

## Our Chairman's introduction

It was a busy year in 2017 with lots of exciting events held for our Older and Younger Friends and there are some great pictures in this newsletter, and our thanks to the many people who helped to organise and support these events. Whilst our key objective is support disadvantaged children on a 121 basis to improve their self esteem, confidence and have some fun, for some these events represent a good opportunity to renew friendships and for our operations team to see firsthand the extremely valuable work our volunteers do. We have had some changes in our Operations team, and on our trustees' board, whilst this represented a few challenges we are in a good place going forward with new ideas and energy. Our volunteer numbers have increased, as has our funding, which thankfully just about kept pace with this expansion. We have had success with awards helping our profile. I would personally like to say a massive thank you to all our volunteers, operations team, funders and supporters without their continued help we would not be able to help so many local children in Warwickshire. If you think you would be interested in getting involved please contact me [cheryll.rawbone@friendshipproject.co.uk](mailto:cheryll.rawbone@friendshipproject.co.uk) or [karen.hoy@FriendshipProject.co.uk](mailto:karen.hoy@FriendshipProject.co.uk)



## What we've been Up To .....

### Brandon Marsh, Den Building -May 2017

We all had a fabulous time when we went "Den Building" at WWT Brandon Marsh. It was brilliant fun, the children made some great dens, with imaginary tables, chairs, water supplies, fires and even animal traps! WWT also organised an artwork session and picnic too. It was lovely to see them making friends with children they didn't know beforehand and working so well in their teams. They all left a bit grubbier than when they arrived, but with big smiles on their faces! One younger friend said "it was the best day of her life"



## Territorial Army Day, Canley - June 2017



A huge THANK YOU to all of the Territorial Army team at Canley for putting on such a great event for our Younger Friends, volunteers, operations team and trustees. They had a brilliant time challenging themselves to climb this huge climbing wall (though the children were keener to do this than the adults, though a few braved it too, so well done to Sally and John in particular. They had to work with under direction of a partner whilst going around a blind folded command course to avoid land mine hazards (not real ones!), plus they built bird boxes top take home, and enjoyed an electronic splat the rat. It really challenged and excited the children. The Older Friends volunteers enjoyed it too! Thank you to OF Louise for helping to facilitate this.

Do you have access/idea for a fun place for us to hold an event, if so we would be delighted to hear from you...?

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## Treasure Hunt and Fun Day, Hill Close Gardens

August 2017



We would just like to say a massive thank you to Sue and the team at Hill Close Gardens, Warwick and to the National Citizen Service Challenge team for organising such a fantastic day, with treasure hunt, picnic and games. A wonderful time was had by all the disadvantaged children from the Friendship Project. It was much appreciated to have the garden pot chocolate cake treat and little windmills for them to take home, kindly donated by Hill Close Gardens. Most are from much challenged circumstances, and it was great to see them have some fun, and able to play and enjoy themselves without worries in the fresh air. The NCS team also raised £404.71 for us which will go towards funding new volunteers.





## Craft Day, Coventry -September 2017

The theme for this year's craft morning was animals. 13 Older Friends and 18 Younger Friends met at the Training Room in the Memorial Park at Coventry to produce items for the Friendship Project Christmas Tree, the art work for the Christmas card, things to take home for family and friends and (most of all) to have fun together. Everyone enjoyed painting, sticking, making Hama beads, colouring etc, as well as eating and drinking! Thanks go to Lois for doing the refreshments, Sam, Nicki, Karen, Jane, Judy and Caitlin for supervising activities and everyone else for turning up and joining in. We were surprised to find the car park full when we arrived to set up. There is a "Fun Run" every Saturday in the year so next time we will be starting at 11.00 a.m. and will finish up with a packed lunch at 1.00p.m. This is arranged for Saturday 29th September 2018. Hope to see you there? The Christmas tree in St Mary's Church Warwick looked lovely and the robin made very special Christmas cards. Thank you to Andy Sheppard, Avon Studios for photo of the robin collage.



