

Foster Carers Newsletter

Winter Special 2014

Sons & Daughters -
awards winners -
Full story inside

great prospects
Foster something incredible today!

Foster



Central
Bedfordshire

NOTICEBOARD!

Do you have something you want pinned to the board next month? Drop us an email or call us!

New Team Structures

At the back of this newsletter, you'll find the new structure charts for the Corporate Parenting Service.

We've had a few changes, so take time to have a look.

Any questions, contact your supervising social worker.

Foster Care payments in December:

Foster Carers will get paid **4 weeks allowance** on Thursday 11 December. This payment covers time period 30 November to 29 December. (You will not get paid on 25/12/14 due to it being a bank holiday). You will receive the next fortnightly payment on Thursday 8 Jan 2015.

We also pay a Festival allowance (equivalent to an extra week's allowance) for each child at this time of year.

Please do not hesitate to call Karen Bogacki on **0300 300 6806** if you have any queries relating to pay.

We, in the Resource team, wish everyone a very happy Xmas and peaceful New Year.



Introducing Sue Harrison, Director of Children's Services



Sue Harrison took up post as Director of Children's Services in September this year. Sue joins Central Bedfordshire Council from Blackpool Council, where as Director of Children's Services, she oversaw a dramatic improvement programme.

Dear foster carers,

I'm delighted to introduce myself as the new Director of Children's Services for Central Bedfordshire Council. I'm very excited to be here and look forward to ensuring that all children and young people in Central Bedfordshire, and those caring for them, are supported by good quality services from committed and dedicated teams.

As you would expect, I have been meeting as many teams and individuals as possible, as well as visiting schools and Children's Centres. I met some of you at the Sons and Daughters Awards ceremony at Priory House, where I was privileged in presenting the awards certificates to those young people who have been recognised by the Fostering Network for the difference they make to the lives of the children who come to live with their families, making them feel welcome and supporting their parents as foster carers. And I am very much looking forward to meeting many more of you in due course.



I began my career as an English teacher and spent many years in the classroom before moving into a School Improvement Role within Knowsley Council. I later moved into a broader leadership role at Manchester Council, where I was both a senior educational adviser and also acted as the Assistant Chief Executive.

I have two grown up children. My son lives and works in Switzerland, and my daughter is studying for an English degree at Leeds University. My daughter had to spend a considerable amount of time in hospital as she was growing up, so I understand the challenges that some young people face and the commitment that the parents, carers and adults supporting them have to make. Helping young people to overcome similar challenges is a daily routine for most of you and I am committed to making sure that you have the best support available, to make the most of your individual talents.

I am very grateful for all the support that everyone has given me since I arrived in Central Bedfordshire Council six weeks ago. From my secretary, Annette, who has made sure I get to the right place at the right time, to our head teachers who have kindly invited me to their schools, and all the staff who are so very proud of the children they support. There are a lot of new faces and names to learn.

Information Evening Dates

We have two information evenings coming up. If you know someone who you think would like to attend, please let them know:

Wednesday 10 December, Dunstable Community Fire Station, Brewers Hill Road, Dunstable, Bedfordshire LU6 1AA

Wednesday 28 January, Leighton Buzzard Library and Theatre, Lake Street, Leighton Buzzard, Bedfordshire, LU7 1RX

Please ask them to email fostering@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk or call 0300 300 8181

News, news, news...

Fostering is a family affair...

Three young people received a Sons & Daughters award from The Fostering Network in recognition of their important role as part of a fostering family over the last 12 months.

Joseph Russ, Lauren Wesley and Stephen Clarke were recognised as part of the charity's Fostering Excellence Awards, which celebrate excellence and outstanding achievement in foster care. The three young people attended a presentation event at Central Bedfordshire Council in October with their parents, where they were presented with the certificates by Sue Harrison, the councils new Director of Children's Services.

Sue Harrison, said: "Fostering truly is a family affair and the sons and daughters of foster carers make such a valuable contribution to making sure foster children feel welcome and included as part of a family setting. It is such an honour to meet and reward such lovely young people and inspiring to know that they have made such a positive difference to other children's lives who may not have had the best start."



