

Friends *of the* Family  
Annual Review  
April 2011 – March 2012

Trustees

Chair – Viv Wheeler  
Vice Chair – Angela Moody  
Secretary – Andrew Rutter  
Honorary Treasurer - Jonathan Flory  
Marcia Cunningham  
Chris Morse  
Pamela Peskett

Administrator – Helen Cramp

Under 5s Project Staff and Volunteers

Project Leader – Colette Dunford  
Play Leader – Pat Slade  
Marcia Cunningham  
Elaine Denness  
Nigel Drew  
Iris Gould  
Jean Hayward  
Flora McCallum  
Angela Moody  
Susan Thomas  
Valerie Wright  
Charlie Wright

5s to 13s Project Staff and Volunteers

Project Leader – Samantha Hunt  
Judith Davis  
Nigel Drew  
Vanessa Ellis  
Jane Horton  
Ann Lee  
Elisa McGarry (until October 2011)  
Lara Masters  
Gerda Patrick-Smith  
Lesley Phillips  
Claire Pigott  
Pat Stephens  
Caroline Ward  
Ceara Watson



## Chair's Report

This has been my first year as Chair of Friends of the Family which has now become a limited company and it has been an action packed year.

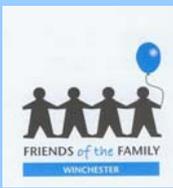
In this time I have come to recognise the immensely important job we do supporting families when it is needed. No one prepares us for the demanding job of being a parent but when this is complicated by complex family issues, who do you turn to if there is no nuclear family nearby? I am constantly impressed by the commitment of our project leaders. Colette Dunford manages the Under 5s Project with her Play Leader, Pat Slade on Tuesdays and Fridays. Sam Hunt leads the 5s to 13s Project and also prepares our attractive seasonal newsletters and publicity. They professionally manage their families and volunteers as well as working in the community to make Friends of the Family better known.

As Trustees we have recognised the difficulty of raising sufficient funds to maintain the work we do, however, despite some unsuccessful grants our fundraising has had a very impressive outcome this year, along with our new membership, enabling us to feel more confident about our future. Local fundraising has also made us better known within the Winchester locality.

May I say a huge thank you to Pamela Peskett who retires from the board of Trustees this year. She has worked tirelessly for Friends of the Family as Chair, and as an invaluable fundraiser. Her County Council and local connections have been very beneficial to us and we will miss her but wish her well. Also, I would like to thank the local Quakers who make our work possible, providing such a special venue within such a wonderful setting at their meeting house.

As Trustees we are not reticent, earlier in the year through a day's evaluation process, we were given the opportunity to nominate strategies for the continued future of our special charity. I look forward to the successes of the coming year, working with a dedicated team of Trustees.

Viv Wheeler  
Chair



## Under 5s Project Leader's Report

It is with great pleasure that I can report on the year from May 2011 – July 2012 with immense positivity and pride. The Mums group continues to evolve with families growing their own identities and fulfilling their ambitions...

We have mums who have found their careers and others who are able to be the person they want to be rather than that which has appeared prescribed for them. Another who has worked really hard to get accepted, conditionally, at university to do Occupational Therapy. Our children have also come on, developing and embarking on relationships, sometimes for the first time, in a healthy and safe environment.

The richness of the people who contribute to this environment is immense. Our volunteers, without whom we could not provide such an array of opportunities for the mums and children to be who they are, continue to provide the commitment and consistency necessary for our families who often have no experience of extended families and the security they provide.

This summer we are piloting a Dads group. It has long been our intention to source a provision to enable dads to have similar opportunities as the Mums group, to learn about who they are as parents and how they can make the best experience possible of parenting despite the often limited experiences they had. It is a joint venture in more ways than one. We want to engage the Dads and involve them in their developing roles in their families. We are offering this in conjunction with the YMCA in Winchester who have joined us in working to achieve this outcome.

The Trustees, once again, have worked tirelessly to keep Friends of the Family on a course that is ever innovative and true to our aims. They have fought hard to identify opportunities for funding as the ever growing demand on our finances and resources continues unabated and as always the Quakers are the bedrock of our foundation. The venue and commitment they offer to Friends of the Family and their contribution to our society of young families is immeasurable and we all really appreciate it.

Colette Dunford  
Under 5s Project Leader

## Under 5s Group Members thoughts...

I have been attending Friends of the Family group since my son was two months old. He had just come from hospital after having an operation. In the year that we have been coming to group I have seen immensely great changes in my life and a vast improvement in my mood. I have suffered with severe anorexia and depression, which has almost evaporated during my time spent at group.

