

Our Chairman's Introduction

I would personally like to say a massive thank you to all our volunteers, operations team, trustees, funders and supporters, without their continued proactive engagement we would not be able to help so many local disadvantaged children in Warwickshire to improve their self esteem, confidence whilst allowing the children to have fun in a safe encouraging environment. There is considerable research to demonstrate that stability in childhood can improve both mental health and physical welfare in later life. We can help to make that positive difference.

2018 was a fantastic year from both a fundraising perspective to give us a great platform for expansion, and also as you will see many happy children, and volunteers, from the events and activities held alongside the 1-2-1 support, plus a case study showing how a young person has benefited. The operations team has been expanded, and new team members have come on board bringing additional resilience and also structure to increase the number of children that we can support, and hopefully reduce our waiting lists. **More volunteers are always needed.....** If you think you would be interested in getting involved please contact me cheryll.rawbone@friendshipproject.co.uk or karen.hoy@friendshipproject.co.uk



Cheryll Rawbone
Chairman

What we've been Up To

Pool Party, Warwick School, March 2018

To celebrate Science Week, Heather Shipley, our Coordinator for Stratford and surrounding areas, organised a Pool Party kindly facilitated by Warwick School. This was followed by some fun science activities run by one of our Older Friends, Sophie, from the M in STEM at the school. We would like to thank all involved, particularly Warwick School and also Jo from ASDA for organising and donating the food for the picnic boxes that we made.



Twycross Zoo, June 2018



A huge THANK YOU Cheryll for organising a fun filled day out at Twycross Zoo. The zoo very kindly gave us a reduced rate for entry, so as to make this visit possible. Most of our Younger and Older friends travelled on the mini bus which was kindly subsidised too, with a friendly driver from Back & 4th Transport. One Younger Friend had a funny moment at the meerkat enclosure. We were listening to a talk when the Younger Friend dropped her purse in – oops! The meerkats loved the purple pom pom! A keeper rescued the purse and no money was stolen! Another great memory from the day is the children's amazement of touching the animal skins near the giraffe enclosure.

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

cheryll.rawbone@friendshipproject.co.uk or Karen.Hoy@friendshipproject.co.uk

Butterfly Treasure Hunt and Fun Day, Stratford Armouries & Forest of Hearts - July 2018

We would just like to say a massive thank you to The Forest of Hearts, The Armouries in Snitterfield, and to the National Citizen Service Challenge team for organising such a fantastic day, with a butterfly treasure hunt, picnic and games. A wonderful time was had by all the children from the Friendship Project. 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, and the fresh air. The NCS team also gave leaflets out for us in and around Stratford the following day, so as to support volunteer recruitment, and were featured on Welcombe Radio too, along with one of the younger friends and some of our volunteers. We are looking for volunteers in Stratford, and are being supported by the Stratford Town Trust for this specific recruitment.

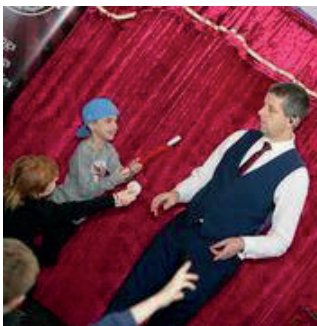


Craft Day, Coventry -September 2018



Forty of us met up at the Training Room in the War Memorial Park in Coventry on a beautiful sunny September day. The idea was to have some fun doing crafts together and also to prepare for the Christmas card and tree decorating. The theme this year was simply, "Christmas". We made a collage which will become this year's Christmas card for the Friendship Project. Also, lots of decorations for taking home but also to decorate the trees in Warwickshire. We are hoping to have three this year: the "usual" one in St Marys Warwick, one in one of the Rugby villages and one in Fillongley. We decorated gingerbread men (and ate them!) and ended up with a picnic. Special thanks to Nicki Cresswell and Sam Hall who prepared most of the ideas, Lois who provided the crisps from Walkers, to the team who worked so tirelessly but even more to the Older and Younger Friends who joined in so enthusiastically. Even the ones who "Don't do craft". We are grateful once again for Andy at Avon Studios Photography in Wellesbourne for once again photographing the art work for our card.

Christmas Party, Warwick Arms, December 2018



What a fun and colourful Christmas Party we had The Warwick Arms. There was a magician, disco, presents and yummy food! The Mayor of Warwick even made an appearance. Our sincere thanks to the charity Evelyn's Gift for organising the party, and presents for our Younger Friends, and for letting us be part of their "Happy Day" memorial celebrations. Everyone had a brilliant time!