You can find out more about the awards and the winners on The Fostering Network website <https://www.fostering.net/support-us/fostering-excellence-awards>.

Could you be a Foster Carer representative?

As part of our ongoing development strategy and to ensure we improve as a service, we're reviewing how foster carers are represented across the board; in particular, at Corporate Parenting Panel (CPP), Foster Carers Talk Time and during Support Groups.

Being the voice of foster carers at such meetings and groups is an interesting and important role. We want to ensure that those who carry out this task have the best support and training possible, to ensure that they are representing Central Bedfordshire Foster Carers as a whole.

We will provide role specific guidance, so you are clear and confident in the tasks you are taking on and that you have terms of reference to use when preparing for meetings. For example, we will offer training on how to present topics at CPP, guidance on discussing issues and concerns with other foster carers and support you in becoming an advocate for fostering and the service as a whole.

If this exciting opportunity is of interest to you, please get in touch with your Social Worker in the first instance. We look forward to hearing from you!

Social Group Dates until March 2015

Come along and catch up with fellow foster carers and members of the fostering service at our social groups. The dates for the rest of the year are as follows:

Cardington social group

Friday 12 December 2014
Friday 23 January 2015
Friday 27 February 2015
Friday 27 March 2015
9.30am – 11.45am
Cardington Village Hall, Cardington,
Bedfordshire MK44 3SX

Dunstable social group

Friday 5 December 2014
Friday 9 January 2015
Friday 6 February 2015
Friday 6 March 2015
9.30am – 11.45am
Salvation Army, Bull Pond Lane,
Dunstable, LU6 3AH

Millbrook social group

Wednesday 17 December 2014
Wednesday 7 January 2015
Wednesday 11 February 2015
Wednesday 4 March 2015
9.30am – 11.45am
Millbrook Village Hall, Sandhill Close,
Bedfordshire MK45 2JD

Family & Friends

Saturday 13 December 2014
Saturday 7 March 2015
9.30am – 11.45am
Haynes Village Hall, Northwood End Road,
MK45 3QB



Do you regularly attend Social Groups? We need you!

We are looking for one or two representatives from each social group to be a member of our Foster Carers Talk Time to attend and share the general views of Foster Carers.

The Talk Time is about Foster Carers, the Fostering Team and Senior Management sharing news/ideas, raising general issues about fostering and helping to make changes and improvements to the Corporate Parenting Service.

We would like to open up the forum to members of the social group so you can share any questions or concerns on behalf of your group and Foster Carers in general. If you would like to discuss this opportunity please contact Jenny Thornhill on **0300 300 8090** or by email: jenny.thornhill@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk.

Level 1 Smoking Cessation Training

Smoking is still the most preventable cause of premature death in the UK and can lead to fatal conditions like heart disease and lung cancer. Quitting is the single most important thing you can do to improve your physical health, no matter what your age or how long you've been smoking, almost as soon as you quit, the health benefits begin!

The training will provide basic skills and knowledge needed to offer brief stop smoking advice and covers the following topics:

- Health effects of smoking and second-hand smoke
- Benefits of giving up
- Addiction and withdrawal
- Evidence base for interventions
- Pharmacological treatments
- Assessment of smoking status and readiness to quit

In addition, the training will cover information on Central Bedfordshire Stop Smoking Service and how to refer. The service offers a range of options to help smokers kick the habit for good, including group, one to one and telephone support. Our friendly trained Specialist Stop Smoking Advisors will provide practical and expert advice on the most suitable treatments and give a wide range of coping strategies to help smoking quit.

We provide a 90 minute training session with leaflets and resources to all guardians and out reach workers and this can be provided in addition to the Smokefree Homes and Cars training.

