

Family Friends

2017

Grenfell Tower Fire

How Family Action are supporting survivors of the tragedy

A Social Remedy

Doctors are now referring patients to Social Prescribing

Because Friendship Works

Hear from Sarah about her two years volunteering

family
action

Building
stronger
families

Welcome to our 2017 edition of Family Friends, our supporter magazine.



I'm pleased to share with you our 2017 edition of Family Friends. What a year 2017 has been with the awful terrorist attacks in Manchester and London and then the horror of the Grenfell Tower fire. But amidst all the confusion and sadness, the human response to those tragedies has been truly inspiring. We have witnessed such incredible acts of kindness and generosity as individuals and communities have come together to help one another. This remarkable togetherness is something we reflect on in this issue.

We were recently very honoured to be able to provide some financial support to many of the survivors of the Grenfell fire. The grants we made were only possible thanks to the incredible generosity of individuals and companies who supported our Grenfell fundraising appeal.

I was so touched to read Sarah's story (page 9-10) and hear how she has given her time to make a huge difference as a mentor, and how that has changed her life too. Sarah is one of around 600 people who volunteer for Family Action's many different services, and who make such a fantastic contribution to our work.

I hope you enjoy reading about how we have made a difference with your support and about the other ways in which you can come together to support children, young people and families near you.

Thank you all for your support over the past year. Everything you read in this magazine just couldn't have happened without you.

Warm regards

David Holmes CBE
Chief Executive

Contents

Get involved	2
Coming together for Grenfell	3-4
Family Funday Week 2017	5-6
Family Action in stats	7-8
Friendship Works	9-10
Events	11-12
Social Prescribing	13-14

Get involved:

Building stronger families, building brighter lives

Family Action is able to reach out to families, and bring communities together, thanks to the support from people like you. There are many ways you can support us and we would love to hear from you if you would like to find out more. Here are a few ideas:

Remember someone special with a lasting gift

Celebrate the life of a loved one by suggesting that money is donated instead of buying flowers at their funeral or by setting up an in-memorial fund afterwards.

Leave a gift in your Will

Family Action relies on donations to help us innovate to meet the changing needs of families now and in the future. Help us continue to build stronger families by leaving a gift in your will.

Start a regular gift

Standing orders and direct debits help us plan for the future, enabling us to create much needed services.

School fundraising

Teach your children about charities whilst helping other young people with our schools fundraising pack – available on request.

Contact our friendly fundraising team at
fundraising@family-action.org.uk or call 020 7241 7608 to talk
about how you can get involved!

Communities together:

The Grenfell Tower fire tragedy

On the 14th of June 2017, a fire started at Grenfell Tower, a 24 storey block of flats in North Kensington. Over 80 people died, and hundreds lost their homes.

Through this terrible tragedy, one of the most striking things to see was how the community pulled together, from local organisations such as The ClementJames Centre and Westway providing shelter and support, to people across the country and the world sending donations of clothing and money.

As a charity with nearly 150 years grant making experience, we knew we were well placed to respond, and set up a Justgiving page early that morning. People from around the world supported our appeal, and helped raise over **£265,000**.

By partnering with local charities who are working closely with those affected, we have so far delivered 101 grants directly to individuals who were living in the tower or in neighbouring Grenfell Walk.

Grants given so far* include:

- **61** requests for clothing
- **23** for transport due to meetings related to the fire/rehousing
- **33** asked for day trips or short breaks to get away from the area with their family
- **12** needed help paying large phone bills because of calling family abroad
- **13** asked for items to help them get back to work or study
- **2** asked for a pram
- **14** asked for toys
- **66** asked for other items that were lost in the fire

* As of 24/08/17

Referring through The ClementJames Centre



Based at the foot of Grenfell Tower, The ClementJames Centre is a trusted local charity that has been at the heart of the response to the fire.

ClementJames Centre quickly became one of our referral partners.

Howard from the Centre said:

“After the initial emergency response, there were a couple of weeks when Family Action’s grants were the only ones available for Grenfell residents to apply for. It was really good that Family Action contacted those working on the ground to find out what the families actually needed.

Giving grants through us meant residents could go to centres they were already familiar with.

Grants were flexible to give people what they needed and we were struck in particular by how many people wanted a grant to enable them to get away from the area.

If you supported this grants service you made a good choice, you can be assured that 100% went to residents of the Tower or Grenfell Walk, and these grants have reached nearly everyone.

We’ve been really impressed with how Family Action have done everything and I would encourage people to continue supporting them.”

Family Funday Week

Thanks to the **Big Lottery Celebrate** Fund,
our Funday Week in April **helped over 2,000**
27 different Fundays across the country.



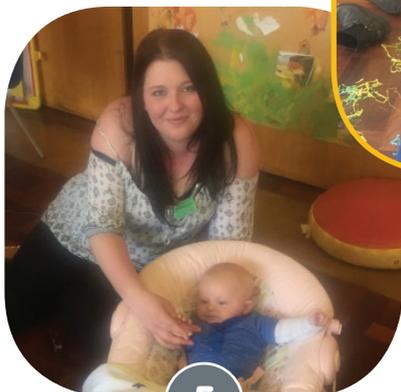
Peterborough

In Peterborough there were lots of fun activities for everyone to enjoy including a very popular chocolate tombola, craft tables and face painting.