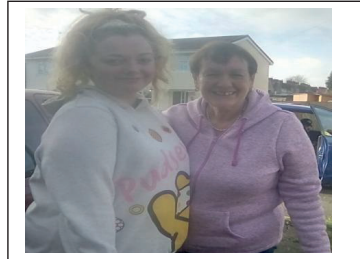
Christmas tree Decorating, St Marys Church, Warwick – 28 November 2019

Our oldest and longest standing Older Friend Joan and her Younger Friend 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. We also had a tree at St Andrews Church in Rugby with decorations from the children and our talented volunteer Sam.



Older Friend Judy's story – ten years ago I attended a local church to see a tribute act to Neil Diamond and came away with a leaflet for the Friendship Project. This was at a time in my life when both of my children were independently living away from home, I was divorced, both my parents had passed away and I was made redundant, so I had more leisure time on my hands. I needed a new challenge and something that would occupy my time, particularly at weekends. I have always enjoyed my time with children particularly the simple things in life like taking the time to watch a snail carry its home to a new destination or watch ants in their busy lives. We forget to see things through children's eyes as we get older and I find it's an excuse to slow down and just have fun.

I was introduced to my Younger Friend ten years ago when she was 7 years old and we became firm friends immediately. Going to the park was her favourite activity at first followed by something to eat but then we started to venture further afield - taking my dog to country parks, swimming, the cinema, ice skating (not my greatest achievement!), museums, bowling, visited Birmingham on the train, National Trust properties, climbing walls, lambing at a farm and many more adventures. Horse riding became her favourite hobby and we have both made many friends at the Fathers Heart Youth Ranch, at Sheepy Magna supports disadvantaged Children with contact with horses and ponies.



I have had a wonderful fun time with my Younger Friend and gained as much from my involvement as my YF has matured into a confident young woman. The Friendship Project is no longer supporting her as she is now 17 years old but our friendship continues. I now have a new Younger Friend and look forward to many more adventures. The whole experience has been very rewarding and has had a major impact on boosting my own self confidence and given me the skill to order a meal at McDonalds!

Younger Friend Caitlin's story: The Friendship Project has made a huge change to my life. It has helped me through good and bad times and I couldn't think of a better way to be supported. The thing I enjoyed most about being a Younger Friend is I entered new environments and gained new experiences. I loved every part of being with the Friendship project and I started gaining the confidence I didn't think I had. Spending time with Judy was amazing and I couldn't have asked for a better Older Friend. All I want to say is thank you to The Friendship Project.

Could you be a volunteer – We have many more children on our waiting lists needing an older friend, and it could be you helping someone like Caitlin. Please contact Karen.Hoy@friendshipproject.co.uk for more information on opportunities available.

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

Jason Ashley

With grateful thanks to Jason Ashley who raised £300 for The Friendship Project, as part of his 50th birthday celebrations pictured here after playing rugby in the snow! This is enough money to fund 30 trips out for our Younger Friend with their Older Friend!



Charity Music Concert

Thank you to Maja Todd for organising a classical music concert where we were the chosen charity. Maja played the cello beautifully as part of her musical trio, and tea and cake provided too.

Our thanks go to Warwick Boat Club for holding a 24 hour Squashathon on 13th October 2018 to raise funds for us. They raised in excess of £1700! Our thanks also for the free lessons offered to our Younger Fiends.



Squashathon – Warwick Boat Club October 2018

- ❖ NFU Mutual in Tiddington kindly gave us 14 sacks full of wonderful presents for our 14 Younger Friends in Stratford. Their kind donations made a number of children have a very Happy Christmas! Thank you.
- ❖ We are always extremely grateful for the fantastic cakes that Free Cakes for Kids UK kindly make for our so many of our Younger Friends Birthdays
- ❖ Recessionaires have funded lessons at Playbox Theatre and Martial Art Lessons for our Younger Friends too



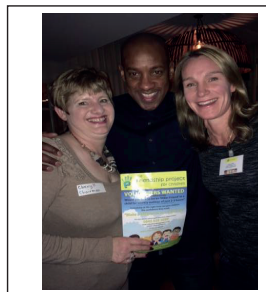
The Croft Preparatory School

The Croft
Preparatory School

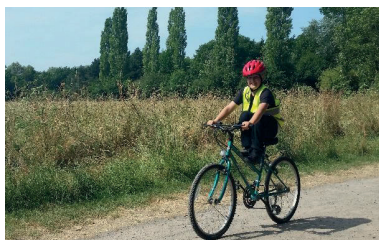
Thank you once again to The Croft Preparatory School in Stratford upon Avon for their decision to choose us as one of their two nominated charities starting from September 2017, along with the local branch of the MND Charity, over a 2 year period to 2019. We are very grateful for all that they are doing to support us. Cheryl and Karen had a wonderful time at their 'Christmas at The Croft' Event enjoying the carols and the magic of Christmas – thank you for having us and our Christmas card stall!