For further details please contact Rachael Holland, Stop Smoking Service Manager at Rachael.Holland@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk or 0300 300 5307

SmokeFree Homes and Cars Training

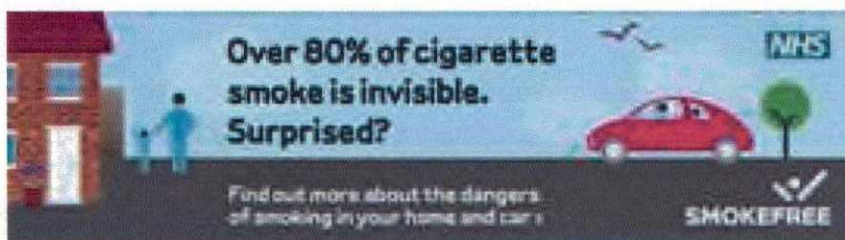
Smokefree Homes and Cars Programme works with families with young children, to help safeguard the health of children under 5 years by not smoking in the home or car. Smokefree Legislation has been nationally in place since 2007 and a further legislation on not smoking in private cars is currently going through parliament and a Paper is due to be published in 2015.

We are asking parents and guardians who smoke to sign up to either the 3 months or 6 months Smokefree Homes and Cars Pledge, this means changing their smoking areas to just smoke outside the home and car.

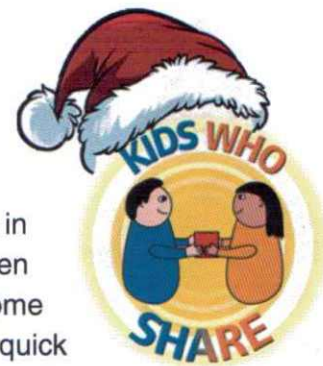
Statistics highlight that over 80% of cigarette smoke is invisible with over 4000 chemicals in each cigarette, including methanol (rocket fuel), tar (road surface), carbon monoxide (reduces oxygen in the blood system and acetone (paint stripper). Children are at particular risk in developing bronchitis, pneumonia, meningitis and ear infections with second hand smoke in their under developed lungs and maturing immune systems. Babies are at higher risk of sudden infant death syndrome (cot death) when exposed to smoke. Furthermore, adults inhaling other people's smoke can seriously harm their health increasing the risks of lung cancer by 24% and heart disease by 25%.

We provide a 40 minute training session with leaflets to all guardians and out reach workers as an addition to the Level 1 Smoking Cessation course, this will help bring a further understanding of the harms of smoking especially to children and young people.

For further details please contact Aruna Sharma-Balls, Public Health Co-Ordinator at Aruna.Sharma-Balls@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk or 0300 300 6669.

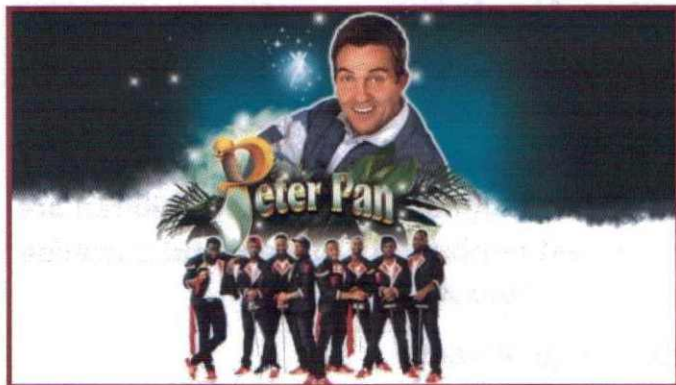


Kids who share



We had an absolute blast for the last activity at Bounce, the indoor trampoline park in Milton Keynes. With loads of interconnecting trampolines and foam pits, our children and young people showed us some impressive tricks and flips. We did try to get some

photos but they were all so quick the technology couldn't keep up with them! We hope all that attended had an equally fun time and if you didn't attend why not come along to our next event.



We're a very friendly bunch and new members are always welcome. The group is for the birth children of foster carers aged between 5—17 years.

Our next event is to Milton Keynes Theatre to see Peter Pan and you should have already received your invitation through the post with full details. If you haven't received yours then get in touch with Jenny Thornhill on 0300 300 8090.

So get practising your loudest boo, hiss and "he's behind you!"

Sue and Jenny



Foster Carers Talk Time in January

The times and location of the January Foster Carers Talk Time session has changed and we'll only be holding one. We've chosen the most central location possible and hope that you can attend.

