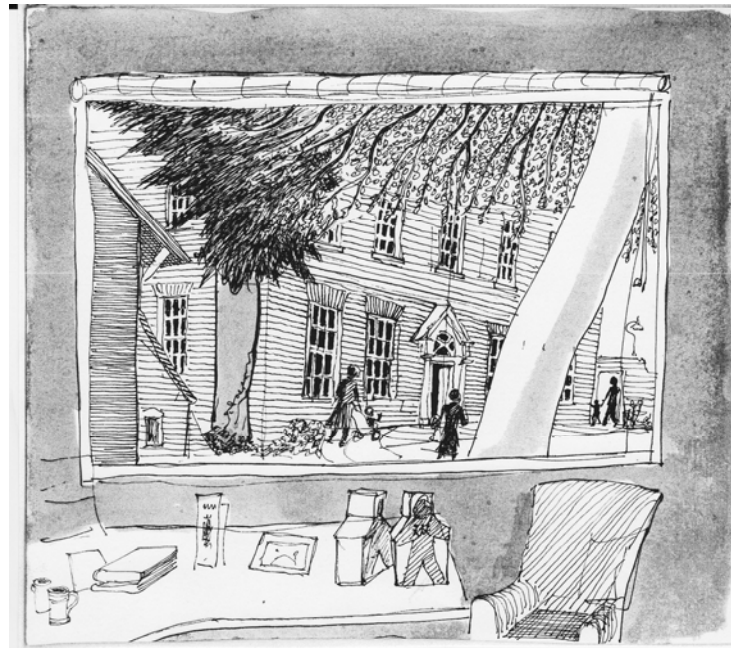


FRIENDS OF THE FAMILY WINCHESTER

ANNUAL REPORT



January 2010 – March 2011



Date of AGM

Friday 8th July – 2pm

Quaker Meeting House

Our thanks go to Andrew Rutter (Trustee) for the sketch of the view from “Hadfield Cottage 1” on the front cover.

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FRIENDS OF THE FAMILY – MEMBERS (Winchester)

January 2010 – March 2011

FOUNDERS Ann Titman and Dorothy Richardson

TRUSTEES

Chair Bishop John Dennis

Secretary Andrew Rutter

Treasurer Annie Manly (To July)
Helen Cramp (From July ongoing)

Committee Members Marcia Cunningham
Maureen Crossman (Retired)
Dr Ian Hadfield (Retired)
Jonathan Flory
Angela Moody
Chris Morse
Pamela Peskett
Vivienne Wheeler

Honorary Trustee Dorothy Richardson

STAFF

Under 5s Project Leader Colette Dunford

5s to 13s Project Leader Samantha Hunt

Play Leader Susan Thomas (to April)
Pat Slade (from May ongoing)

Assistant Play Leader Pat Slade (to April)
Rebecca Ryder (May to December)

Consultant Psychiatrist Dr Ian Hadfield (to September)
Dr Richard Fry (from December)

Admin Assistant Vanessa Kitt

VOLUNTEERS

Under 5s Project

Libby
Elaine
Nigel
Iris
Flora
Angela
Ellen
Joan
Jackie
Valerie
Jean

5s to 13s Project

Vanessa
Jenny
Ann
Lara
Elisa
Angela
Chris (to August)
Namrata (to Sept)
Gerda
Lesley
Pat
Caroline
Ceara

FRIENDS OF THE FAMILY (Winchester)

AIM

- ❖ Friends of the Family aims to transform the lives of children born into vulnerable families.

OBJECTIVES

- ❖ To offer a safe and non-threatening environment where families can realise their potential.
- ❖ To help families to help themselves by discovering their own strengths.
- ❖ To facilitate through play, activities and nurturing relationships the emotional, social and physical development of vulnerable children in these families.
- ❖ To offer respect and sustained emotional support to families, co-operating with and reaching beyond the activities of other services.

CHAIRMAN OF TRUSTEES REPORT

This has of course been a very difficult year for charities, including ourselves, and the future looks like a very challenging one too. Friends of the Family was set up eighteen years ago with a very specific need in view and has worked faithfully over those years in line with their aims and objectives to meet the needs of an enormous number of vulnerable families and children. Friends of the Family has every intention to continue and thrive for many years to come.

We owe enormous thanks to both our paid staff and our volunteers for their willingness over these past months to go the extra mile and help us to keep financially viable. Our particular thanks to Colette and Samantha, our Project Leaders, to Pat Slade, our Play Leader and to Helen Cramp, who has taken over as Treasurer with quiet capability. I would also like to thank new Trustees Vivienne Wheeler and Chris Morse, both of whom have brought their insights and vigour into the essential fundraising which has to underpin all that we do. We owe much too to Pamela Peskett, our Senior Fundraiser, and indeed to the willingness and tireless work of so many. It has been a year of tremendous teamwork. The reports that follow spell it all out clearly and succinctly and we know will be of interest to all our readers.

