

Statement of purpose

TACT London & South East



TACT London & South East
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*Registered charity numbers: England & Wales 1018963. Scotland SC 039052.
TACT is also a limited company by guarantee: company registration number: 2779751.*

I. Introduction

The statement of purpose is designed to inform you about the values, and structure of TACT, some information about the recruitment, assessment and training of our carers, and details of staff and placements. The statement is a legal requirement and the issues referred to, laid down in regulation.

Organisational history

Established in 1993, formerly known as The Adolescent & Children's Trust (TACT), TACT is the UK's largest charity and voluntary agency providing fostering and adoption services. Our core work involves providing high quality and well supported fostering or adoptive families for children and young people across England, Wales and Scotland. We campaign on behalf of children and young people in care, carers and adoptive families.

TACT is governed by a Board of Trustees with 11 members. The Board has ultimate responsibility for directing the affairs of the charity, ensuring that it is solvent, properly run and delivering on its charitable objectives. In addition to meeting bi-monthly, a smaller number of the Trustees sit on sub committees alongside TACT staff; the Safeguarding & Children Services Committee and the Business & Remuneration Committee. The Board delegate day to day leadership of the organisation to the Chief Executive Officer.

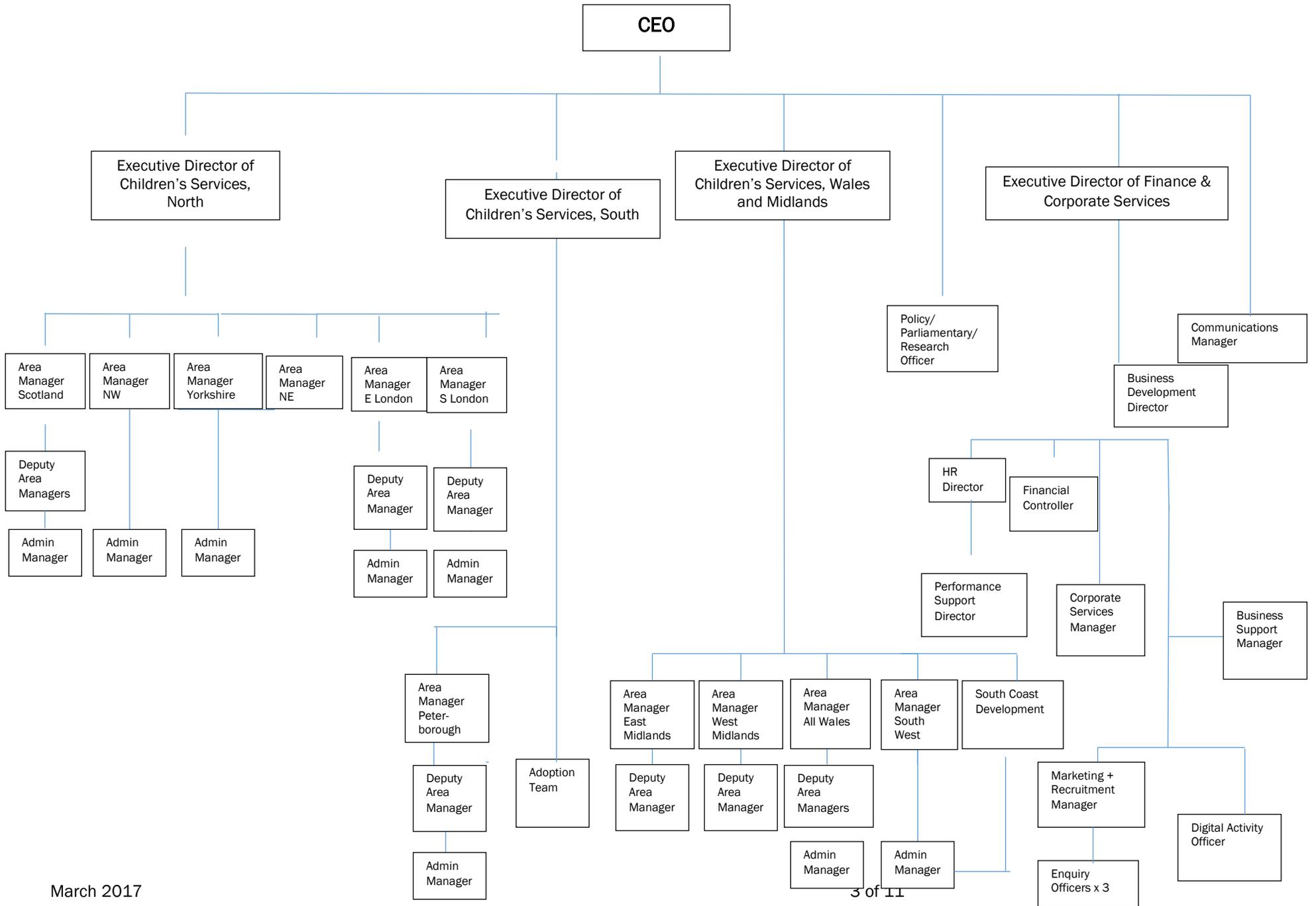
TACT's head office is based in Hither Green, London. It includes the corporate functions of finance, human resources, children's service and quality, external affairs and marketing. It is also the office of the Chief Executive and Executive Directors of Finance and Corporate Affairs, Children's Services & Quality and Policy, Communications and Fundraising.

