Julie Cubitt (until March 2008)

Mr John Randall

Ms Shira Rub

Mrs Caroline Davis

Mr Nick Goodwin

Director

Deputy Director

Administration Manager/Company Secretary

Miss Helen Catchpole

Social Work Practice Manager

Mr Dean Banks

Family Finding Social Workers

Mrs Maggie Bowen

Mrs Sue Jones

Mrs Angela Payne

Mrs Donna Love

Mrs Penny Palmer

Mrs Wendy Van Den Heuvel

Mrs Rhonda Walker

Post Placement Social Worker

Mr Eric Merriott

Post Adoption Social Workers

Mr Rory Crimmins

Mr John Randall

Adult Adoptee Counselling Social Worker

Mrs Liz Stapleton

Independent Birth Relative Counselling SW

Mrs Rosie Hale

Administration Team

Mrs Lesley Andreassen

Mrs Val Crean

Ms Tracey Driscall

Mrs Deanne Shorrock

Panel Administrator

Mrs Julia Stripp

Fundraising & Publicity Co-ordinator

Mrs Ally Colton

Our Achievements in 2007

37 children placed for adoption

Aged 0-11 years at time of placement

19 boys, 18 girls

Three placements of 3 siblings and five of 2 siblings

17 adoptions approved by the courts

Many of these children have physical and mental health issues. These include diagnoses on the autistic spectrum, chromosomal abnormalities, severe and moderate learning difficulties, the impact of physical, emotional and sexual abuse, congenital birth defects and alcohol or drug dependency at birth.

14 couples approved as prospective adopters

63 new adult adoptee counselling cases. Approximately 75% of these are adoptees seeking access to their birth records and considering tracing birth family members. The other 25% are birth relative initiated referrals.

65-70 ongoing post adoption and post placement cases



Our Post Adoption Support

Our full time Post Placement Social Worker, Eric Merriott:

Assesses the need quickly after placement for any therapeutic/life story work – enabling children and their parents to understand their 'life journey'.

Supports existing household children (birth or adoptive) to feel valued and understand their role in a new family structure. This prevents breakdown and distress within the family. All are 'given a voice'.

Alleviates situations before they escalate, avoiding disruptions and distress.

Informs and refines social work practice.

Prepares prospective adoptive parents and reassures them of support so that they are better able to cope with the range of difficulties they will face.

Our specialist Post Adoption Social Worker, John Randall, describes his work and that of his colleague Rory Crimmins:

"Overall adoption support entails a mixture of short-term work focused on specific tasks and goals and longer, sustained relationships over time.

Short-term work includes trying to help a child understand his or her early history or arranging contact with a member of the birth family if this is considered appropriate and safe. The needs of some of our children mean that there are no quick solutions and the key requirement is to stay in touch with adoptive families and respond to their changing needs – both those of the young people and their parents. Knowledge of local resources such as special education, child and adolescent mental health services and opportunities for respite care is vital.

We do our best to respond quickly to adoption support needs and to hang in there with adoptive parents when things get tough. Our adoptive parents take on huge challenges that are poorly understood by the public at large. Our aim is to match their commitment, creativity and resilience with the support that we provide."

Our Adult Adoption Counselling Social Worker, Liz Stapleton, writes:

"There have been 63 new cases in 2007. Approximately 75% of these are adoptees seeking access to their birth records and considering tracing birth family members. The other 25% are birth relative initiated referrals. Some cases can go on for a number of years and often people come back several times. We are also often approached by other agencies seeking help in tracking down records. Often it will not have been our adoption but we have local knowledge about resources and can pass this on. These referrals are not usually counted in the above figures but can often be quite time consuming. Tracing is easier than it was in the past with the Internet and there have been a number of reunions over the year. Preparation for meeting is vital and it can often take a long time until both parties feel ready for that momentous meeting. Sometimes clients appreciate the safety of our office environment as a place to meet for the first time – it is something that we can offer, although others prefer to make their own arrangements."

Our Patrons

Families for Children is delighted to have the support of two well-known local celebrities, Michael Caines MBE (Patron) and Judi Spiers (Vice Patron).



