



Young People
and Children First

Newsletter Winter 2023

WWW.YOUNGPEOPLEANDCHILDRENFIRST.ORG.UK

In this newsletter

- Note from the CEO
- A resident's story - moving on from care
- News from support services
- Update on fundraising and events
- How to donate
- Dates for your diaries
- Acknowledgments
- Keep in touch

Note from the CEO



Happy New Year to you all. I am still getting over the fact we are now in 2023!

As always, our staff and supporters went above and beyond this Christmas to ensure our young people had beautifully decorated houses, sparkling Christmas trees, lovely food, gifts, and were not alone over the festive period. I cannot thank everyone enough. We, and our young people, are now back into the 'daily routine' of school, college and work, though with lots to look forward to.

We will be working hard this year to expand our service to provide move-on flats for our young people. We will be working closely with our supporters and partners to achieve this. Moving our young people into affordable housing is a huge challenge. There simply is not enough. By providing our own move on housing, our young people can continue to thrive, access our support, whilst being independent and having their own space. We look forward to keeping you up to date on our progress.

I'm delighted to introduce Richard Harper to YPACF as Maintenance/Caretaker. He not only is looking after our houses and gardens but also teaching our young people maintenance tasks. Welcome to the team Richard.

Enjoy our newsletter and I hope to see you all at this year's 3k Fun Run at Greenham Common. I'll be the one dressed as a lion again 😊.

Yours, Tracy Underwood

A resident's story - Moving on from care

During National Care Leavers week in October, we took the opportunity to raise awareness of the issues that care leavers very often face. We were very visible within the local community and had a stall in Hungerford, Newbury and Thatcham markets. Our CEO Tracy was interviewed by BBC Radio Berkshire and we used social media to share statistics and stories

It was during that week that we shared Sabrina's story. In September 2022 Sabrina* moved into her own flat after living at one of our charity homes for three years and she very kindly allowed us to share her story.

We share it with you again in case you missed it.



Sabrina's story

When Sabrina* was 6, she and her younger sister were taken into care. The sisters would spend weekdays with foster parents and weekends with respite foster carers.

At 18 years old Sabrina left her foster placement and moved into a room provided for her by charity Step by Step¹. When the second placement broke down she found herself homeless and sofa surfing.

Sabrina suffers with, among other things, Emotional Unstable Personality Disorder² (EUPD). She found it extremely difficult to settle anywhere.

Sabrina's social worker recommended that she contact our charity Young People and Children First³ (YPACF). YPACF provides a safe home for vulnerable young people between the ages of 16 and 25 who are care leavers or homeless. We provide these young people with a safe and comfortable home, life skills, work and learning opportunities that will support them physically and emotionally as they step towards the ultimate aim: successful independent living.

In February 2019, Sabrina said she was scared when she moved in to YPACF accommodation, Rebecca House. Rebecca House is a three bedroomed family sized home in which two other young

¹<https://www.stepbystep.org.uk/>

²<https://mind.se/en/information/psychiatric-diagnoses/emotionally-unstable-personality-disorder-eupd/>

³<https://youngpeopleandchildrenfirst.org.uk>

care leavers and a live-in supervisor lived. She didn't know anyone in the house, and it took getting used to. But she did settle in, and she continued her volunteering job at a local charity shop.

Sabrina said 'Amy was a constant figure in the house and I would see her all the time. She would do support evenings with us where we would all do something together. After a while it felt like home' (Amy is a support worker at our charity).

Sabrina lived at Rebecca House for over three years. Recently, she moved into her own place for the first time. A lovely one bedroomed flat nearby. Our support worker Sarah was on hand to help Sabrina every step of the way.

When she moved in the flat it was completely unfurnished, uncarpeted and it needed a lick of paint. The flat is now painted and carpeted and Sarah and Sabrina enjoyed shopping for furniture together. It's now warm and homely.