Wandsworth

Mums brought along their little ones to our Funday in Wandsworth, where children enjoyed face painting, dancing and a buffet lunch!



5



LOTTERY FUNDED

Celebrate!

children and families have great days out at
Here are some of the highlights!

Bradford

The Lord and Lady Mayoress of Bradford were special guests at the Funday held by our Bradford services. They are pictured here with some of our volunteers and service users who helped out on the day.



Southend

Our Southend Funday was visited by animals from a local farm, as well as hundreds of children who enjoyed arts and crafts, a soft play double decker bus and among other things, baby massage!

Building stronger families,

LIFE CHANGING GRANTS Pg. 3-4



have been given in the past year. Of these, **73%** of recipients felt in control of their lives, compared with just 14% before.

101
Grants

have been made to Grenfell survivors

"The grant helped me close a really bad chapter in my life. With the support of my worker and that grant, I have opened a new chapter. If I had one message for the funders, it would be "thank you for helping me live." "

SOCIAL PRESCRIBING Pg. 13-14

76% of those who used our Social Prescribing Service developed coping strategies



started physical exercise **57%**

60% developed a leisure pursuit



doctors surveyed thought Social Prescriptions should be available in their surgeries ¹

4/5

¹ www.nesta.org.uk/sites/default/files/more_than_medicine.pdf

building brighter lives

VOLUNTEERING

Pg. 9-10

Volunteers help us reach even more families and have a huge impact on our work. This year...

115

Mentors gave over

15,000

hours of support to young people through our Friendship Works scheme



600

People volunteered for Family Action

Volunteers

233

gave hours to plan and host Funday Week during our Funday Week

FUNDRAISING

Pg. 11-12

Our 2017 London Marathon runners raised a total of

£58,683



this is

£2,934

each, which can fund:

over **100 group sessions** for new mothers struggling with mental ill health

or provide **nine** Open Doors Grants

or support **five** children and their Friendship Works mentor for a year

or send **ten young carers** on a weekend activity residential

Friendship Works



We catch up with Sarah, one of the volunteers in our Friendship Works mentoring service:

Why did you decide to be a Friendship Works mentor?

I've always been involved with charities, mostly through fundraising, and wanted to make an impact on a child's life in my local neighbourhood.

What was your first meeting with Matt* like?

It's quite a funny story actually. I went to their house with Dean, the Friendship Works case worker, to be introduced to Matt who was six at the time. When we got there, a toddler opened the door - I was so clueless about small children back then I thought this two year old was Matt, and worried I was going to have to change nappies! Luckily Matt came round the corner a moment later. Dean took us for hot chocolate and cookies so Matt and I could get to know each other, and find out what kind of things he wanted to do - which was everything!

What's the best thing about being a mentor?

It's heart warming to see the impact you leave on their life. Matt is not the same kid as he was two years ago, he was very shy then but now he is so confident!

What do your friends think about you being a mentor?

They think it's great. My best friend recently had a baby, and has asked me to be her baby's godmother because of the commitment I have shown to being a mentor. That was a fantastic feeling.

You've also been a great fundraiser for Friendship Works, especially at work, can you tell us a bit about this?

Yes, I organised a wine tasting evening and linked it with a client event for the bank I work for. It was great as all our clients could come together. We

raised money by selling tickets, through an auction and a raffle. Our clients and my colleagues were all really happy to support, and knew how important the cause is to me. Since the event, several have been in touch to support Friendship Works themselves.

Why is it important to support Friendship Works?

We're not all equally lucky in life. We need supporting infrastructure. Children need an adult they can rely on and have confidence in – especially someone outside the family. Also they need time to be children and try new things – many of them have caring responsibilities at home so it's important they have our full attention which they may not have at home or school.

*Not the child's real name

Are you interested in being a mentor like Sarah?

If you live in London, are interested in mentoring a disadvantaged child or young person and are happy to commit to two years volunteering, we'd love to hear from you! Contact us to find out more or sign up to one of our volunteer information sessions at www.family-action.org.uk/friendship-works

Get your company involved in fundraising and make a difference!

You could...

- Hold a wine tasting evening like Sarah!
- Hire spin bikes and set your colleagues a static cycle challenge
- Run a quiz night
- Have a bake sale (or competition!)
- Take part in our Christmas Toy Appeal



Our supporters at NewDay on their Static Cycle Day.

For more information contact fundraising@family-action.org.uk

Get involved: Events

We talk to star fundraiser John...

This year, John ran the London Marathon for Family Action on his 70th birthday and raised an incredible £2,892!

What made you decide to take on this incredible challenge for Family Action?