What we've been Up To... Volunteer Get togethers & Older Friend Get Togethers

We arrange 5/6 volunteer Get Togethers throughout the year and several stood out. Cheryll and Fiona meeting Dion Dublin at the Star and Garter at Leamington in February, and a wonderful "Pimms in the Garden" evening, hosted by Cheryll in the summer. Additionally we had a get together at The Jurys Inn, Hinckley Island, where our volunteers were kindly given complimentary health spa and pool access in the afternoon. Our volunteers range in age from 22 to 83. It is always fabulous hearing about their friendships and what they do with their Younger Friends. THANK YOU TO ALL OF OUR WONDERFUL VOLUNTEERS!

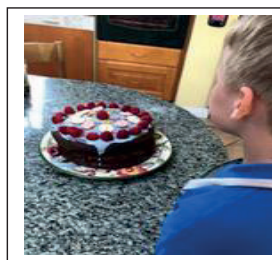


Younger Friends



Thank you so much to our volunteer Elaine for donating a bike to one of our Younger Friends, and our Older Friend David for making it happen. He was also able to buy a helmet, vest and bell through Evelyn's Gift Charity. His Older Friend said that they had to do a little fixing of it before it could be ridden but that his Younger Friend is very intuitive and enjoyed helping to get it working again. They will now be spending most weekends cycling! Our Older Friend keeps the bike at his house, although the Younger Friend always suggests taking it with him (obviously!).

"Yesterday, my Younger Friend made and decorated this amazing Devil's Food chocolate cake for his 12th birthday. Isn't it incredible? He is an avid watcher of The Great British Bake Off and Master chef too. For the main course he asked for his favourite meal: a fry up with two fried eggs and Lashford sausages (they are delish and I can only find them at Notcutts); mushrooms fried in butter, garlic and coriander; frazzled streaky bacon and garlic bread on the side! He has quite a remarkable appetite." We had a game of Bannanagrams before I took him home to show off and share the remaining two thirds of the cake



Some Feedback from our Younger Friends

'He is so totally amazing and kind. I love biking with him and he is really enthusiastic and reliable.'
'I really like going out with my Older Friend because we have loads of fun and we go out on our bikes. He's great.'
'I really like my Older Friend. We have so much fun together but she's leaving and I will miss her. I hope I get another friend.'
'She's a bit crazy but in a fun way. I think she's amazing we have so much fun together.'
'He is so good, he's super kind and we get to go to lots of great places.'

YOU REALLY DO MAKE A DIFFERENCE!!! 'Kate's help and support has helped our daughter at a time of huge change in our family. She lacked confidence because of what had been happening and now she has the confidence to join clubs with others her own age so she is so busy she doesn't have time for the friendship anymore'

Donations Received for Friendship Project 2018

Grateful thanks to those that have donated, our Funders and Fundraisers/Event organisers for 2018, who included the following: -

29th Fund - Heart of England Foundation

Alan Edward Higgs Grant

All Saints Church

Anthony Bourne Foundation Grant

Aubrey Allen

Aviva

Baron Davenport Trust

Carol Dodd

Cheryll Rawbone

Evelyn's Gift

F C Stokes Family Trust

Gallagher

Garfield Weston Charitable Foundation

BM & SJ Hall

Goodwin's the late K Ashford

Hampton Resourcing

Heart of England Coventry Building Society

Heart of England C Youell Family Fund

Heart of England Wesleyan Fund

Jarman Trust

King Henry VII Endowment trust

Ladies First

Lions – Warwick

Meerstock

Pipesource

Provincial Grand Lodge of
Warwickshire

Recessionaires

Results for People

Rotary of Kenilworth

Rotary Club of RLS

St James Place

Star Turtle Disc World

Stratford Town Trust

Terence Hague

The Sheldon Trust

Three Spires Lodge

Warwick Boat Club

Warwick Court Leet

WPCC

Wates Foundation

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.