Services are provided from 9 area offices for fostering, one of which also includes adoption. These are; East London, Bristol (covering Bristol & South West), Neath (covering all of Wales), Liverpool (covering North West), West Midlands, Kettering (covering East Midlands), Leeds (covering Yorkshire, Humberside & the North East), Edinburgh (covering Scotland) and South London (covering South London, Kent) We also have a registered adoption agency based in London.

We are currently expanding our service geographically in a number of areas. The North East service, currently being expanded under the Yorkshire Office, will shortly be the subject of an application for Ofsted registration. We are also expanding into Bournemouth and Poole under the South West Office and Brighton, Portsmouth, Southampton and Weymouth under our South London Office. In the East Midlands we are expanding into Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire and in the North West we are expanding into Greater Manchester. In Scotland we are expanding through Dundee and up the East Coast to Aberdeen. These expansions are being closely supported and overseen by our Business Development Unit.

TACT have also been chosen to run Peterborough's permanency services (including adoption and fostering services). The contract begins on 1.4.17. Ofsted are already aware of this and an advisor has been appointed.

TACT MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE 2017



II. TACT's charitable objectives

- To relieve children and young people who, by reasons of their circumstances, have need of foster, adoptive or substitute care by placing children in foster homes or adoptive placements and by training foster or adoptive parents to deal with the needs of the children in their care.
- Otherwise to promote the care and upbringing and establishment in life of children in need thereof including by promotion of their health, development and education attainment and particularly children in foster or adoptive care.

III. TACT's Vision and Values

Our Vision

'Better lives for our children and young people'

Values

- **Aspirational** – by helping others, we grow ourselves
- **Passionate** – we are determined to keep improving what we do. We will ambitiously pursue the best outcomes for everyone we work with and strive for excellence in all we do
- **Customer Focussed** – we shall listen and respond to the people we work with, children and young people, their birth families, carers, our staff, our supporters, local authorities and other stakeholders
- **Fair and equitable** – we will be open and transparent, communicating what we do and why we do it, based on equality and respect for all
- **Beyond Profit** – reinvesting our resources into improving outcomes for children and young people

Fostering standards

Our standards of care are measured and monitored against the National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services 2011 and the UK National Standards for Foster Care.

All carers undertake the TSD Training Support and Development Standards for Foster Care within 12 months of approval.

TACT believes:

- All children have the right to a permanent family in which they are able to grow and develop as unique individuals.
- Every child in care should benefit from a specially designed care plan to address their specific needs.
- All children have the right to be involved in planning their own futures.
- All children should take with them memories of a positive experience of their time in care when they leave.
- Individuals with parental responsibility have the right to be involved in making decision about their child/ren's future.
- Proper use must be made of the theory and considerable body of professional knowledge which is available relating to child care and child development.
- Every individual involved in TACT's childcare programmes should benefit from appropriate training and development opportunities.

All people involved with TACT will received the best treatment possible, irrespective of gender, age, disability, marital status, sexuality, race, ethnicity or religion.

IV Members of staff at TACT London & South East office

1. Management:

➤ **Beverley Crisp** is the Area Manager. She is responsible for all operations and services at TACT London & South East. She joined TACT in **2002** and has the following qualifications:

- Diploma in Social Work (DipSW)
- Certificate and Diploma in Management Studies (CMS and DMS)
- Qualified Practice Teacher
- Diploma in Counselling and Psychotherapy
- Degree in Psychology
- MA in Child protection

Beverley qualified in 1990 and has many years' experience working for various local as a Team Manager chairing case conferences, for authorities in South East England mainly in the field of child protection, looked after children, duty and assessment, Advisor for the Adoption panel. She has recently completed her Diploma in Management Studies (DMS).

2. Deputy Area Manager (Hants)

➤ **Tracy Bezh** joined TACT in **2013**. Tracy is an experienced social worker who qualified in 2005, she has gained experience working in a wide range of children and family settings, including looked after children, adoption, intensive fostering, youth court, care and court proceedings. She is now responsible for the Hampshire part of the TACT operation.