Michael Caines is one of Britain's most acclaimed chefs. AA Chef's Chef of the Year in 2007, and awarded MBE in 2006 for services to the hospitality industry, Michael is an Operational Partner and Director of ABode Hotels and Michael Caines Restaurants. He is also Executive

Chef at Gidleigh Park, the prestigious country house hotel on the edge of Dartmoor at Chagford, Devon, where he has earned his reputation – as well as two Michelin stars – serving distinctive modern European cuisine utilising the finest local and regional produce and ingredients. Amongst numerous other recent accolades, Michael has cooked in 10 Downing Street for the Prime Minister and taken part in 'The Great British Menu' competition for the honour of cooking for the Queen's 80th birthday. Michael was born in Exeter in 1969 and adopted into a large and loving family. He gained his passion for food from his mother who he used to enjoy helping in the kitchen. Says Michael, "I grew up in a large family and my love of food and cooking came from the big family meals we always shared together, prepared by my mother, who was a wonderful cook. My father loved to grow vegetables and fruit in our garden, and so I grew up appreciating the flavours of the freshest foods, picked that day and simply prepared."

Michael says, "Families for Children is a charity close to my heart, as I am myself adopted and benefited from growing up in a loving family. Adoption does work and gives a huge amount of benefit and joy to the adoptee and parents alike."

Judi is a true 'Devon Maid' who returned to her home ground after spending several years with BBC Radio 2. A highly experienced and respected broadcaster and interviewer, Judi also worked – most notably – at the old Pebble Mill studios and for Westward TV and TSW, being a popular face both at home in the South West and 'up the line'. Listen to Judi's BBC Radio Devon Show, weekdays 8.55am-midday, to enjoy her eclectic mix of humour, celebrity guests, quizzes & competitions.

Our Director

Mrs Caroline Davis

I am delighted to be able to report on a most successful year for Families for Children. Following the difficulties experienced in 2006, as a result of the change in adoption legislation, Families for Children had a major review of all aspects of our service. The strategies put into place to ensure the revival of the Agency have been successful and we have recovered our position as one of the outstanding agencies in the country finding adoptive families for 'hard to place' children.

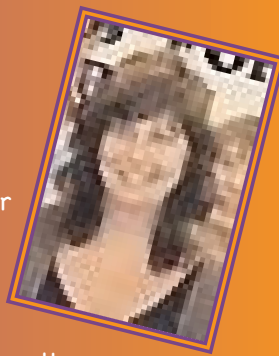
Families for Children now has a well developed fundraising programme including Trust and Grant applications and a pilot venture directed at obtaining the support of parishes across the South West. Ally Colton and Helen Catchpole have worked extremely hard to ensure the success of our fundraising.

Families for Children was sorry to lose Anne Osborne, our very capable Senior Practitioner, to a more senior post. Her departure led us to review the post and we were delighted when an internal applicant, Dean Banks, was appointed to become our Social Work Practice Manager.

Dawn Gibson and Isabel Molland have also moved on. We were joined by Donna Love who, as an experienced worker, settled quickly into the team at Buckfast. Rosie Hale has joined us at our Wimborne office to cover the Independent Birth Relative Service contract for Dorset, Bournemouth and Poole. The Agency also benefited from a Plymouth University student placement.

The quality of social work across the Agency is excellent as evidenced by the large numbers of children placed, 37 this year, and the lack of any pre-adoption disruptions in 2007.

Nick Goodwin, Deputy Director, ensured that the quality of the social work remained high despite the huge increase in work. Our Social Workers are well supported by an excellent administrative staff. The whole team, including our Trustees and Panel, have pulled together to make 2007 such a successful year.



Our Recruitment

Adoption is for children who cannot live with their birth parents and will not be able to return to them in the future. Adoption is a legal process whereby the parental responsibility for a child is transferred from birth parents to adoptive parents. An adoptive family provides a child with a sense of belonging and legally the child gains the rights of any natural child, including inheritance rights.

We treat prospective adopters with respect and honesty and make the process of assessment transparent and even-handed. We welcome adopters:-

- From all cultures, languages and religions within the UK and whose backgrounds are in more than one culture.
- Who already have children and those who do not have children. (The child to be placed in an established family will usually be at least two years younger than the youngest child.)
- Who are disabled.
- Who are single women or single men.
- Who are couples in a stable and enduring relationship who are committed together to care for a child – whether or not they are married or in a civil partnership.



