

welcare

strengthening families since 1894

Dear Friends

I am pleased to share some of the highlights from the summer especially our successful summer holiday programme which took place during a scorching week in August, the Picnic in the Park in Redhill Memorial Park and our uplifting Service of Thanksgiving held at St John the Evangelist (visit www.welcare.org/news to find out more). The sunshine and good weather we enjoyed for all these events makes contemplating the colder and darker days ahead even more daunting. Our greatest concern as we start autumn is the impact of the cost-of-living crisis on the children and families we serve and I have written more about what we are doing and how you can help below. In addition to supporting our Families In Crisis Appeal I hope you will have a chance to browse through our refreshed website and read some of the new case studies about the families we've helped.



Our website has been updated to focus on our child and family support services with information about events and groups in one place rather than locating information based on our centres and locations. We have refreshed pictures of the whole staff team and include information about what everyone does at Welcare. A familiar face to many is Catharine Adjei who we welcomed on 6th June as the new Redhill Family Centre Manager. Catharine reflects on her first 3 months in post below.

We look forward to a busy autumn ahead with the Charlton Walk on 10th September and the long-awaited Rock Choir performance on Friday 16th September (see Events below). Our dedicated supporter, Christina, first started planning for this in 2018 so it will be great fun to finally get together and enjoy an evening of music at St Mary's Church, College Road, Bromley. Please tell your friends and family and remember that tickets and further information are available via our website www.welcare.org/events

Please follow and tag us on social media to receive and share our latest news, events, and stories. In this way, with your help, we can build a strong supporter base to allow us to continue our vital work.

With sincere thanks and best wishes

Kindest regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anna Khan".

Anna Khan,
Welcare CEO

OUR LATEST NEWS

Cost of Living Crisis



As the **cost of living** continues to soar, we are all noticing the effects. But while many of us are anxious about our household costs for the autumn and winter many of the families we support are struggling to survive, frightened by the future and fearful about how they will cope. We are already seeing a rise in demand for our practical support services and requests for emergency food and fuel vouchers.

Welcare will continue to provide practical support for the children and families we work with who are in need. This support is tailored to the individual needs of families we support and may involve the provision of supermarket vouchers or a referral to the most appropriate local foodbank. Through extensive community links our staff team has information about local support available from statutory and local sources including charitable trusts. The eligibility criteria for local trusts varies, some is restricted by parish boundaries and postcodes others by the type of support they will fund (i.e., fuel payments or provision of white goods) We use our local knowledge to navigate the system to access the most appropriate help and if required back this up with support with budgeting or signposting/referral to a specialist support agency including Citizens Advice. Our staff and supporters share knowledge of corporate schemes and over the next few months we anticipate more of these will be launched especially by supermarkets and energy companies. For example, in the last year we accessed SIM Cards and Data from Vodafone, Laptops and birthday cakes for families in need.

In addition to using our professional networks and position as a verified referral agency we have access to grant funding from trusts who donate to us for families in need. Although the sums are relatively small, they provide an immediate lifeline and without the time delay and administrative burden or a full funding application.

We join campaigns and lobbying led by the national charities and umbrella groups including recent campaigns by Children England, NCVO, the Children's Society and ACEVO who all have policy and parliamentary teams with expertise and contacts with government departments and ministers. In this way we can focus our limited resources on continuing our direct work on the ground but lend our voice and support.

Supporting our annual Families in Crisis Campaign is a practical way that individual and church supporters can help. All funds raised through this appeal are restricted to our client grants fund and used throughout the year, especially if a family lives in an area where there is more limited access to other support or they need an item not covered by local grant funders, recent examples of this type of support include carpets and bedding but also a man and a van to help a woman and her children leave the family home.

Looking ahead to Christmas we request that any churches who have previously supported us through Toy Services will support us instead with a monetary donation, which we can use to purchase specific items and a range of supermarket gift cards. This allows us to be flexible in the support that we give and complement, not duplicate, the excellent work of the foodbanks and other charities.

Visit our website www.welcare.org for more information about our Families in Crisis Appeal and #CapeAbility at Christmas resources to use with Junior Church groups instead of a Toy Service. Alternatively contact us (info@welcare.org / 020 7820 7910) and we will send them out.

Families we've helped: Yvonne's Story

Yvonne* was living with extended family in a two bedroom flat – this meant that 4 children and 4 adults were vying for space and attention. With no outdoor space and two of the children sharing a bed there was constant chaos, little structure and increasingly aggressive behaviour. Our family support worker provided practical help and emotional support to improve everyone's day to day life.

Yvonne recognised the impact the housing was having on her boys' behaviour. She was struggling to respond to their needs and wanted help with strategies to support them. The youngest in particular was frequently wetting the bed and waking up multiple times in the night. Although there were no issues at school when Yvonne collected him his behaviour would become unmanageable. With 4 children in the house and shared parenting responsibilities Yvonne needed to focus on meeting her children's needs. She felt she wasn't always consistent with her parenting and that she easily gave in to their demands. Mealtimes were particularly difficult and Yvonne would often respond to the children's individual demands for food resulting in her cooking multiple meals or giving top up snacks if they didn't eat their dinner.

Better housing was key but the application to the local authority was complicated by the families' complex structure and finances. A large number of supporting documents were required but co-ordination by the Welcare family support worker ensured the application was submitted and deadlines met. As the family waited for housing the family support worker applied for funding from the Henry Smith Charity which bought them a bed and linen. This helped the children's sleep patterns and gave them their own space.