I have always been a single mum and without any family members to support me and my son, we would have fallen apart without Friends of the Family. There are no other groups that provide anything even remotely similar to the support that Friends of the Family offer. We are in desperate need for Friends of the Family to continue as it is the surrogate family we have always needed. We owe them our every happiness.



Picture by Finlay aged 18 months

## Committed Under 5s Volunteers

I feel very lucky to have discovered Friends of the Family and been accepted as a volunteer. That word 'accepted' is important as I felt from the start that I had stepped into a magic circle in which each member was valued and felt valuable. Our aim is to provide a service for young families, but I know that my fellow volunteers feel that Friends of the Family is a service for us too, giving us a chance to feel part something very special.

I look back over my few years as a volunteer and think of the mums and children who have arrived, nervous and suffering the effects of all sorts of emotional damage, and see how they begin to come in on a Tuesday or Friday morning like a member of a family arriving at a home where they are included, welcomed and solaced. For so many of our mums we become a surrogate family, trusted and loved.

Not all endings are happy, but I can recall so many success stories; mums who have grown confidence to take courses and gain qualifications, separate from abusive partners, conquer addictions and postnatal depression and become more able to cope with the stresses and strains of family life. Children who initially had to be coaxed in, and then wouldn't let their mums out of their sight, eventually start to run in, eager to play with their favourite toys. Mums start to form mutually supportive bonds with each other, which continue independent of Friends of Family and children come out of their isolation and co-operatively play together, learning to share.

Many cups of tea and coffee are consumed, snack time for the children, with the checked cloth laid on the table is a time for sharing and relaxing, babies contentedly chewing on breadsticks and older ones browsing the healthy selection of food we prepare. The monthly shared lunch is an informal picnic and feels like a truly family occasion.

I thank my lucky stars that I found, and joined, Friends of the Family because my involvement in it has enriched my life so much. Long may it continue.

Iris Gould

Having realised in March that I had been volunteering for ten years at Friends of the Family I wondered, as I often do, how all the young children who had entered the door at Colebrook Street are getting on. I know I have learnt a lot from them and I can only hope some of my own and my co-volunteers better attributes have "brushed off" on them. It has been immense fun trying!

Nigel Drew



## 5s to 13s Project Leader's Report

I am very proud to say that 5s to 13s Project is now in its fourth year and continues to thrive with a growing team of dedicated and committed volunteers.

In the past year 11 volunteers have supported 11 families and their children in the Winchester area. The dedicated volunteers have made regular visits to the families in their own homes offering them support and encouraging them to find their own solutions to the issues they are facing. With this support the families who come on board with this project have grown and made significant changes to their own lives. These achievements have included families moving home, parents undertaking voluntary work and children catching up their reading age.

As this unique befriending service grows and develops, its reputation for reliable, committed support for struggling families is becoming more recognised by referrers. A referrer, who has recommended seven families to this project, has said:

“The 5s to 13s Project is an invaluable resource. Everyone is aware of the cut backs that have been made in services affecting our young families. This voluntary project has produced people who have offered vital support to families who for one reason or another have not met the criteria of other resources. I have had feed back from several families saying what a difference the volunteers have made to them at a time when they were really struggling.”

However, recruitment of volunteers to this project is always a challenge and sometimes families have to be placed on the “waiting list”, until a volunteer whose skills and attributes match the unique needs of the family can be found and trained. In our developing experience we have found that when the families are provided with non judgmental support at a time that they need it the most, they are able to make significant changes to improve their children's and their own lives.

Samantha Hunt  
5s to 13s Project Leader

## 5s to 13s Statistics for April 2011 - March 2012

- 11 families supported
- 343 visits made by volunteers to families
- 6 new volunteers trained
- 8 new referrals made to the project
- 2 families left the project
- 1 volunteer left the project

## 5s to 13s Parent's thoughts...

I have limited physical abilities and a mental health illness which can prevent me leaving the house sometimes and during the winter months when it is dark.

Just over two years ago I started to 'open up' and admit I needed help with my family. When I first met our volunteer I really liked her. She had a grown up family, which meant she knew some of the difficulties of raising children and their needs but also their 'ability to push boundaries'. She also understood how easy it can be to break your own boundaries if it means you get a 'quiet life'.