'I don't know where I'd be without the charity (YPACF⁴). They don't just chuck you out. They support you. They helped me get my name on the list to get this place and set my bills up with me'

Sabrina is still volunteering at the same charity shop and she loves her new home. Sarah (her key support worker from YPACF) is a regular visitor, as are Sabrina's sister and her 10 month old niece who is enjoying crawling around and exploring her Auntie's home.

We are so proud of Sabrina. Seeing her happy and settled in her own home is such a pleasure and is testament to the courage and resilience of remarkable young care leavers.



News from support services

The support services team have continued to support our young people in our properties and in the community. Christmas can often be a difficult time of year and we were overwhelmed with donations of cakes, hampers, and gift vouchers from supporters.

⁴<https://youngpeopleandchildrenfirst.org.uk/our-story/>

We took all our residents and support team for a Christmas meal at The Berkshire Arms which all the residents enjoyed thoroughly. We are only able to provide activities like this due to the ongoing support and donations - thank you to you all.

We continue to provide group activities such as bowling and trips to the cinema and group cooking in the houses with some of the marvellous items in our donated hampers.

The staff team have been supporting our young people with the impact of the cost of living crisis. Our young people that have moved on to independent living have found this particularly hard. They have, at times, have been so concerned about the cost of gas and electricity they have been reluctant to turn on heating in the very cold weather. The cost of food is another concern.

Our support workers are helping both current residents and those that have recently moved on with budgeting and advice on cooking on a budget.

The team recently completed a training workshop with Time 2 Talk, a local charity who's aim is to promote the mental health and emotional wellbeing of young people aged 11-25 in West Berkshire. We are looking to collaborate further in the new year with Time 2 Talk by bringing their service into our properties for our residents.

Fundraising and events

Volunteer Tea Party



Thank you to everyone who joined us in our office for tea and cake in November. We really enjoyed having the opportunity to get together, reconnect and share news and updates. We plan to hold another tea party this year to which everyone will be invited. We and our young people value our volunteers greatly. We really couldn't provide such a wonderful service without them.

WE ARE LOOKING FOR MORE VOLUNTEERS!

General events volunteers

Could you be called on to help us with our community events? This may include manning a stall with one other for a couple of hours, setting up or closing down a stall. It could also include being a steward at a fun run or serving teas/coffees at a community event.

We participate in a minimum of five events per year such as Thatcham Family Fun Day, Thatcham Christmas Lights Switch on, 3k Fun Run and always need help at these events.

Skills required – friendly, sociable, team player.

If you'd like to know more please email info@ypacf.org.uk⁵.

Christmas events



We thoroughly enjoyed being part of a whole host of events over the last few months of 2022. We attended Douai Abbey quiz night, Thatcham Christmas Lights switch on, the Pangbourne College Christmas Fayre, a wonderful coffee morning in Cold Ash, a fellowship at Burghfield Methodist Church hall, tea with Bradfield ladies golf club and two evenings of carols with Kingsclere choir.

We are a small team and value our relationships in the local community. If you would like to partner with our charity, please email info@ypacf.org.uk.

Dates for your diaries

Fun 3km walk/run

Sunday 26th February 2023, 10:30am, Greenham Common RG19 6HX

Family 3km fun walk/run

Sunday 26th February 2023, Greenham Common, RG19 6HX

Children, people of all ages and dogs on leads are very welcome.

A fundraising event for our charity. £15 for a family, £5 for an individual

Following the success of our fun run in Feb 2022 we are going to do it again! Please join us!

⁵<mailto:info@ypacf.org.uk>

It's such a lovely event and a great way to spend an hour or so on a Sunday morning with friends and family. Children and people of all ages are welcome to walk, jog or run a 3km route on Greenham Common. Dogs on leads are very welcome. Fancy dress welcome!

To join us, please go to <https://www.jumblebee.co.uk/ypacffunrunfeb2023> to register and purchase a ticket, £15 for a family, £5 for an individual. You do not need to get sponsors, just bring your ticket and get ready for a lovely walk/run/coffee/cake.

Tea, coffee, water and cake will be available to purchase.