The family support worker also instigated discussions on setting consistent rules and boundaries. Yvonne started to menu plan with the children and involve them in meal preparation. As a result they have a far healthier diet and are less reliant on snacks. Although the school weren't seeing any challenging behaviour they were involved with a Team Around the Family meeting. This resulted in a referral to the Enuresis Team for the bed wetting and the family support worker working one to one with the youngest child.

The family have been accepted onto the housing register and whilst they have not yet moved they have taken the first step and Yvonne is now bidding on houses. The youngest child is able to talk about his emotions and the family use the props he created in the sessions with the family support worker. Yvonne says 'we talk a lot more to each other. My younger son especially will talk about feelings and we talk about feelings to each other'. Through the Team Around the Family meetings mum has a much better and more open relationship with school which means that she feels she can speak with them and raise any issues.

Yvonne scored the family 10/10 for how well Welcare understood their life situation. She said, 'I was petrified and my family support worker was very good at explaining at every stage and making me feel a lot better about it...We were stuck and didn't know what to do. We knew we were doing a good job but we wanted to do a better job ...It was nice to know my thoughts and feelings weren't crazy and I wasn't doing as bad a job as I thought I was. I felt awful at the beginning but it wasn't as bad as I thought and everything was related to housing'.

*names have been changed

If you would like to make a difference to someone struggling in your local community please spare what you can. We couldn't do the work we do without the valued help of our supporters.
www.welcare.org/donate



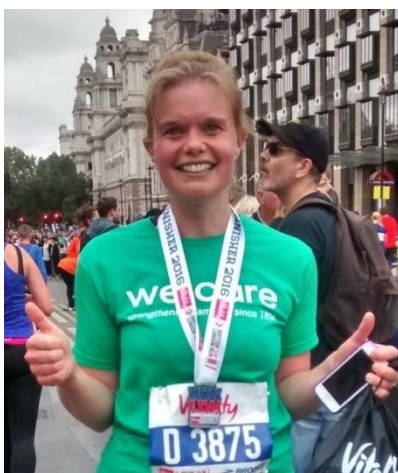
New Manager for Welcare Family Centre, Redhill

We are delighted that Catharine Adjei has now been in post as our Redhill Centre Manager for 3 months. She has had a brilliant first couple of months and has really got stuck into the role. Catharine's return to Welcare has been wonderful for all the East Surrey Team and the families they support, as well as all her wider Welcare colleagues.

Catharine first worked for Welcare in East Surrey as an Outreach Worker from June 2011. The role involved supporting children and families and running groups and parenting courses. In June 2017, Catharine was appointed as Welcare Children's Centre Deputy Manager, where her responsibilities included co-ordinating our wonderful Welcare volunteers. Unfortunately for us, due to a Surrey County Council restructure, Catharine had to leave her post as Deputy Manager in August 2018 but used this opportunity to gain valuable experience elsewhere.

Now she is back at Welcare and over the last three months Catharine has very much enjoyed: getting to know Welcare colleagues and being inspired by their commitment and creativity with children and families we support; sharing and participating in Welcare's Thanksgiving Service and hearing the beautiful voices of the Sandcross School Choir; participating in a family picnic for 45 children, held as a free summer holiday activity by Welcare in Redhill Memorial Park, and thinking about Welcare 'Here Now Here Always' and grateful to be part of an organisation that holds the hope for families in crisis.

She looks forward to continuing to work with the Welcare family, and to proactively support, encourage, and empower children and families across south London and East Surrey. Catharine says, "as manager I keep the child's voice at the centre of all we do, lead and support the FANTASTIC team in East Surrey, work in partnership with other statutory and charitable organisations, agencies, schools, Surrey Children's Services and health professionals (to name a few)".



Catharine will be running a sponsored half marathon to raise money for Welcare. This will be the third time Catharine has run to raise money for Welcare and she will be tackling the famous Behobia-San Sebastian race in Spain on 12 November 2022. If you would like to sponsor her please visit www.justgiving.com/campaign/welcarecatharinerun

For more information on fundraising or planning your own event visit www.welcare.org/fundraise

To see more of our news from 2022 visit www.welcare.org/news-listing

EVENTS

Friday 9 September 2022 at 2.30pm & 7pm

Redhill: A Century of Change
Harlequin Theatre, Redhill

Local historian and Welcare supporter John Capon presents an illustrated journey through 100 years of almost continuous change in the life and appearance of Redhill. Proceeds from the sale of tickets will be divided between Welcare and another local charity.

Visit www.harlequintheatre.co.uk/events/redhill-a-century-of-change to book
or call 01737 276500

Saturday 10 September 2022 at 11am

Charlton Walk, Charlton Park Greenwich
organised by Friends of Welcare in Greenwich

Participants are invited to meet from 11am outside the Cafe which is situated inside the Park close to the entrance in Charlton Park Road opposite the Charlton Lane turning.

Friday 16 September 2022 at 8pm

Rock Choir
St Mary's Church, College Road, Bromley

A fantastic evening of live music and entertainment organised by Friends of Welcare in Bromley
Visit www.welcare.org/rock-choir to book to call 020 7820 7910

Friday 7 October 2022

Concert by Ferrier Operatic Society
Annual concert arranged by our Greenwich supporters
Call 020 7820 7910 for more details

Wednesday 16 November 2022 at 11.30am

Bromley Service of Thanksgiving
Bromley Parish Church, St Peter & St Paul Church

Our annual service, celebrating the work of Welcare and giving thanks for all the hard work of our loyal supporters and dedicated Welcare team

www.welcare.org

info@welcare.org / 020 7820 7910

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