For me, this is the last report that I shall be writing, as I am to stand down at the 2011 Annual General Meeting. I shall leave Friends of the Family with much regret after my years with you all. I thank everyone for their friendship and co-operation. It is a great work which is done here and I know it will continue and thrive whatever difficulties may be met in the years to come. I wish the Trustees, the Project Leaders, volunteers and most of all, of course, the children and families, a great and happy future.

Bishop John Dennis
Chairman of Trustees

UNDER 5s PROJECT LEADER'S REPORT

This last year has been a challenge. Dealing with the uncertainty in the voluntary sector, where funding for charities has focused attention on the specifics of what we do and how we go about it in the year ahead.

As a result we have had to re-assess our priorities and certain cuts had to be made wherever possible. This meant we had to say goodbye to Rebecca Ryder, our Assistant Play Leader, who brought much creativity and energy to the role.

The work continued despite this due, to a large degree, to the determination and commitment of the volunteers who attended every week.

They have provided the setting and stability of the mums and children group and, in many cases, turned their skills to identifying and supporting fundraising opportunities wherever they can be found.

The Mums Group has continued to flourish and the mums themselves are taking up further education in maths, English and childcare. They are becoming able to find employment and/or university places in the subjects that they feel passionate about.

We are pleased to welcome Dr Richard Fry, Consultant Child, Family and Adolescent Psychiatrist, as our Consultant. Dr Fry has kindly offered to take over the role from Dr Ian Hadfield who has done such an amazing job for many years.

We have *Hadfield Cottages 1+2* to remind us daily of Ian's many contributions to Friends of the Family over the years.

With the many issues that charities are facing the Government strategy is:

2.2. It links to the County Council's Budget Strategy: *Tough Times require Tough Decisions*, and the decision supports corporate strategy to:

- *make Hampshire safer and more secure for all by **ensuring early intervention services are offered to the most vulnerable families** and safeguarding procedures in caring for young children are followed*
- *maximise well-being by ensuring that families and young children continue to access a range of services which enhance well-being*
- *enhance our quality of place by providing services within local communities.*

(Decision made 27th May 2011 by John Coughlan, Director of Children's Services, and Tracey Sanders, Head of Services for Young Children)

In the future, we will be required to increase our networking and collaboration with other agencies in Winchester in order to ensure that we can keep the unique service we provide at Friends of the Family. To this end, I am working with other support provisions to further the existing services by, for example, setting up a Dads Group and addressing post-natal depression in young families.

I am looking forward to a successful year ahead, in which our mums and children continue to achieve their goals and build the life they aspire to.

Colette Dunford

Under 5s Project Leader

PLAY LEADER'S REPORT

"1, 2, 3, go!" As a baby clamours to be put on the slide by her mum, older children adventurously try sliding lying down or even on their sides. Again, the beautiful garden has been a feature of the year, staying out for the whole morning as long into the autumn as we dared, then continuing to take the children out after their mid-morning snack, weather permitting. Indoors a toddler starting to talk says: "Go!" to a toy train at the top of the bridge before pushing it down, then lines up small cars and says: "1, 2, 3, go!" before picking up one in each hand to put at the top of a spiralling slope.

We have had the pleasure of encouraging several children to learn to talk by our attentive listening, even more rewarding with late talkers than the early ones. Our baby is now walking and climbing confidently. She has made great strides in allowing Mummy to join the Mums Group. An older child, whilst not yet 4 ½, has settled happily into school.

The year is punctuated by special events such as the excitement of our annual Easter egg-hunt in the garden and learning to blow out birthday cake candles, before opening a small gift.

At their Easter workshop, *All about Me*, the older children enjoyed making clay medals to celebrate their achievements, such as being kind to a younger sibling.

Although sad to say farewell to Susan as play leader, our shared lunch in May in the garden was also a happy occasion to celebrate the loving care she had shown to us all.

She still helps us out from time to time as an occasional play volunteer and it is good to know that we have someone so experienced to call on.

Susan also continues to tend our small Friends of the Family garden under the office window. The children love watering it, often raising their watering cans so that they can feel that even the tallest flowers are getting a drink. Then they eagerly wait their turns to have their cans refilled.