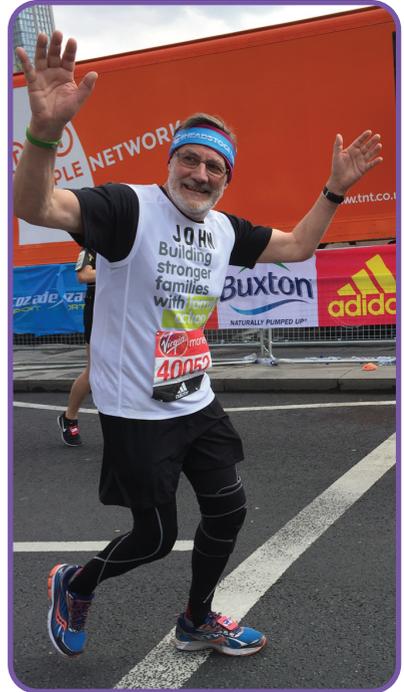
I've always been interested in the London Marathon and usually make an effort to watch it each year. While in front of the TV during the 2016 Marathon it was announced that the 2017 event would be taking place on the 23rd April - not only my birthday, but my 70th birthday! Wouldn't running the Marathon be a great way to celebrate such a milestone.

What did your family and friends say?

I used to do a bit of jogging when I was a lot younger and even had a place in one of the earliest London Marathons but was unable to run because of injury. My last serious attempt at any real exercise must have been at least 10 years ago so I kept my Marathon plans secret from most friends and family while I started a bit of easy running - my first target was to run for 5 mins without stopping! After several months of training three times a week I managed to run eight miles (very slowly) and began to feel that completing a Marathon was more than just a dream so I told my family and received enthusiastic support. At Christmas I told everyone and started asking for sponsorship. Again I received enthusiastic support even though some of my friends thought I was taking leave of my senses.

What would you say to someone thinking of running the marathon for Family Action?

Do it! The challenge is considerable, but if I can do it anyone can. The experience is fantastic and it is great to be able to support the good work that Family Action does.



The Big Half



Join our team in this brand new Half Marathon from the organisers of the London Marathon. The Big Half will take place in London on closed roads for the first time next March. The route will start at Tower Bridge and finish at The Cutty Sark in Greenwich, where you can join in the Big Festival for all the family in Greenwich Park.

Skydive for Family Action



One for the thrill-seekers among you – take on a tandem skydive almost two miles from the ground! With a fully qualified instructor you will experience up to 30 seconds of freefall at speeds of over 120mph before your parachute opens for a few minutes of gliding back down to the ground and admiring the views.



Run the 2018 London Marathon for Family Action

If, like John, you're up for the challenge of a lifetime, join our marathon team today.

Visit www.family-action.org.uk/london-marathon or email events@family-action.org.uk to find out more.

Email events@family-action.org.uk or call 020 7241 7608 if you're interested in taking on a challenge for Family Action this year.

Social Prescribing: social remedy

Increasingly it's being recognised that there are social as well as medical solutions to managing social isolation and long term mental health conditions ¹

Social Prescribing is the name for services offering a non-medical alternative to improve people's health and wellbeing.

Family Action's Social Prescribing service offers a community-based alternative to medical interventions for people with long-term conditions or mild to moderate mental health needs. Based in GP surgeries, we aim to improve mental health and wellbeing through referral to non-medical sources of support within local communities.

Michelle* shares her story of using our Social Prescribing Service

When I was referred to Beverley at Family Action's Social Prescribing Service by my doctor earlier this year, I was in one of the worst places I've ever been. I had developed depression after a horrible situation at work in which I experienced bullying and was eventually made redundant. I was so low I was unable to do anything or go anywhere.

I had no idea what Social Prescribing was. To be honest, when the morning of my first appointment with Beverley came around, I didn't want to go. I had been feeling so low that I hadn't left my bed in days, but luckily I found the strength to force myself to the appointment.

In that first meeting when I opened up and told Beverley everything that

¹www.nesta.org.uk/sites/default/files/more_than_medicine.pdf

had been going on I couldn't hold back the tears. I was very emotional and frightened about my work situation.

But she wasn't just there to listen. Beverley has so much knowledge and was able to refer me to so many other services that I would never have known about. It was so holistic and I was signposted to support

me, and I feel so much stronger now than I did at the start of the year. Beverley is so good at picking out the positives – helping me think about the future – I now know I don't have to go through it all alone.

I've come across other people like me who haven't got a Beverley – I don't know how they do it, and hope that Social Prescribing will be

“ I felt truly powerless about what was happening to me. Beverley let me speak. She listened. She reassured me.”

within the community for every area of my life. A couple of days later I had a Talking Therapy session and met with an employment specialist who Beverley had referred me to. She even recommended a Mindfulness App to help me relax!

Through our meetings, things started to look a bit better for me. Social Prescribing really was my life line – I honestly don't know what I would have done without it. Beverley put in a massive system of support around

available to more people. Had she not been there for me, I dread to think what would have happened.

Through Family Action's Social Prescribing Service I now have the confidence to face the months ahead. I still have challenges to face, and will be going to tribunal for unfair dismissal later this year, but knowing I have so much support around me will make it so much easier.

*Name changed to protect identity.



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