Cumberland Update and Prayer Letter

Welcome to our latest newsletter/prayer update. It was such a blessing to be able to spend time with our volunteers, supporters and church leaders at our recent events in Carlisle and Cockermouth. A number of people that were unable to attend the events have asked for an update. We will use this space to share the information from the event and points for prayer for the coming weeks and months.. We are so very grateful and blessed by your support for us and the families we serve.

Love Caz, Esther and Jayne

Time to celebrate and give thanks….

Ephesians 3:16-21

God has indeed done immeasurably more that we could have imagined in providing the funds for us to be able to continue in the Cumberland authority region. Normally, when a contract is not renewed Safe Families would not continue to work. But in Cumberland it really worked—we have a fantastic, committed volunteer team and our families never wait long to be matched. Secondly, we have great relationships with churches across the region. Through financial contributions from trusts, foundations, churches and individuals we quickly reached the target to enable us to continue until the end of March 2027 and support 40 families across the region. Obviously this is a reduction in the number of families we normally support and will inevitably reduce the number of posts our volunteers receive requesting support. We are keeping in contact with the Local Authority and hope that we will be able to partner together in the future.



Wider vision….

As well as seeking to stem the flow of children going into the care system with wraparound care and support through our family support volunteers and churches, we also know that it's not always possible to keep children with their birth families. This is for many different and complex reasons, and this is why we are also now seeking to find loving and stable homes for those who need them longer term through fostering, adoption and supported lodgings. Wouldn't it be wonderful to say in 10 years' time that the church is the biggest recruiter of foster carers and supporter of families, offering parenting courses, practical support and much more,? So a big vision that you are all part of and we can't thank you enough.

Staff changes….sadly in the NW region we have recently lost two contracts that have resulted in staff redundancies. Unfortunately Esther has been affected by this and her time with SF/HFG will come to an end on Tuesday 31st March 2026.

New referral route….

Historically, our referrals have come from different sources, through the local authority, health and schools. We formed strong relationships with a number of schools and felt that this was the right way to proceed. Firstly, we approached schools with whom we had previously worked but also have approached others across the Cumberland region. Referrals have been slow to come in but we are trusting God in His time that He is doing a new thing, and He will make a way in wilderness and streams in the desert. The three initial referrals we had we matched very quickly and we are so grateful and blessed to have the best volunteers! Please hang on in there with us, if you are eagerly awaiting your next volunteer opportunity – it will come!

And so to prayer……

- Give thanks to God for his abundant provision in enabling us to continue to work across the Cumberland Region.
- Pray for the referrals to come in steadily to enable us to support families and to utilise the gifts and skills of our wonderful volunteers.
- Pray for churches across our region as they support us in our wider vision.
- Pray for opportunities to share the message regarding fostering adoption and supported lodgings and for hearts of Christians to be open to answering the call.
- Pray for Esther as she moves on to a new season in her life . That she will know God's peace and His guiding hand at this time.