Ways to donate

Like all charities, The Friendship Project relies on donations from the general public, trusts, organisations, and other charitable benefactors, 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. Our website, www.friendshipproject.co.uk/fundraising includes details of the following, via partner



Payroll Giving

Sponsorship – Online Fundraising – Sponsor Me

Match Funding

One off Card donations

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

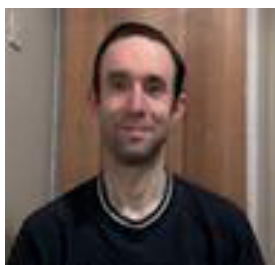
Cheryll Rawbone, c/o 20 Northumberland Road, Leamington Spa, Warwickshire, CV32 6HA.

Trustees News

2018 was a tremendous year for us in terms of fundraising and thanks to Richard Barrett for all his hard work in achieving such a magnificent total, which will help us with our expansion plans across the county, including a new extra area coordinator for North Warwickshire. Our volunteer numbers have increased, and this has been supported by our Operations team. Pauline Higginbottom is specifically thanked for her help with recruitment and training for our new area coordinators, her wise council is highly valued. Michelle our Hon Secretary has efficiently helped make sure that our expenses and salaries have been paid particularly when we were without an active treasurer for most of the year. Thankfully, it's now resolved with Ken Smith's appointment in January 19.

Our president, Michael Coker, was awarded an MBE in the New Year Honours list 2018/9 for services to the Community in Warwickshire.

He said: "he was flattered and surprised by the honour".



Jon Gibbons has joined us as an Older Friends representative on the trustee board. He is a valued Older friend, and we are delighted that he has joined us bring the volunteers voice at the trustee level too. 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. Please feel free to contact him.

Gemma Allardyce was head of Marketing & Promotions for us and left us this year, as did Rachael Escott who had responsibility for events. We would like to thank them for all of their help, particularly in organising several of our very successful Christmas parties, and we wish them all the best for the future.

We are looking to strengthen our trustees and specifically for additional trustees as follows:-

For roles including Compliance/QA, HR/legal, Events, also Operations Management roles, for succession planning. If you Maybe interested or know anyone please contact our Chairman To discuss cheryll.rawbone@friendshipproject.co.uk she is happy to have a coffee and initial chat to give more information and see whether this may be of mutual interest. Check out the Essential Trustee on the Charity Commission Website about the duties of a trustee

www.gov.uk/government/organisations/charity-commission



Welcome and Farewells – Operations team

Farewell to Area Coordinator Nicki Cresswell. Many thanks to her for all her contributions and service. We have welcomed two new Area Coordinators Kelly Furness and Viv Kelsey.



Kelly Furness – Area Coordinator for Rugby & District

When Kelly was 18 she was an Older Friend for the Friendship Project. She found the experience was an invaluable introduction to working with vulnerable children and social care. She has worked as a social worker for the last 18 years in both children and adults services and most recently in the recruitment, training and assessment of prospective foster carers. Kelly feels that the opportunity of working to help and support vulnerable children as an Area Coordinator is a good opportunity to make a difference. She still has some very positive memories of the time she was an older friend and feels that this experience will help her to support and develop friendships. Kelly will also be working as an independent social worker in the fostering sector.

Viv Kelsey - Area Coordinator for North Warwickshire

Prior to joining us Viv has had a variety of roles, including Emergency Control Room for the Fire Service, teaching Firefighters to drive the Fire Engines to emergencies, teaching English overseas in China and being an Estate Agent! More recently she has trained as a therapeutic counsellor and worked in different charities covering quite a lot of areas, including Sexual Abuse and Domestic Violence. Viv also has a small private practice, and does some administrative work for another Charity in Coventry. She feels that the work with the Friendship Project is a very valuable service and something close to her heart.



What we've been Up To... Shows & promotions

- WCAVA Volunteering Fayre – Leamington, Jan 2018.
- WCAVA Volunteering drop in – Stratford, June 2018.
- Nuneaton & Bedworth Community Fayre, July 2018.
- Stratford Business Show, October 2018.
- WCAVA Volunteering Fayre – Rugby, October 2018.
- Kingsley School Christmas Fayre, November 2018.
- The Croft School Christmas Fayre. December 2018.



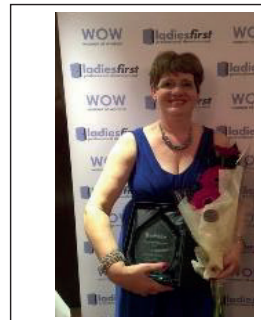
Awards

At our AGM on 24th May 2018 in Coventry, Cheryll Rawbone, Chairman, presented John Hancock with his 30 years volunteering service award for the friendship Project. John has held many different positions with the Friendship Project and is now our Safeguarding Officer. John has a wealth of experience that we all call upon and are so grateful for his ongoing support.