There are no 'blanket bans' on the grounds of age, weight, appearance, sexuality, status, income, etc. As an Agency we consider all applications on their individual merits. The order in which applicants are assessed will be prioritised by the needs of children waiting for adoption locally and nationally. We discuss with prospective adopters the current priorities of the Agency during our initial conversations.

In order to thrive and flourish all adopted children need to grow up knowing they are adopted and be given information about their birth families. Adopted children need their new families to be open and honest in a sensitive way about their birth families. We look for adopters who can develop an attitude of awareness and openness towards the birth family of their adopted child.

The law has recently changed so that birth parents can request information about the child who was adopted and ask to meet up with them when the child becomes an adult, if that is what the adopted person wants. This means that adopters need to be willing to face their fears and anxieties about birth families very early on in the adoption process. Contact with the birth family is a theme throughout the assessment process and subsequent training.

Our Finances

Balance Sheet
31 December 2007 Families for Children Trust

	2007		2006	
	£	£	£	£
Fixed Assets				
Tangible Assets		19,048	19,158	
Investments		138,534	142,937	
Sub Total		157,582	162,095	
Current Assets				
Debtors	60,192		57,538	
Short term deposits	247,027		140,756	
Cash at bank	6,703		8,829	
Sub Total	313,922		207,123	
Creditors				
Amount falling due within				
One year	61,603		34,863	
Net Current Assets		252,319	172,260	
Net Assets		409,901	334,355	
Funds of the Charity				
Endowment Funds		139,895	142,937	
Unrestricted:				
General	185,101		109,527	
Designated	84,905		81,891	
		270,006	191,418	
Total Charity Funds		<u>409,901</u>	<u>334,355</u>	

These accounts are a summary of the information extracted from the annual accounts which were approved by the Board of Trustees on 28 March 2008 and signed on their behalf by:

Rev Canon Bruce Duncan, Chair of Trustees
Mr David Wakely, Honorary Treasurer

Independent Auditors' Statement

To the Board of Trustees of Families for Children Trust:

We have examined the summarised accounts set out on this page. You are responsible as Board members for the preparation of the summarised accounts. We have agreed to report to you our opinion on the summarised accounts' consistency with the full accounts on which we reported to you on 28 March 2008.

We have carried out the procedures we consider necessary to ascertain whether the summarised accounts are consistent with the full accounts from which they have been prepared.

In our opinion, the summarised accounts are consistent with the full accounts for the year ended 31 December 2007.

Francis Clark, Registered Auditors, Chartered Accountants, 23 Devon Square, Newton Abbot, Devon TQ12 2HU

Our Finances

Statement of Financial Activities

Year ended 31 December 2007 – Families for Children Trust

	Total Funds 2007	Total Funds 2006
	£	£
Incoming Resources		
Voluntary Income	23,532	146,878*
Fundraising	176,958	202,330
Investment Income	15,028	10,152
Interagency Fees	650,380	468,618
Other Incoming Resources	0	12,570
Total Incoming Resources	865,898	840,548
Resources Expended		
Cost of Generating funds	20,117	53,017
Charitable Expenditure	760,967	799,414
Governance Costs	4,865	4,426
Total Resources Expended	785,949	856,857
Net Incoming/ (Expenditure) for year	79,949	(16309)
Other Recognised Gains and Losses		
(Loss)/Gain on Investments		
Realised or Unrealised	(4,403)	2,334
Net Movement in Funds	75,546	(13,975)

*Included permanent endowment of £140,603

The summarised accounts on this page are an abridged version of the full accounts of Families for Children Trust which are filed with the Registrar of Companies and the Charities Commission.

The Auditors' Report on the full accounts was unqualified. These summarised accounts may not contain sufficient information to allow a full understanding of the financial affairs of the Agency. For further information, the full accounts, the Auditors' Report on these accounts and the Board of Trustees' Report should be consulted.

Copies of this are available from:

Helen Catchpole, Administration Manager of Families for Children at Southgate Court,
Buckfast, Buckfastleigh, Devon TQ11 0EE.



Our Fundraising

2007 has seen the skills, acquired by necessity in 2006, used to successful effect. The Agency set itself three fundraising targets and achieved two of them.