We will be dressed up as lions, dinosaurs and teddies and last year we were joined by Batman and Robin, fairies, teddy bears and lots of friendly dogs. See you there!

Spectacular race night



Save the Date: Evening of Friday 21st April 2023 - venue Newbury area tbc

Will you join us for a spectacular, fun filled evening of racing? Your chance to have a flutter, win lovely prizes and see your horse come in first. We will be holding a race night on Friday 21st April in Newbury. Bring colleagues, friends and family along and you can bet that you'll have a great night! Professionally hosted with a bar.

Tickets will be on sale for tables and individual's and we will be looking for companies to sponsor the races!

Please put the date in your calendar. More details to follow shortly.

How to donate



All donations, whatever their size and regularity, are much appreciated and enable us to offer continued support to disadvantaged young people in West Berkshire.

WEST BERKSHIRE LOTTERY

You can support us and be in with a chance of winning £25,000!

At least 60% from each ticket sold goes to support a West Berkshire charity.

Support Young People and Children First when you play West Berkshire Lottery - West Berkshire Lottery⁶

DONATE MONTHLY

You can set up a direct debit and donate monthly.

Regular donations make such difference to our charity.

Donate | Young people and children first⁷

⁶<https://www.westberkshirelottery.co.uk/support/young-people-and-children-first>

⁷<https://youngpeopleandchildrenfirst.org.uk/donate-2/>

Acknowledgements

We are so fortunate to have so many kind people to thank and YPACF, staff and young people thank them all sincerely. Of special note are:

Volunteers Angie and Martin for helping us on our stall.

Volunteers John and Elaine for doing tip runs for us and helping us to collect furniture.

Alec Smith for raising money for us with his amazing Halloween and Christmas lights.

Alicia for giving us a fantastic Christmas cake to include in our raffle.

An amazing local golf club!

Supporter Teresa for making ceramic Christmas decorations for us to sell and for donating art supplies to our residents.

Andy and the team at Foundation IT for donating office furniture to us and for the amazing sofa which will put to good use in our charity houses.

New supporter Natasha for donating bedroom furniture which has made a massive difference to the home of one of our young people that has moved into their own accommodation.

Karoon for always supporting our events with lovely cakes and for making amazing Christmas cakes for each of our houses. Teresa for the wonderful food hampers for each of our houses.

Sarah for giving each of our young people a gift voucher for Christmas.

AND Richard Rogers from Recruited UK for running 10k on Christmas eve and raising over £1000 for us! ★★☆☆☆

Support from businesses, groups and organisations

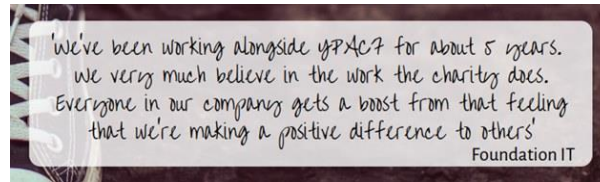
Our sincere thanks go to the following businesses, groups and organisations that have made donations to our charity in the form of money, time, items or prizes for our raffle.



We are looking for companies and groups to support us!

Becoming a corporate supporter is an excellent way for a business of any size to use the skills of employees to help others. It can engage staff and generate good feeling and positive publicity of your company.

If you would like to find out more please get in touch we would love to hear from you
info@ypacf.org.uk



Keep in touch

We would love for you to stay in touch.

We can't email you if you have not given us permission to do so. If you would like to receive quarterly newsletters like these, the occasional invitation or request for help, please email sarahmcgill@ypacf.org.uk and she will add you to our email distribution list.

We do also use our Facebook⁸ and Instagram⁹ pages regularly to share news. Please search YPACF to find us.

Our newsletters, blogs, volunteering opportunities, job vacancies and details of how to donate can all be found on our website www.youngpeopleandchildrenfirst.org.uk¹⁰.

Thank you from all the team at Young People and Children First.

⁸<https://www.facebook.com/YPACF>

⁹<https://www.instagram.com/ypacf/>

¹⁰<https://www.youngpeopleandchildrenfirst.org.uk>