The Friendship Project was selected as a finalist for the Not for Profit Excellence award at the Leamington Business Awards. With a record number of entries this year, the judges had a difficult job and were highly impressed with the quality of entries so to be shortlisted was a fantastic achievement. All finalists were also considered for the Business of the Year Judges' Choice award. The awards ceremony was at The Assembly on the 16th November 2018

Our congratulations go to Friendship Project Chairman Cheryll Rawbone who won 'The Achieves for Charity Award 2018' award in October at Nailcote Hall. The evening was organised by Ladies First and was sponsored by Mander Hadley Solicitors.



In November 2017 we were awarded the SME Coventry & Warwickshire Not for Profit Business of the Year award in a ceremony held at Coombe Abbey, Coventry. We then made the national finals of the UK SME Not for Profit Business Awards for 2018, which took place at Wembley on 7th December 2018. Though could not attend as tickets were too expensive.

Safeguarding



John Hancock our Safeguarding Officer reports that the Safeguarding Officer's role is to have oversight of all the Project's procedures to ensure that safeguarding practise is robust.

The Safeguarding Committee met in November and are made up of: Chair of Trustees; Vice-Chair of Trustees (also Safeguarding Officer); Trustee with responsibility for training; Chair of Operations; and our Local Authority representative with expertise in Safeguarding. The Committee agreed the content and use of the Safeguarding Agreement; received an update on the Family Review process; and discussed a case which was referred to the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer).

Family Safeguarding Reviews are now conducted by Area Co-ordinators with assistance provided by the Safeguarding Officer.

Safeguarding training has been provided for Project members - 3 sessions per year. Until recently, sessions were led by a long-standing Older Friend, whose day job involves providing training provision for two neighbouring Local Authorities. She was assisted in the last training session by the Area Co-ordinator for Rugby. Future sessions will be led by the Area Co-ordinators for Rugby and Stratford until our regular trainer returns from maternity leave.

A valuable role played by the Safeguarding Officer has been day to day advice and guidance to Area Co-ordinators on a range of Safeguarding issues.

The purpose of each Safeguarding training session is 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.

Other dates for safeguarding training for 2019

- Saturday 15 June – 9.15am -12noon at Fillongley Scout Hut
- Tuesday 8 October – 6.30pm -9pm at King Henry VIII school, Coventry

Future Events...

- Sun 4 May – Narrow Boat outing for the North arranged by Older Friend Chris
- Saturday 12th May – Promotional Event seeking volunteers – Asda Leamington Spa
- Saturday 18 May – 11.30-2.00 Event for over 10's in conjunction with Kenilworth Fire Service
- Thursday 6 June – 7-9 Celebration of the work of volunteers/AGM, WASPS Boardroom, RICOH
- Friday 14th June - Promotional Event seeking volunteers – ASDA Nuneaton
- Tuesday 2 July – 7.30-9 Group Supporter Get Together at The Star & Garter, Leamington
- Saturday 20 July – Event arranged by the NCS. Location Coombe Abbey – possibly Go Ape
- Wednesday 11 September – 7.30-9.30 Volunteer Get Together to include Cyber Safety Training
- Saturday 28 September – 11-1 Craft Event, Coventry Memorial Park
- Wednesday 13 November – 7.30-9 Volunteer Get Together, Star & Garter, Leamington
- Saturday 30th November, Atherstone Dickens Christmas Fayre
- December – Christmas Party! Details TBC



Editor's request – please provide feedback, and/or photos. articles for 2019/2020 newsletter to

karen.hoy@friendshipproject.co.uk



the
friendship project
for children

VOLUNTEERS WANTED

Would you like to be an 'Older Friend' to a child for weekly outings of just 2-3 hours?

(Volunteers must be aged 18 or over and preferably with transport)

Friendship at the right time can give children
the confidence they need.

"Make a difference to a child's life"

For more details and an application form, please contact

0845 838 2098*

email: info@friendshipproject.co.uk

twitter: [@friendshipproj](https://twitter.com/friendshipproj)

facebook: [/TheFriendshipProjectForChildren](https://www.facebook.com/TheFriendshipProjectForChildren)

or visit our website

www.friendshipproject.co.uk



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