## Christmas Party, Leamington Cricket Club

### December 2017

What a fun and colourful Christmas Party we had at Leamington Cricket Club, who is thanked for allowing us to use their club again. There were games, a disco, prizes, presents and yummy food! Our sincere thanks to Mid Counties Coop Childcare team for organising the party for our Younger Friends, and decorating the clubhouse, inviting Father Christmas, so everyone had a brilliant time



## Christmas tree Decorating, St Marys Church, Warwick – December 2017

3 Younger Friends, plus our oldest and longest standing Older Friend Joan were just some of the people that helped decorate our Christmas tree that was on display at St Marys in Warwick. Some of our September craft morning decorations made it to the tree, with extras made too.



## Sophie's Story

I moved to Warwickshire for a job just over two years ago. My friends thought I was crazy, brave and stupid (amongst other things!). I knew no-one up here, and I had no family up here. I had moved everything for a job. So, given that I wanted to meet new people, make friends, and also make a difference, I set about to do something that would help with it all – somewhere I could volunteer. I used to volunteer regularly growing up so knew the type of thing I wanted to help with – something with children, and something where I could make a difference.



Being a supposedly mature / responsible adult, I was eligible to volunteer for the Friendship Project and was thrilled when they wanted to interview me and tell me more about what they did! A few months later (and the third new DBS in the space of a year), meant I'd been accepted and was on my way to helping change someone's life.

The idea behind the friendship project is a phenomenal one; it matches young children (who unfortunately are in a difficult situation one way or another) with older friends (aka adult volunteers) to give them the chance to be a normal child again. It may be that there are no parents on the scene; it might be that their siblings are all severely disabled; it may be that they have no positive role models around. It is a chance for that child to have undivided attention for a few hours a week. They can feel safe, secure and most importantly, valued.

I'm paired up with a younger friend who's just turned 11; we've been swimming, we've visited Stratford butterfly farm, had ice creams in the park, gone to the cinema, made cupcakes, carved pumpkins and much more. One highlight for me was taking her out for dinner - we went to ASK Italian in Warwick and it was absolutely wonderful. She looked at the menu and was amazed! She coloured in pictures before her starter arrived; she loved the taste of the pizza (she's used to oven pizzas) and was thrilled by dessert. Eating out is something I take for granted and it was clear by the look on her face this was something that was very new to her. To be able to give her an experience like that was humbling.

The support from the staff at the charity is fantastic. I have frequently phoned my Area Coordinator up because something didn't seem right. Either my younger friend was very quiet, very upset or sometimes just seemed uninterested. For me, this was all a learning curve and Fiona was more than happy to chat things through and advise me!! I assumed my younger friend would be pleased to see me every week (and would show this!). Boy, how wrong could I have been?! Years of working at Summer camps and holiday camps meant I knew what children were like; I knew they don't always say what they mean and they don't always know how to show it. Deep down I know this, but I easily forget it! Therefore it's always nice when you get a reminder you're on the right path. Fiona was exactly this - the voice of reason!

Last week was her birthday - I asked her what she dreamt of and she told me she dreams of becoming a nurse. "Of course you can - you can achieve anything you want" I told her. It was a fantastic dream, to me it was clear it was both achievable and realistic and I thought it was a no-brainer she would aim for this. She looked at me and said "No, Dad says I can't".

**Sometimes it's the extra voice that gives them a new perspective. If I just make her think twice about her dream- and that it is achievable, I will have succeeded.**



# What others have been up to for the Friendship Project...

## TK Maxx, Rugby

TK Maxx has a Community Fund and each store is actively encouraged to nominate and complete a bid for a local charity. Nicki Cresswell, Area Coordinator from The Friendship Project for Children was delighted to receive the maximum donation of £1500 from Chris Melling the Store Manager at TK Maxx, Rugby. The store nominated the project as they were really impressed by the work we do and the positive difference we are making to the local community.



