



# IMPACT

Issue 10 Christmas 2020



## A Year to Remember

An Editorial by Trevor Birtle

As we approach Christmas and the end of 2020, a moment of reflection seems in order. Obviously since March our lives have been overtaken by the ravages of a tiny virus, which we are now all too familiar with. For PACTNE however we have much to be grateful for. In the latter half of the year we have raised all the funds we need to build our Family Centre; all of our available cabins have been filled; and we have expanded our staff team to better serve our families. Our new Business Plan has been written and approved by the Trustees. We have been able to achieve a higher rate of Housing Benefit for family stays, and this is contributing to our sustainability. We have joined two one-bed units of accommodation to provide a much needed two-bed cabin; paddocks have been built to better use some of the more untamed areas of our field for goats and alpacas (opposite); the raised bed allotment now benefits from a heavy duty polytunnel; and “the big shed” is ready to provide a space for volunteers. On reflection much has happened during 2020 but by far the greatest satisfaction has come from seeing some of our resident families move back into the community and then flourish, whilst those still with us are achieving their family goals.



Obviously we live in an area with a high Covid-19 infection rate and the virus has visited Eagle House. However, those affected have recovered well and normal, or almost normal life has resumed. That is certainly something to be very thankful for. As the vaccination programme rolls out one of our most vulnerable Trustees, who is also a resident, was one of the first to be given the vaccine. We continue to follow Government guidance and our Covid-19 risk assessments to guide all our activities and keep everyone here at Eagle House safe and well.

Looking back, 2020 has certainly been a year to remember but one most of us will be glad to see end. 2021 will bring its own challenges. Until then, and in this lovely season of Advent, on behalf of the staff, trustees, residents and volunteers I want to wish you and all those you love a peaceful and joy filled Christmas. Thank you for your continued interest in, and support of PACTNE.

## No medal for Christine this time, but she is still a star!



Since the first lockdown in March fundraising has become very challenging for many charities and PACTNE is no exception. Christine Allison, one of our part time family support workers had been selected to take part in the Great North Run, the world's largest half marathon and had set her sights on being sponsored for this charity. Unfortunately given the current situation the run was cancelled. This did not deter Christine who concluded that she would run a half marathon anyway, and still achieve sponsorship for PACTNE. After training hard Christine completed the 13.1 mile run in August and raised over £800 towards our Family Centre build. Our thanks go to Christine who showed such tenacity and resilience and her sponsors.

## Family Centre by Trevor Birtle

Our biggest outstanding strategic development is the building of our Family Centre with Manager's Accommodation. To make this possible we knew we needed significant donations and grants but the first half of 2020 came and went without a grant in sight. Just like buses however, when one came along several followed in quick succession. We were thrilled to receive £3,000 from the Rank Foundation and this was followed by £3,000 from Vinci Construction. A further Grant of £10,000 from The Vardy Foundation, a Bounce Back Loan of £27,000 and the incredible generosity of just a few individuals has allowed us to reach our target amount of £77,000. This is an amazing feat, which is so heart-warming and we thank all who have contributed so generously. 2021 will see us tackling the outside spaces.....

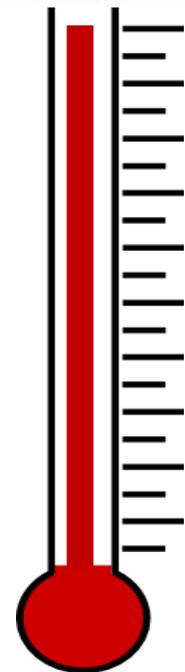
So, having secured our target funds, we turned our attention to one of the sixteen planning conditions relating to the external appearance of the Family Centre. To discharge this condition, we searched for a brick to match the existing structure as the original has not been manufactured for over a decade. Our hopes were

pinned on a "Snowie Heritage rough drag wired" brick and after a wait the match was eventually approved. This has allowed our fantastic builder, Mr Paul Brown to make a start. As you can see lots of bricks, blocks and insulation have been delivered to Eagle House which does look like a builder's yard. Despite the inclement weather we normally expect at this time of the year, Paul has got the extension beyond damp course level, installed the anthracite grey doors and windows in the existing building and even erected some internal walls. There is

much to do but Paul assures us that we can have a realistic expectation of the Centre being ready to open by Easter 2021. The end of Pam and I's 5 year caravan experience may well be in sight.