Simultaneously, with taking on my new responsibilities and embarking on an Open University Early Years course, I was also pleased to welcome our new Assistant Play Leader, Beccy, bringing fresh ideas, energy and enthusiasm. She ended the year by planning and co-ordinating the Christmas party, including the children decorating homemade reindeer antlers with bells attached, which they then wore to dance in. Although unfortunately too ill to attend the party, Father Christmas arrived a week later much to the delight of the children.

In September, I renewed my paediatric First Aid certificate by taking a 12-hour course with the Red Cross. As well as the opportunity to practise resuscitation and dealing with choking on the training dummies (adult, child and baby), one of the highlights was learning to bandage a child's hand so that it looked like a bunny!

I have also found it interesting and challenging studying 16 hours a week for the (new) Certificate in Early Years Practice, professionally recognised at Level 4, a higher level than the minimum currently be required by OfSTED to lead any Early Years setting. It can also potentially be used as the first module of the Foundation Degree in Early Years. I am very grateful to all the families and staff (including volunteers, of course!) for their invaluable support in this.

Some thoughts on my Open University Early Years course

Almost all the other students I met worked either in day nurseries or reception classes or were child minders and could compare notes with others in the same situation, whereas the unique

nature of Friends of the Family meant that I had to blaze my own trail. Even the task of drawing a diagram showing my position within the organisation wasn't straightforward as we were not set up with the standard hierarchical structure. We are not given directives from 'the top', but instead from the Project Leader's central position, using ground knowledge and being closely supported by staff and volunteers, including trustees. Thus my diagram was not triangular but circular like a nest in which children (with their mums) can shelter whilst learning and developing.

I had thought that similarly I would have problems showing our position within national frameworks and policies so was pleasantly surprised to find that here we seemed to fit more comfortably than other settings. Working with 'vulnerable' families is stated as a priority of Every Child Matters, and we have always emphasised the 'unique child' of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) by having an exceptionally high staff/child ratio and encouraging and supporting child-led play, "*a balance between child-initiated and adult led play-based activities*" also being required by the EYFS, and, apparently, a challenging concept to many Early Years workers. I was delighted when my tutor commented at the end of an assignment that I had proved the importance of child-led play, which I had not set out to do.

One of our course resources: *Thinking about change*, particularly referred to the need for Early Years settings to embrace multi-agency and multi-disciplinary working within and outside our setting. Our monthly team meetings have always involved group reflection from different professional perspectives on the needs of the children, the insights of our Consultant Child Psychiatrist being invaluable. And I am sure that I was unusual in citing attending a domestic violence forum this year as part of my multi-agency experience.

However, I am glad that we are OfSTED exempt as that allows us much more flexibility, which I think is important in our specialised position, whilst still being able to use the EYFS as a valuable resource and guidance to good practice.

I feel that my and our approach at Friends of the Family was validated when I was awarded an overall module grade of Distinction!

Patricia Slade

Under 5s Play Leader

5s to 13s PROJECT LEADER'S REPORT

Whilst I was on maternity leave at the beginning of 2010, the existing volunteers of the 5s to 13s Project were supported by Trustee, Marcia Cunningham, former under 5s Project Leader, Gill O'Shea, and volunteer befriender, Gerda Patrick Smith. They offered regular supervision to the six volunteers who were placed with families at the time and helped to keep the Project on an even keel in my absence. Also during my maternity leave I was able to run a successful training programme for a further six volunteers. This enabled me to expand the Project as soon as I returned to work in June 2010 and I began matching and placing the volunteers with families straight away. Currently we have seven families being supported by volunteers, making a total of twelve families having received support since the beginning of the project.

During the year we have said goodbye to one volunteer and three families. Family 10 moved out of the area, Family 11 decided that the timing was not quite right at the moment to have a volunteer. Family 7 also decided that they no longer needed their volunteer to visit them on a regular basis because they now felt confident that they had worked out some of the issues they had been facing. During 2010, one mother successfully undertook a Level 1 childcare course at college and then enrolled on the Level 2 course. She also took a part-time job working in a nursery supporting a little boy with special needs. In her exit interview this mother was asked how her Friends of the Family volunteer had helped her. She wrote:

"My volunteer was a god send just at a time when we needed it most, she gave me the support to regain my confidence, both as a parent and as a person" and "she was a catalyst for me to do things that I believed were right for my family."

The befriending role is not everyone's cup of tea, but those who undertake it find the rewards from the project are numerous. One of the volunteers who left the project to take on a full-time work, after a year's commitment to a family said: *"as the situation of befriending is quite artificial, it is easy to forget that it takes time for bonds to form and for trust to develop ... I did not understand or appreciate that this is the way the relationship develops until much later."* She had been working with her family for a whole year and it was only in the last couple of visits that the mother felt comfortable enough to *"pour her heart out"* to her volunteer.