## Hampton Resourcing



We were delighted that Hampton Resourcing chose us as their nominated charity of 2017/18, and some of their team along with one of our Trustees, Chris Buck, competed in a 'Tough Mudder' event to raise money for us. They raised total of £ 702.86. Additionally they have kindly been hosting our quarterly trustee meetings and providing us with sandwich lunch/drinks. Our new Honorary Secretary, Michelle Machin, who also is responsible for salaries / expenses, works there and one of their team, Dan Careless is an Older Friend too.

- ❖ NFU Mutual in Tiddington kindly gave us a hamper and huge amount of presents for one of our Younger Friends and his Mum at Christmas, who were looking at a quite a bleak Christmas without this donation.
- ❖ Sarah Parr donated a large number of 'Plushimorph' toys that we have been selling at the events and fayres that we attend to raise funds.
- ❖ Penman's Solicitors did their very own 'Bake Off' for us to raise money.
- ❖ Recessionaires have funded some music and riding lessons for younger friends
- ❖ Family Court Service Carol Service collection



## Waitrose

Heather Shipley, our Stratford Area Coordinator collected a cheque from Rachel Hymers, Waitrose Assistant Team Manager Trainee for £490. It was from the community matters green tokens. Your tokens in the slots really do count! Thank you....

**If you can persuade your local supermarket to do this for us it would be great. Please contact your local coordinator for support with this**



# The Croft Preparatory School

## The Croft Preparatory School

We would like to thank Karen Hoy for proposing us and The Croft Preparatory School in Stratford Upon Avon for their decision to choose us as one of their two nominated charities starting from September 2017, along with the local branch of the MND Charity, over a 2 year period. We attended their Christmas Fayre with a stall, and they have already held several fundraising events and raised significant amounts of money for us. We are very grateful for all that they are doing to support us.

### Sponsorship activities - Older Friends

Two of our Older Friends – Sally Andrew and David Both did separate sponsored cycle rides. David in the French alps, and pictured is Sally on a training run, she had not cycled any great distance before and took part in the Ride to London – 100 miles, raising £895 before gift aid.



### What we've been Up To... Get togethers

Volunteer Get Together at Leamington Tennis Club 2 March 2017

Volunteer Get Together and Tiddington Community Centre 14 September 2017

### What we've been Up To... Fayres



- ❖ Warwick Folk Festival – Tombola – Sunday
- ❖ Kingsley School Christmas Fayre Saturday 25th November 2017
- ❖ The Croft Preparatory School Christmas Fayre Friday 8th December 2017



# Donations Received for Friendship Project 2017

Grateful thanks to those that have donated, our Funders and Fundraisers/Event organisers for 2017, who included the following: -

29 <sup>th</sup> Fund - Heart of England Foundation	Mid Counties Cooperative Society
Aubrey Allen	Provincial Grand Lodge of Warwickshire
Aviva	Recessionaires
BBC Children in Need	Rotary of Kenilworth
Baron Davenport Trust	Rotary Club of RLS
Bewdley Trust	Rotary Club – Warwick RCN
Cheryll Rawbone	Stratford Town Trust
Executors of the late R E Crowley	TK Max
Gallagher (previously Arthur J Gallagher)	Waitrose
Greggs	Warwickshire Masonic Lodge
Hampton Resourcing	WCC Resources
Kenilworth Chiro Clinic	Mrs S M Weetman
Lions - Balsall Common	Wilmcote Charitable Trust
Lions -Kenilworth	
Lions – Warwick	

**Thanks also to Gallagher, Insurance Risk Management & Consultancy, for their ongoing support in providing postage, office services, photocopying, mail shots, printing plus meeting facilities on a free of charge basis.**

## New ways to donate – our new web page is live

Like all charities, The Friendship Project relies on donations from the general public for a significant amount of its income. If you can spare even just a pound or two to help towards our valuable contribution to society, then please do feel free to contact our trustee Fundraiser, **Richard Barrett** ([richard.barrett@friendshipproject.co.uk](mailto:richard.barrett@friendshipproject.co.uk)).