My youngest son is happy in his own little world or so I thought, and I was guilty of allowing him to be that way as it was easier. Our volunteer on the other hand quickly saw in him his abilities and coaxed him to bring them all out. She sat for an hour or so with him and his homework (I only lasted about 10 minutes!!)

Our volunteer has become part of our family, together we have discovered a friendship that will last a long time and for that, I cannot thank Friends of the Family enough.

"Life had become difficult, we had lost a loved one and life went down hill. Our volunteer was a great comfort; she was a life saver in times that felt so bleak. She taught me how to trust in myself as I always felt I was letting my children down, I cried a lot, not knowing what to do. Today we are a different family, we do talk, everyone listens and we smile...a great weight has been lifted."

## Focus Children's Views....

I loved having my volunteer coming round to my house.

She helped me a lot with my homework.

She helped me a lot with my friendships.

She helped me a lot with my confidence.

My volunteer became my adopted Grandmother and she will always have a special place in my heart.

Our volunteer was great, she helped us to calm down when we were angry and cross with each other.

I could talk to her about things that I couldn't talk to my mum about and she listened.

I like my volunteer coming to see me. She comes and plays games with us every week.

Sometimes I ask her to help me with my French homework, sometimes we just take the dogs for a walk and chat.

We even went to the theatre together and I got to go on the stage and pretend I was in the real pantomime!

## Children's Activities

Many children who are involved with Friends of the Family have had the chance to take part in several fantastic activities through out the year.

These have included a "Decopatch" workshop which was kindly funded by NADFAS, family tickets to see the Christmas Pantomime at the Theatre Royal compliments of Emmaus and a guided tour of the same theatre with fantastic workshop activities with Ryan Jones, Winchester Royal Theatre's Learning and Participation Officer.



## Committed 5s to 13s Volunteers

This is my third year with my 'family' and overall it's been a good year for them. Although there have been ups and downs their determination has seen them come a long way in that time. They have moved to a lovely new home and focus child "N" has settled in well at his new senior school. It is at this stage that I can truly say that I have become a Friend of the Family.

Lesley Phillips

By taking focus child "A" to swimming lessons, my hope is that besides the achievement and self worth, she also benefits from having a little oasis of time for herself which is regular, dependable and consistent.

Caroline Ward

## The different ways volunteers have supported families

- Being an advocate for parents/ children at school / Children's Services meetings
- Offering parents the opportunity to spend focus time with individual children
- Facilitating weekly swimming lesson for focus child
- Supporting and supervising focus child on theatre trip
- Helping children with a variety of homework (including French!)
- Offering practical help to organise redecoration of the family home

## Training

This year we gratefully received money from Hampshire Police Authority towards the cost of training staff and volunteers. Throughout the year Friends of the Family has offered training to all its volunteers on a variety of topics that we feel relevant to the work they undertake with children and their families. These topics have included Essential First Aid Training, Alcohol Awareness, and An Introduction to Autistic Spectrum Disorder.

In addition to this, six new 5s to 3s Project volunteers have undertaken and completed our 14-hour training programme. The Under 5s volunteers have also received in-house training in their team meetings from their Project Leader, Colette Dunford, and we continue to provide regular high-quality supervision to all our volunteers.



# Fundraising Report

## **Putting the Fun into Fundraising**

Our funding this year has come from increased fundraising activities, charitable foundations and grants. We received £5,000 from Hampshire County Council but nothing from Winchester City Council. We are now working in partnership with other organisations to submit joint bids. I am pleased to report that the shortfall has been met by increased fundraising and private donations and we find ourselves in a healthy financial position for the start of the next financial year.

Friends and supporters of Friends of the Family, Winchester have been involved in a wide variety of fun activities to raise funds this year including Georgie's sponsored dog walk, Rebecca and Hannah Thomas' cycle ride, Bangkok Brasserie supper, concerts and a garden opening.

Your attention is drawn to the popular annual quiz night organised by Listener crossword setter, Richard Morse, which will take place on 12th October 2012. The Q Box project sponsored by the late David Quayle of B&Q raised £1,395. To obtain a 'box' to collect your loose change, please contact Pamela Peskett, who has been instrumental in securing the financial stability of Friends of the Family, Winchester. I would like to thank Pamela for her tireless support and guidance in steering us through local council bureaucracy. She has been successful in many bid applications. Jonathan Flory has done an excellent job recruiting new members and this regular income stream is very helpful. Another steady source of income has been through [www.easyfundraising.co.uk](http://www.easyfundraising.co.uk) and I would encourage anyone inclined to buy things online to sign into this site where a percentage of your purchase will go directly to the charity at no extra cost to you.