Friday 23 January 2015

12.30-2.30pm

Room PH13, Priory House, Chicksands.

We'll be covering the following topics:

- ★ Fostering Network Membership
- ★ Annual review of the fees and allowances
- ★ Max cards
- ★ Anything else you'd like to discuss

Your views are important to us and this is a great opportunity to tell us what you think about the service and speak to staff. Make sure you let us know you're coming, as we can only run these sessions if we have sufficient numbers.. Email mariana.brown@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk or call 0300 300 6727.

Bedfordshire Foster Care Association

An independent Voice for Carers in Bedfordshire

www.bedsfostercarers.co.uk



Seasons Greetings

Christmas Party 2014

Sunday 14 December - 16:30 to 19:00
Forest Centre, Marston Mortaine

We will be holding our Christmas Party & Disco on December 14th at the Forest Centre. A party food buffet will be served to all children and therefore it is vital that we have numbers. Please reply using the slip below, by email or phone by December 1 Dec that we are able to cater for the children's refreshments. All Carers, Sons & Daughters and Foster Children are welcome. Please come and join in the fun. This is our last opportunity to meet and socialise as carers working for the same Fostering Agency.

Please tell us of any dietary requirements

www.bedsfostercarers.co.uk

Santa will be in attendance. Please bring a suitably wrapped present for each child attending, clearly named to the value of £7. This will be collected on arrival for Santa to distribute

Christmas Party 2014

Please include me in the plans for the Party & Disco

Adults attending Children attending

Name:.....

Contact number:.....



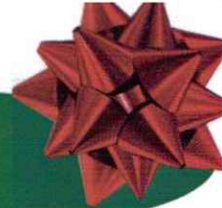
Please return to Brian Roberts, 18 Doddington Road, Chatteris, Cambridgeshire, PE16 6UA.

01354 669086 / 07906 988992 or email ask@bedsfostercarers.co.uk by December 6th





Christmas activities



Find out where Santa is this Christmas and where you can pick up a special gift - fees may apply

Christmas Tree Festival 2014

Forest of Marston Vale
Forest Centre, Station Road,
Marston Mortaine

Sat 6 & Sun 7 Dec

Two day winter festival with stalls selling locally produced gifts, wooden items and artwork, hand made jewellery, candles, jams and chutneys, uniquely flavoured marshmallows, soaps and more.

Kids can meet Santa, there will be arts and crafts activities for them to enjoy and outdoor rides include the Teacups, inflatable slide and giant bungee.

FREE ENTRY

www.marstonvale.org

Christmas Cracker

Priory House Gardens,
Dunstable

Saturday 13 Dec, 10am-4pm

Santa's Grotto, crafts and choir
www.dunstable.org

Christmas Grotto

Quadrant Centre, Dunstable

Saturday 13 Dec, 11am-3pm

Santa's Grotto
www.dunstable.org

Father Christmas Fly In

Swiss Garden, Shuttleworth
Collection, near Biggleswade

Saturday 20 Dec, 2.30-4.30pm

Santa's Grotto
www.theswissgarden.org

Christmas Kingdom

Mead Open Farm

29 Nov to 24 Dec, 2.30-4.30pm

Santa's Grotto, plus more
www.meadopenfarm.co.uk

Winter Wonderland

Rufus Centre, Flitwick

Saturday 6 Dec, 10am-2pm

Visit Santa in his Grotto, Christmas crafts, entertainment and post letter to Santa!

Call 01582 631900

An Audience with Father Christmas

Wrest Part, Silsoe

Sat & Sun 6, 7, 13, 14 20 & 21
Dec, 10am-4pm

Meet Santa and hear tales of Christmas. Lucky visitors will also get a treat.