Grant Making Trusts

Target £125,000 – Achieved £128,077

During 2007 the Agency approached those grant making trusts which had responded to the Emergency Appeal in 2006 for their further help. Grateful thanks are offered to those who were able to help us again. In addition, over 230 applications were made to carefully selected grant making trusts with a positive response rate of just under 10%. The grant making trusts that were able to assist us were as follows:-

	£		£
Sir John and Lady Amory	300	Darroch Charitable Trust	200
Exmouth Association	900	Garfield Weston Foundation*	25000
Clare Milne Trust	5000	Queen Anne's Gate Foundation	20000
Storaid	2000	Alice Ellen Cooper Foundation	10000
Calleva Foundation	1000	Lord Clinton's Charitable Trust	500
Constance Green Foundation	5000	29th May 1961 Charitable Trust	2000
Marsh Christian Trust	400	Van Neste Foundation	10000
C and M Pike Trust	250	Torquay Refuge Fund	1361
Buckfast Abbey Trust	1000	Michael Shanly Trust	5000
Coutts Charitable Trust	500	Ashworth Charitable Trust	2500
Heinz Charitable Trust	4000	Rayne Foundation	25000
Heathcoat Charitable Trust	250	Tollard Trust	40
Norman Family Trust	1000	Anonymous Foundation	3000
Tesco Trust	1876		

* The Trustees received £75,000 from the Garfield Weston Foundation with the stipulation that no further application could be made for three years. For this reason, the Trustees set up a designated reserve for £50,000 with £25,000 being released in each year, 2008 and 2009.

Events and Corporate Giving

Target £50,000 – Achieved £50,241

Many of those who had made personal donations to our Emergency Appeal in 2006 have helped us in 2007 by holding their own fundraising events. We have also been assisted by twenty-six Churches during the year, particularly in response to our Christmas Appeal. Numerous events have been held on our behalf in 2007 and we are very grateful to all those who arranged them. These events have the dual benefit of raising the Agency's profile and recruiting new adopters. Families for Children has developed links with several local businesses who have written commercial agreements in place to help us. Our Patron Michael Caines MBE and Vice Patron Judi Spiers are especially helpful with our Events Fundraising by providing publicity and contacts. We thank them both for their commitment to Families for Children.

Individual Donations

Target £50,000 – Achieved £21,171

This area of fundraising fell short of its target probably because of the high level of individual donations received following the Emergency Appeal. Families for Children has about forty direct debit donations each month and we would very much like to increase this number. The targets for 2008 remain as they were for 2007 and our intention is to recover the reserves that we lost in 2006 and to go from strength to strength.



Ally Colton, Fundraising & Publicity Co-ordinator

Our Chair of Trustees

The Reverend Canon Bruce Duncan, MBE



The board of trustees is responsible for guarding the vision and values of Families for Children and, in consultation with the Director and her staff, developing its long-term strategy. The trustees create policies to govern the Agency's activities, establish employment procedures, and ensure compliance with our charitable objectives. We also work to ensure accountability to donors, beneficiaries and staff, as well as to the Charity Commission.

One major task of the trustees is fiscal oversight. The board is responsible for effectively managing the Agency's resources so that it can meet its charitable objects. The difficulties we faced (along with many other voluntary adoption agencies) as a result of the implementation of the new Adoption Act, led in 2006 to a year of acute financial insecurity. We became much more pro-active in grant applications and fundraising generally and the trustees are extremely grateful for the generous response from trusts and individuals to our emergency appeal; and to Caroline Davis and her staff for their confidence and unwavering loyalty to the Agency. Without that generous support within and outside the Agency Families for Children would not have survived.

As it is, we have emerged in 2007 a fitter, stronger and more focussed organisation. The trustees remain committed to the 'forever' policy of support for its families at any time that it is needed and much of our fundraising is directed to fulfilling this pledge. We have undergone a skills audit and as a result have strengthened our board of trustees with valuable new members.



Our Adopters



At regular intervals during the adoption process we encourage our adopters to complete feedback forms. Comments include:-

From Mr and Mrs A, who have just adopted for a second time through Families for Children: "We were very impressed with the Families For Children set up, response and our social worker" and commenting about dealing with Social Workers and professionals from outside the Agency – "makes you realise how good everyone is at FFC!"

From Mr and Mrs B, who have adopted twins through Families for Children: Regarding the preparation of their Prospective Adopters' Report – "Visits were always timely and made friendly – our social worker put us at ease and answered any questions we had."

Comments regarding support after placement include:-

"Our social worker was great."

"Our social worker was a tower of strength, always on the end of the phone, visiting often with calming words of advice."