The Friendship Project have partnered with The Charities Trust, a leading donations management company established in 1987, so as to provide opportunities for payroll giving, sponsorship, and credit card payments. The links for this are as follows:-

### **Payroll Giving**

For individuals, you will need to check if your employer offers payroll giving. This is the link to where you can find out and where they can find out more and download the relevant forms > <http://www.charitiestrust.org.uk/payroll-giving-individual/>

### **Sponsorship – Online Fundraising – Sponsor Me**

If you wish to run a campaign or event to raise funds for the Friendship Project, then it's Sponsor Me. Fundraising pages can be created by companies (<http://www.charitiestrust.org.uk/sponsor-me-employer/>) or individuals (<http://www.charitiestrust.org.uk/sponsor-me-individual/>).

### **Match Funding**

Matching employee giving is one of the best ways to increase employee engagement and boost an employee's donation. Many organisations offer it as part of their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programme and we have lots of experience in running schemes. This is the link for more information > <http://www.charitiestrust.org.uk/match-funding-employer/>

### **One off Card donations**

To make one off card donations to the Friendship Project, donors can use this link <https://www.sponsorme.co.uk/your-donation/mydonation.aspx?CR=CT52669&CN=The%20Friendship%20Project&PR=1000>

**Cheques** – can be made payable to **The Friendship Project for Children** and posted to:

**Cheryll Rawbone** – Chairman, c/o 20 Northumberland Road, Leamington Spa, Warwickshire, CV32 6HA.



## Trustees News

We would like to record our thanks to Lois Hamson who agreed to continue in post in 2017, so as to allow us time for recruitment of new trustees she then retired at the end of 2017. We wish her well with her move to be with her family in north Leicestershire. Her hard work and commitment to Friendship Project was much appreciated. John Palmer also stepped down as treasurer at the end of 2017 owing to his increased work commitments including overseas travel. He is thanked for his service. John took on this role as his wife, Anne had been a long standing Older Friend too.

During 2017 we are pleased to record that we appointed 3 further new trustees. Richard Barrett joined us in September 2017 as Fund Raiser - leading our trust and foundation grant fund raising; Richard is a recently retired management consultant and a qualified accountant. He is a fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants, who spent most of his career providing financial management and process improvement consultancy to a wide range of organisations from family businesses to large companies, charities and Government bodies. For many years Richard worked for Coopers & Lybrand and PwC, prior to establishing his own consultancy business in 2003. He is also a Trustee of the Shakespeare Hospice and USPG, a long-established mission agency of the Anglican Church. In addition, Richard is actively involved with his local church, enjoys cycling, walking, gardening and spending time with his family. Richard is married and has two daughters and one granddaughter.



Gemma Allardyce and Rachael Escott also joined the trustee board from Mic Counties Coop Childcare team. Gemma is Head of Customer & Brand at Co-Operative Childcare, part of their senior management team. Her role is accountable for their trading performance, refinement of the Childcare group's vision and strategy; whilst leading and managing the commercial, customer service and marketing functions.

Prior to working with the Coop, she was Marketing and PR Co-ordinator at Washington Green. Gemma joins us as trustee with specific responsibility for marketing and PR.



Rachael is their Sales & Marketing Manager and is responsible for marketing innovation and delivery to gain new customers and retain existing customers. Rachael has a background in events management and has recently joined the Friendship Project as a Trustee with specific responsibility to providing event support and delivery. Rachael has worked alongside the Friendship Project for over a year, fundraising and organising the Friendship Projects children's Christmas Party and is now looking forward to working on other events.

We will shortly be joined by a new trustee Jon Gibbons who will be Older Friends representative on the trustee board, and if you have anything you wish to raise he will be attending our get togethers and training, or his contact details are [jon.gibbons@friendshipproject.co.uk](mailto:jon.gibbons@friendshipproject.co.uk) please link with him

## We are still looking for additional trustees:-

For roles including PQASSO/Mentoring and Befriending accreditation, Safeguarding, legal, and management for succession planning, if you know anyone please contact our Chairman to discuss.



## Welcome and Farewells – Operations team

Farewell to Area Coordinators Helen Yendall, Deborah Roberts and Project Administrator Sue Frost. Many thanks to them all for their contributions and service. We have welcomed two new Area Coordinators Heather Shipley, and Nicki Cresswell, plus Project Administrator Karen Hoy.