www.english-heritage.org.uk/daysout/properties/wrest-park

Toddlers Christmas

Chiltern Gateway Centre,
Dunstable Downs

Wed 10 & 17 Dec, 11am
Special weekday visit from Santa .
Call 01582 500920

Panto Guide

Here's a list of local Pantomimes and Christmas shows to enjoy

Beauty and the Beast

Abbey Theatre, St Albans
Fri 19 - Tues 30 Dec
www.barnthretre.co.uk

Jack and the Beanstalk

Alban Arena
Fri 5 Dec - Sun 4 Jan
www.alban-arena.co.uk

Around the world in 80 Days

Cambridge Junction
Mon 8 Dec - Sun 4 Jan
www.junction.co.uk

Sleeping Beauty

Bedford Corn Exchange
Sun 28 Dec - Sat 3 Jan
www.bedfordpanto.co.uk

Aladdin

Gordon Craig Theatre, Stevenage
Tues 25 Nov - Sun 25 Jan
www.gordon-craig.co.uk

Peter Pan

Milton Keynes Theatre
Fri 5 Dec - Sun 11 Jan
www.atgtickets.com

Robin Hood and the Babes in the Wood

Grove Theatre, Dunstable
Fri 12 Dec - Sun 4 Jan
www.grovetheatre.co.uk

A Christmas Carol

Luton Library Theatre
Sat 13 - Wed 24 Dec
www.lutonculture.com




Training update: Winter 2015



This is what's happening from January 2015

January 2015



First aid

Friday 16th January

10am - 3pm

Rufus Centre, Flitwick

Asperger's and autism awareness

Saturday 17th January

10am - 1pm

Rufus Centre, Flitwick

Promoting a healthy attitude towards sex

Monday 19th January

7 - 9pm

Rufus Centre, Flitwick

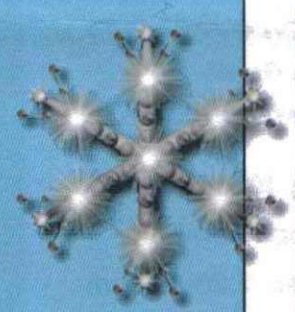
TSD fast-track

Thursday 29th and Friday 30th January

9.30am - 1.30pm

Rufus Centre, Flitwick

February 2015



First aid

Saturday 7th February

10am - 3pm

Rufus Centre, Flitwick

March 2015

Delegated Authority

Monday 2nd March

10am - 12pm

Rufus Centre

Safer Caring; a new approach

Saturday 7th March

9.30am - 2.30pm


Rufus Centre, Flitwick

Supporting the health of LAC

Tuesday 10th March

7 - 9pm

Rufus Centre, Flitwick



Contact and working with birth families

Friday 13th March

9.30 - 2.30pm

Wrest Park, Silsoe

First aid

Monday 16th March

10am - 3pm

Rufus Centre, Flitwick

Allegations

Wednesday 18th March

10am - 12pm

Wrest Park, Silsoe

Crisis Intervention

Friday 20th March

9.30am - 2.30pm

Wrest Park, Silsoe

Managing and supporting transitions and endings

Tuesday 24th March

6.30pm - 9.30pm

Rufus Centre, Flitwick

Hidden Harm; the impact of drugs and alcohol use on families

Wednesday 25th March

10am - 12pm

Wrest Park, Silsoe

Supporting educational potential

Thursday 26th March

10am - 12pm

Wrest Park, Silsoe



Training, Support and Development (TSD) Standards

Not yet completed your TSD workbook?

Then why not get yourself booked on our next workshop and complete two standards in two and a half hours.

Wednesday 17th December 2014

6.30 - 9pm

Rufus Centre, Flitwick

Standard 6 & 7



Can't make the workshop?

Then book some time with Jenny Thornhill at our drop in events following support group:

Wednesday 11th February 2015

11.30am - 1pm

Millbrook Village Hall, Millbrook

Friday 6th March 2015

11.30am - 1pm

Salvation Army, Dunstable

Caring for pre-pubescent children with inappropriate or harmful sexual behaviours

Robert Tucker is the Founder and Director of RGT Training and Consultancy, an independent agency specialising in training in respect to children, adolescents and their families where there are concerns about complex trauma, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation and where children display inappropriate or harmful sexual behaviours.

Saturday 31st January 2015

9.30am - 2.30pm

Rufus Centre, Flitwick

One of the best I've been to...

Excellent training!



Bookings and queries

If you have a query about training or would like to book a space on one of our training sessions, please contact Jenny Thornhill on:

Tel: 0300 300 8090

Email: jenny.thornhill@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk



Oh Christmas Tree, oh Christmas Tree...