Thanks also go to the Policy Authority, private trusts, local churches and other community organisations for their regular donations and grants. Finally, my personal thanks go to our many volunteers, members and friends who have supported us this year and our terrific staff who have provided vital back up in our mission to provide financial security for Friends of the Family, Winchester.

Chris Morse  
Finance Committee Chairman and Trustee

Friends of the Family Fundraising Events of 2011/12

**April – Georgie's Walkies**

**May – Musical Mayhem**

**June – Sparsholt Open Garden**

**June – St Cross Fete**

**July – Worthy Road Bootsale**

**September – Thomas Sisters Tandem Bike Ride to Land End**

**September – Alexandra Rose Charities Day Raffle**

**October – Quiz Night**

**November – Mayors Charity Market**

**November – Recipe and Rhymes Book**

**January – Andrew Rutter's House Portraits**

**February – Bangkok Brasserie**

## Growing a Membership Base

We have made an encouraging start in developing a membership base of supporters for Friends of the Family. At the last AGM we launched a new initiative to offer membership to individuals who would make a regular financial contribution to the charity.

We aim to keep members updated with our events and welcome feedback and suggestions for how we can make our work more effective. Members can attend and vote at our general meetings and in this way can play a part in shaping how we are run. Bishop John Dennis was our first member!

We welcome a wider membership and hope that existing members will recommend us to their friends and contacts so that we can grow a wide base of support. Membership forms and details are available via our website. Already our members are contributing over £800 a year in regular contributions with several members making significant gifts above our suggested £15 contribution. We are very grateful for this support.

Jonathan Flory  
Trustee

## From a Retiring Trustee...

**Now a Dad's Group**, we are widening our net in our aim to increase our support to vulnerable families.

It is only a few years since we embraced **families with children aged 5-13 years**, offering them a regular friendly visitor.

All this has grown from the vision of Ann Titman and Dorothy Richardson, both committed Quakers, who founded Friends of the Family in 1993. From those days we have offered support to **families with pre-school children**, gradually developing the mother's self-esteem and often encouraging them to take up Further Education.

May Friends of the Family continue to thrive for the benefit of the children in our community.

Pamela Peskett  
Trustee



# Treasurer's Report

There is much good news this year. Not only have we managed our funds well and produced a surplus at the end of the year, but we have done so pretty well entirely by our own efforts.

As we are now a limited company with a new charity registration we have had to produce accounts for that entity for a six month period (when the assets and liabilities were transferred). This means that there are not full 12 month accounts available. I can however report that total income for the 12 months was £37,739 against total expenditure of £33,559 (the majority of which, £28,921 was staff costs). In the 12 month period we only received grants of £7,300 in total so the remaining £30,000 or so was almost entirely due to donations, fund raising, membership and Q Box initiatives. We should all feel very proud of our contribution.

My thanks again to Sarah Le May for examining the accounts and giving some good advice on their presentation and content and to Jonathan Flory for his help in preparing the figures.

The accounts for the limited company are contained in the annual report and figures for the six months to 30<sup>th</sup> September are available on request.

We would particularly like to thank the following organisations for their financial support.

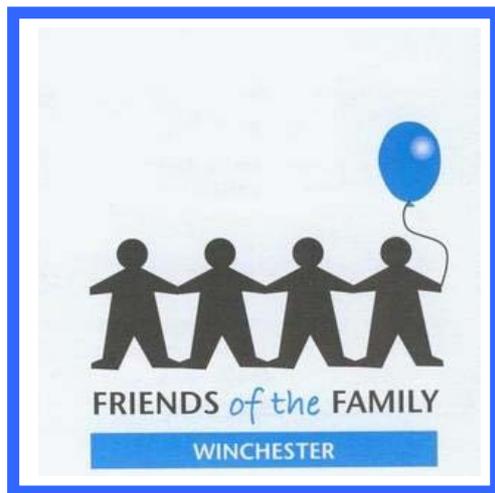
## Grants

Hampshire County Council and Hampshire Police Authority

## Donations

Umbrella Tree Trust, Paul Lunn-Rockliffe Charitable Trust, Alexandra Rose Charities, A Hampshire Private Charitable Trust, St Cross Fete Committee, Emmaus Hampshire, Winchester Round Table, All Saints Winchester, St Lawrence Winchester, St Matthew Winchester and Kings Worthy Church.

Helen Cramp  
Treasurer



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