### Heather Shipley – Area Coordinator Stratford upon Avon, Alcester, & Shipston

Previously to joining the Friendship Project, Heather travelled in Europe, the US, Asia and Australia, worked in Marketing Management and moved to the Midlands from the South. Her experience of working at a local primary school for 10 years has helped immensely in her new role. This work included working with disadvantaged children, parents, carers and professional services, as nurture lead. Heather also runs her own counselling private practice.

### Karen Hoy – Administrator

Karen has a background in Administration. Most recently she spent 15 years as a PA for the directors of at IT Company. Her hobbies include cooking, interior design and spending time with family and friends. Karen has recently been busy with our GDPR project getting all our many forms, procedures, and Guidelines and various assessments up to date for the new legislation coming in on 25<sup>th</sup> May 2018. **Please send Karen any articles or photos that you have for the next newsletter to [karen.hoy@Friendshipproject.co.uk](mailto:karen.hoy@Friendshipproject.co.uk)**



Owing to family reasons Nicki will shortly be stepping down as area coordinator and her role is being taken up by Kelly Furness who also lives in Rugby, is a qualified social worker and was an Older friend some 20 years ago, so is very familiar with the ethos and aims of the project. Kelly is currently undertaking her training with the Project before taking up the reigns from Nicki. Nicki plans to remain within the Friendship Project in a voluntary capacity going forward.

## Volunteer News

Congratulations to Older Friend, Gareth, and his wife Sophie. They now have a new Younger Friend in their lives!



## Younger Friends activities



One of our Younger Friends shown here was enjoying her regular horse riding session with her Older Friend.



Older Friend, says here are a few pictures of my YF during our recent visit to Guys Cliff Abby. At first she was a little reluctant!!! However, after ten minutes of exploring & finding out the history of the building she really started to enjoy herself! Especially when she sat in the 'powerful persons' chair. On our way out she asked if we could go around the building again! She wanted to show me around and she was able to remember lots of facts! Next time there's an open day, my YF would like to visit the gardens!" Permission was given to use these photos by her guardian.



## THE NITTY GRITTY BIT ....IMPORTANT !!

Could we please just take this opportunity to remind all our Older Friends to keep us updated with any new contact details, mobile phone numbers etc – not only yours, but also please let us know if the details for your younger friend change. That way, our database will stay completely up-to-date!

And if we could also please remind all our Older Friends to remember to submit their expense claim forms to Karen Hoy before the 10th of each month! Contact details are [Karen.hoy@friendshipproject.co.uk](mailto:Karen.hoy@friendshipproject.co.uk)

**Even if you don't incur or claim any expenses in a particular month, we need your reports anyway, so that we can monitor the sorts of outings our Older Friends are making. This is needed for our procedures and safeguarding, plus it gives us not only a clearer idea of how the project is running, but when it comes to bidding for funds, this sort of detail helps our case dramatically. We know you are doing an excellent job – but we need to show our funders this too!**



# Awards

Our longest standing Older Friend to date, Joan, received an award from our President Michael Coker MBE for being a volunteer with us for 20 years! Joan said: "Fancy getting those awards!

Embarrassing but an honour. Befriending children with the Friendship Project has always been something I've enjoyed doing and we've gone to places, done all sorts of things, and had a good few adventures that otherwise I wouldn't have had or done but wouldn't have missed it for the world. It's been great seeing the children develop and become so much more confident and enjoy doing all the activities we've done and places we've visited so the 20 years has been a real pleasure."