Looking for a real Christmas tree? Here are a few local places where you can pick one up.

Rushmere Country Park

Linslade Road entrance, Heath & Reach
Bedfordshire, LU7 0EB
info@greensandtrust.org

Buy your Christmas tree from the Greensand Trust and help support your local Country Park. Christmas trees will be on sale from Herons View Visitor Centre, Rushmere Country Park from the 1st December.

We have a range of sizes and types of tree so please do visit and have a look.

www.greensandtrust.org

A. Jakins & Sons

Kitchen End, Pulloxhill Road
Silsoe, MK45 4QT
badgerhillchristmastreefarm@yahoo.co.uk

At Jakins we supply all types of Christmas trees for the UK market, sizes range from 60cm - 900cm. We as a family business are, the salesmen, the people who inspect your trees in the fields and the people who ensure these trees get to you on time.

We have been dealing with the majority of our suppliers for many years, means our trees are a consistent and high quality every year. We offer the Norway Spruce, Nordmann Fir (premium and standard) and Fraser Fir

www.jakinstrees.com

Stagsden Christmas Trees

West End Farm, Stagsden West End
Bedfordshire MK43 8SZ
info@stagsdenchristmastrees.co.uk

Out of the millions of Christmas Trees grown in the UK only a small percentage are the necessary shape and quality to attain the highest grade. At Stagsden Christmas Trees this is the only standard we sell.

Norway Spruce, Nordman Fir, Blue Spruce and Lodgepole Pine

www.stagsdenchristmastrees.co.uk

Badger Hill Christmas Tree Farm

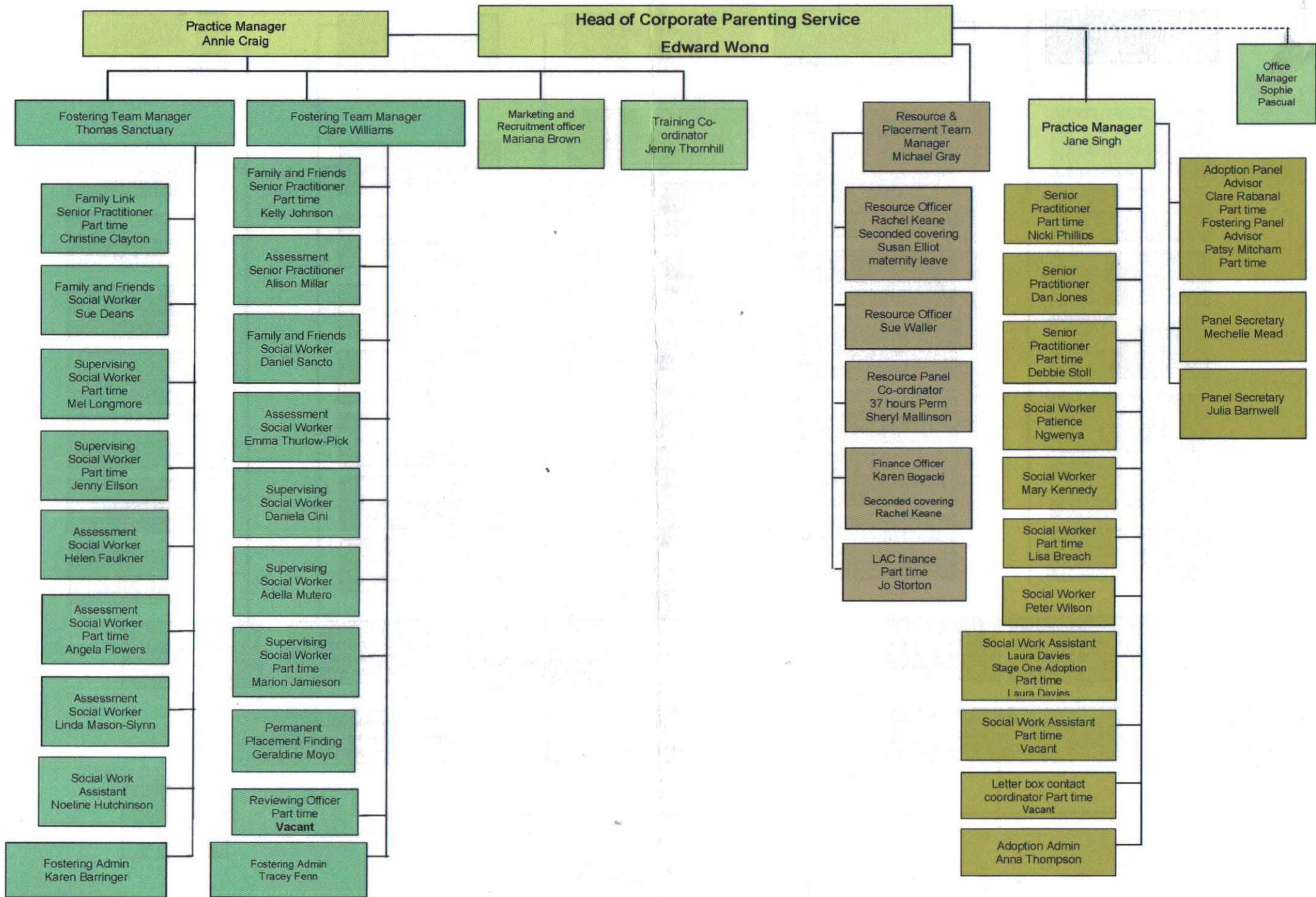
Badger Hill, Clophill Road, Maulden
Bedford, MK452AD
badgerhillchristmastreefarm@yahoo.co.uk