Goal of  
£77,000



£22,000



## Introducing Our New Support Staff

A little while ago the Trustees came to the conclusion that we needed to recruit at least one additional sessional family support worker to allow us to better manage holidays and other absences as well as day to day activities. Within a short period of time we had three applicants all of whom had different skills and experience to offer. The interview panel comprising of Mick, our Operations Manager, Pam, one of our six Trustees and Henrietta, our resident's representative, felt that each applicant had something distinct to offer to PACTNE. The panel recommended to the Trustees that all three ladies should be offered a position and subsequently all three accepted.

Our new staff were asked to say a little about themselves...

**Christina McIntyre** says "I'm a very proud Grandma, a Mum to three adults and the owner of a little black spaniel called Cooper. As well as working for PACT, I'm a counselling psychotherapist and I work on a Drug & Alcohol team within the criminal justice system. My passion in life is people, but I also love curling up with my dog, a good book and an excellent cup of coffee. All of this keeps me super busy - but I wouldn't have it any other way."



**Jessica Wells** writes, "Hi I'm Jess - mother of three, one now adult child and then two smaller children, which has given me the opportunity to have direct experience of what 'being' a mother is throughout the different stages of childhood. I love cooking, although I do have to admit my 'concoctions' as I call them are very hit or miss. What I love doing most though is being outside, whether it be the beach, countryside, forest, city - it's just taking in the beauty of the surroundings."



**Helen Everett** shared "I am a mum of two adult sons and have been a midwife since 1988. As well as working for the charity, I currently work as a community midwife. I love baking but more recently I've discovered wild swimming". (For the uninitiated this is the practice or activity of swimming for pleasure in natural cold waters, typically rivers and lakes).



## A Covid-19 Safe Space

Katy Wilson, one of our experienced Family Support Workers has been hosting a parent and child group called Fantastic Friday for some time. Sadly Covid-19 has affected our ability to safely deliver this group work. Part of our response was to seek a grant from The Big Lottery Community Fund, and I am pleased to say this was successful in contributing £7,878 to help us to develop a Covid-19 Safe family space. Group work will be further developed in the New Year to include a mums only group which will be facilitated by Rachel Hodgson, our Senior Family Support Worker.



Our Covid-19 risk assessments led us to re-allocate our accessible cabin 6 to provide a safe meeting space and a separate overflow office. As soon as the Family Centre is up and running we will once again use this cabin as accessible family accommodation.

## Bounce Back Bonus- can you help?



In May our charity benefitted from a low cost government sponsored Bounce Back loan of £27,000 from our bank, Santander. This has been a great boost, allowing us to achieve our £77,000 target for our building project. The much needed Family Centre will be finished in April but the repayments don't commence until June 2021. The monthly repayment is **£478** and one of our long standing supporters has kindly offered to pay the first repayment. He has also suggested that we ask businesses or individuals to consider donating one repayment during 2021 or beyond. If you could commit to this **one off payment**, please contact Trevor by email: [pactne@gmail.com](mailto:pactne@gmail.com) or mobile: 07506 703429.

## Yarm School Supports PACTNE



In our Easter edition of IMPACT we let you know that Yarm School had selected PACTNE as their charity of the year for 2020. Normally this would have involved a fantastic fundraising ball at the school before

Christmas, but unfortunately this was not possible because of Covid-19. Not to be deterred, the fund raising



committee arranged a family friendly quiz, which was hosted by Danny Posthill who is a Hartlepool born Comedian and impressionist and a Britains Got Talent finalist. The evening was great fun and involved an auction that raised over £2,000, and this amount excludes the ticket sales, raffle and sponsorship. We want to express our sincere thanks to all involved including the organisers, the families, businesses and others providing the wonderful auction and raffle prizes, and of course to Danny. Peter and Stacey Thompson who nominated PACTNE to become charity of the year, have

liased with us for many months and their energy and enthusiasm has been a great encouragement. Since the quiz night we have received a further £1,000 donation from Mac Surfacing Limited to add to the total raised. THANKYOU to everyone concerned, because of you we can press ahead with our outside family space.

During 2020 PACTNE has been benefitted from the generosity of the following organisations:



THE VARDY FOUNDATION



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