Volunteers support families in many different ways. They provide a regular, consistent presence once a week in the family home, helping with homework, cooking, playing games and supporting children to attend after-school activities. They also provide a listening ear to both children and adults in the family and some volunteers act as advocate at school meetings and reviews, eg: Team Around the Child or Family Meetings and Special Needs Reviews. Some even offer practical support such as taking families to EMMAUS to purchase furniture.

We have been very fortunate to have been able to organise free training sessions for all the Friends of the Family volunteers. Courtesy of the Children and Adolescents Mental Health Service, a session on *Depression and its Impact on Family Life* was run, and another session on *Safeguarding Children* was provided free by the Winchester Locality Team Manager. Both these training sessions were well attended and the feedback was very positive.

From funding provided by the Winchester Rotary Club, we have also recently been able to provide a day's training on Alcohol Awareness to all staff and volunteers at Friends of the Family. This training was not only interesting and informative in terms of our professional role, when supporting families and children where alcohol maybe an issue, but also from a personal perspective, especially when we all learnt what constitutes a measure and how to work out the number of units that are in different alcoholic drinks!

The 5s to 13s Project received 13 referrals in 2010 from a variety of sources including CAMHS, Home Start, Children’s Services and local schools. As our resources are limited to the number of trained volunteers available, we have not been able to offer support to all of these families. However, those that have been successfully matched to a volunteer are all making good progress. We are now looking to the next training programme and have been actively recruiting new volunteers to the Project.

Statistics for the 5s to 13s Project for 2010

Total number of volunteers trained to date	15
Number of trained volunteers available to volunteer	10
Number of volunteers who left the project	1
Number of families supported in 2010	11
Number of families who left the project	3
Total number of children in families	28
Number of focus children	10
Number of volunteer visits made to families	185
Number of new referrals	13

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the 5s to 13s volunteers and the families that they support, for their commitment and often personal generosity into making this project grow and thrive. With recent lean times for all “families” it has sometimes seemed difficult to be sure whether we would be able to continue to offer this unique service known as the 5s to 13s Project, to all of those who have requested it. However, I know that with the continued determination of all Friends of the Family supporters, we will be able to raise enough funds to continue to provide this support and encouragement to the families and their children, secure in the knowledge that it really does make a difference.

Samantha Hunt

5s to 13s Project Leader

FUNDRAISER'S REPORT

We were very disappointed that the Local Authority was unable to give us our annual grant in 2010. However, the newly formed Fundraising Team of Vivienne Wheeler, Chris Morse, and myself with support from Iris Gould, got into action and developed a very successful programme of fundraising events. This included a popular quiz evening which will now be an annual event and will be held on Friday 14th October. This has supported us over a very difficult period and will now continue to bring in part of our annual income.

The Qbox* project, instigated by the late David Quayle of B&Q, is also on-going, bringing in almost £2,000 a year thanks to our 16 *Collectors* collecting from 160 boxes.

We would like to thank the private trusts and the Police Authority for their regular donations and Waitrose for choosing us to be one of their charities.

Finally, our thanks go to the local churches, many singers and individual donors who give us their encouraging support.

Pamela Peskett

Fundraiser and Trustee

***If you would like to give a home to a Qbox to collect those cluttering coppers, please phone Pamela on: 01962 866042.**

TREASURER'S REPORT

I took over the Treasurer role from Annie Manly in July 2010. At that time the bank accounts with Charities Aid Foundation were duly amended and the signatories are currently:

- Rt Rev John Dennis, Chairman
- Mr A Rutter, Secretary
- Mrs P Peskett, Trustee
- Mrs C Dunford, Project Leader
- Mrs H Cramp, Treasurer.

The Trustees agreed during 2010 to change the Charity's year end to March, so the accounts are for a 15-month period.

The economic climate has not made it easy to source funds to continue our valuable projects, nevertheless, with much resourcefulness, we have managed to keep our heads above water. The challenge will be to build on this in the new financial year.

The total income for the **15 month period** was £36,924 (2009 – £50,790), and total expenditure was £46,967 (2009 – £43,141).

Bank balances held with Charities Aid Foundation Bank at the year end total £14,244 (2009 – £26,973) and cash balances £48 (2009 – £12). Further grants of £2,750 were received during the year but have been accounted for separately as they relate to future expenditure.

I would like to record my thanks to the Trustees for the help and support they have provided during my first year in this role.

Full accounts will be available at the Annual General Meeting and will be supplied on request by the Treasurer.

Helen Cramp

Treasurer