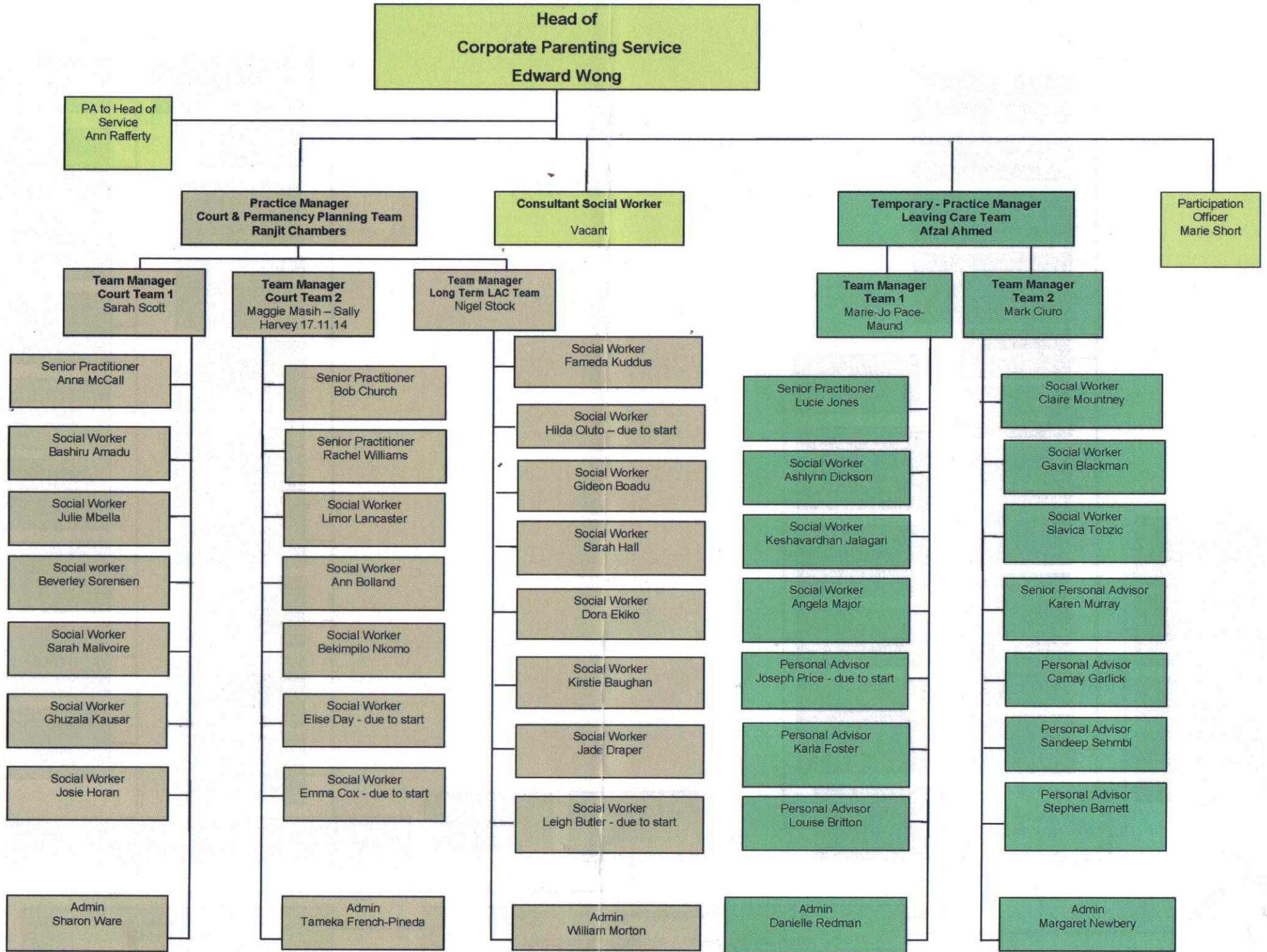
A family owned Christmas Tree Farm, with 10,000+ trees growing in six acres of Central Bedfordshire countryside.