We were delighted to be short listed for the Coventry & Warwickshire SME Not for Profit Business for 2017, and attended the ceremony at Coombe Abbey in Coventry with no expectations of winning and were both surprised and excited to find out that we had indeed won. This is a great accolade for our volunteers and the team. Additionally, we have just heard that we have made it to the final of UK SME Awards for Not for Profit with the ceremony at Wembley Stadium in December 2018

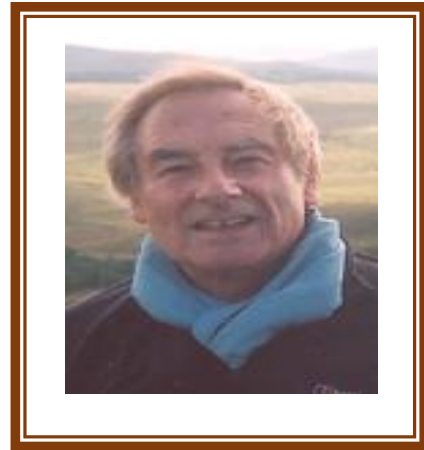
Our Chairman Cheryll Rawbone has received 3 awards this year and was also a finalist in the 'Woman Who' award achieves for Charity or not for Profit, and received Special Achievement Award for her charity work. In May she received a Community Service award from the Royal Leamington Spa Rotary in a ceremony at Kingsley School for 30 years working with us. In November she received 2 awards –the 'Unsung Hero' award at the Gallagher Gives Annual Awards ceremony in London. Cheryll received £2,500 for the Friendship Project as a result of this award, plus we were then awarded a further £2,000 from the Gallagher Community fund budget, and had earlier in the year received matched funding of £700. Cheryll is pictured with Pat Gallagher receiving her award



## Safeguarding

John Hancock our Safeguarding Officer reports that he has undertaken meetings for family and younger friend reviews involving 39 children. Warwick 16 (18); Stratford 10 (12); Nuneaton/Rugby 9 (9).

Older Friends are initially contacted to discover whether there are particular aspects of the friendship requiring investigation during the review. The process is then explained (if necessary). A meeting is then held with the parents/carers and Younger Friend in their home. The interviews are based on 10 questions with the adults (usually Mothers ) and 5 questions with the children.



Families have been overwhelmingly positive about the Project and the support offered by the OF's. During the meeting it has been possible to discuss whether the YF is keen for the friendship to continue. It is also possible to discover the nature and type of activities preferred. Finally, feedback from the review is provided for the OF and a report made for the Area Coordinator.

Another important aspect of the role of the Safeguarding Officer is to investigate disclosures of a criminal nature, which may appear on DBS Certificates. Fortunately, these are rare. On such occasions the discussion, with potential volunteer, is based on set questions, including the following:

- Was the offence a one off?
- How long ago was the offence committed and how old were they?
- Is the type of offence relevant to duties of the role within the Friendship Project?
- Were there any particular circumstances at the time and have they now changed?

The SO is accompanied by another member of the Project, usually the DBS Manager. At the end of the meeting a decision is made as to whether it is appropriate for the person to be involved with the Friendship Project or not.

## Safeguarding Training...

The purpose of each training session will be to clarify and re-enforce the Safeguarding Procedures and Guidelines as issued to each volunteer. Each session will include an introduction to Safeguarding and Protection, together with an update on Child Protection and Safeguarding specifically relating to working with vulnerable children.

### Dates for training for 2018

- 9<sup>th</sup> June 2018 – Specifically feature online safety- 11.00am to 1pm, The Education Centre, Kenilworth Road, Coventry, CV3 6PT (located in The Memorial Park, plenty of free parking)
- 17<sup>th</sup> September 2018 – Details TBC

## Future Events...

- 24<sup>th</sup> May – 7.30pm Buffet and AGM. 1<sup>st</sup> Floor of Gallagher offices, Coventry
- 19<sup>th</sup> June – Volunteer Get Together. Details TBC
- 23<sup>rd</sup> June – Twycross Zoo Group visit– full details to follow
- 7<sup>th</sup> July – 11.00-12.30 Volunteer Get Together. Hinckley Island Hotel
- 21<sup>st</sup> July - Moreton Morrell Farm visit with national Citizens Challenge - tbc
- 29<sup>th</sup> September – 11.00-1.00pm, Craft Event and Picnic, Coventry Memorial Park
- 10<sup>th</sup> October – Volunteer Get Together, Star & Garter.