Wander the plantations at leisure, choose your tree and decide whether to cut it or dig it up yourself, or whether you'd like them to do it for you. Norway Spruces and Nordman Firs available.

www.badgerhillchristmastreefarm.co.uk







**Head of
Corporate Parenting Service
Edward Wong**

PA to Head of
Service
Ann Rafferty

**Practice Manager
Court & Permanency Planning Team
Ranjit Chambers**

Consultant Social Worker
Vacant

**Temporary - Practice Manager
Leaving Care Team
Afzal Ahmed**

**Participation
Officer
Marie Short**

**Team Manager
Court Team 1
Sarah Scott**

**Team Manager
Court Team 2
Maggie Masih - Sally
Harvey 17.11.14**

**Team Manager
Long Term LAC Team
Nigel Stock**

**Team Manager
Team 1
Marie-Jo Pace-
Maund**

**Team Manager
Team 2
Mark Ciuro**

Senior Practitioner
Anna McCall

Social Worker
Bashiru Amadu

Social Worker
Julie Mbella

Social worker
Beverley Sorensen

Social Worker
Sarah Malivoire

Social Worker
Ghuzala Kausar

Social Worker
Josie Horan

Admin
Sharon Ware

Senior Practitioner
Bob Church

Senior Practitioner
Rachel Williams

Social Worker
Limor Lancaster

Social Worker
Ann Bolland

Social Worker
Bekimpilo Nkomo

Social Worker
Elise Day - due to start

Social Worker
Emma Cox - due to start

Admin
Tameka French-Pineda

Social Worker
Fameda Kuddus

Social Worker
Hilda Oluto - due to start

Social Worker
Gideon Boadu

Social Worker
Sarah Hall

Social Worker
Dora Ekiko

Social Worker
Kirstie Baughan

Social Worker
Jade Draper

Social Worker
Leigh Butler - due to start

Admin
William Morton

Senior Practitioner
Lucie Jones

Social Worker
Ashlynn Dickson

Social Worker
Keshavardhan Jalagari

Social Worker
Angela Major

Personal Advisor
Joseph Price - due to start

Personal Advisor
Karla Foster

Personal Advisor
Louise Britton

Admin
Danielle Redman

Social Worker
Claire Mounthey

Social Worker
Gavin Blackman

Social Worker
Slavica Tobzic

Senior Personal Advisor
Karen Murray

Personal Advisor
Camay Garlick

Personal Advisor
Sandeep Sehmbi

Personal Advisor
Stephen Barnett

Admin
Margaret Newbery