DipSW

3. Senior Supervising Social Workers:

➤ **Ola Soremi** joined TACT March 2014. Ola is a qualified as a social worker.
DipSW

➤ **Mary Richard-Paul** joined TACT in August **2012**. Mary qualified as a social worker in 2012. Before she took on a full time post with TACT, she spent 6 months with the fostering team as a student social worker. She has the following qualifications:

- BA Hons Social Work

➤ **Marie Jennings** joined TACT in July **2015**. She is a qualified social worker and is working in the Hampshire, Sussex area with Tracy Bezh. She has the following qualifications: DipSW

4. Placement officer

➤ **Vicky Burbidge** joined TACT London & SE in Sept **2016** as the new Placements officer.

5. Children Resource Workers:

👉 **Chris Bacon** joined TACT in **1996**. Chris has a great experience of working directly with young people and supervising contact. He has the following qualifications:

- NVQ Level 2 in Early Years Care and Education
- Qualified Youth Worker

6. Administration:

The London & SE area is supported by an Administration Team made up of:

👉 **Belinda Evans** joined TACT in **2004** as an Administrative Officer. She became TACT London & South East's Administrative Manager in 2008. Belinda has many years' experience in administrative roles and previously worked in the private sector. MA in Management Studies

👉 **Susan Rogers** joined TACT July **2007** as a fulltime administrator following our merger with a locally based adoption agency. From January 2015 Sue is now working as a part-time administrator. She has many years' experience of administration in the voluntary and health sector

👉 **Daisy Dobson** joined TACT January **2015** as a fulltime administrator. She is an experienced administrator joining TACT from the leisure industry.

V. TACT London & SE fostering service

1. The fostering panel

The fostering panel is a requirement of the fostering regulations and is updated to meet the criteria set out in the regulations. The panel meets regularly, at the London & South East office to consider each application for approval and to recommend whether a person is suitable to act as a foster parent. It also recommends the terms of approval; reviews the suitability to continue as carers from time to time; advises the charity on the procedures and their effectiveness; oversees the conduct of the assessments that are carried out; and gives advice and makes recommendations on such matters or cases the charity may refer to it.

The Panel is chaired by **Eva Simcock**, an independent person with many years' experience in child care. The Panel includes members with a wide range of professional and personal relevant experience; it includes an ex-child in care, a foster carer from a local authority, a health representative, an independent social worker and representatives of the agency.

Panel Members' names and positions:

- **Eva Simcock** – Panel-Chair
- **Audrey Morgan** – Vice-Chair/SW Adviser

- **Beverley Douglas** – Independent foster carer
- **Andy Hoy** – Independent & Education advisor
- **Fisnik Tahiri** – Independent ex-LAC
- **Tracy Bezih** – TACT Supervising Social Worker
- **Asif Riaz** – TACT Supervising Social Worker
- **Belinda Evans** – TACT Panel Administrator

Non-voting Members of the Panel are:

- **Beverley Crisp** – Panel Advisor
- **Dr. K Maisey** – Medical Advisor

2. Current services provided by London & South East

- Fostering to children/young people 0-17 years.
- Outreach support services to children and families.
- Supervised contact.
- Parent and child placements.
- Assessments.
- Foster carer training.
- Support groups.

3. Recruitment, assessment and approval process for foster carers

The following process is followed for any applicants who wish to become approved foster carers:

- a) Initial telephone enquiry from applicant/s. Information and expression of interest form is sent out.
- b) Expression of interest form is returned.
- c) Allocated for Initial Visit.
- d) Initial Visit carried out and Supervising Social Worker then makes recommendation to proceed or not. Area Manager makes decision to proceed or not with Form F. Assessment.
- e) If the decision is not to proceed, the applicant/s are informed verbally and this is followed up in writing.
- f) If the decision is to proceed to Form F assessment, the case is allocated to a Form F assessor.
- g) All references and checks (CRB etc.) are taken up.
- h) Applicant/s must attend Skills to Foster preparation course for fostering.
- i) When Form F assessments are completed and all checks and references are returned it is taken to the Fostering Panel for recommendation. Applicant/s are invited to attend Panel.

- j) The agency decision maker decides on whether to approve. Applicant/s are informed in writing.

4. Training, Support and Reviewing Process for Foster Carers

- The office in London has an annual training programme and foster carers have an individual learning and development plan linked to the programme. Foster carers are supported to attend training through financial packages and childcare arrangements. Undertaking learning and development is an ongoing requirement for TACT foster carers and is now being extended to include on line courses.
- Foster carers are allocated a Supervising Social Worker. Support is offered 24 hours a day, seven days a week, via a duty system of Supervising Social Workers and Social Work Managers. Foster carer support groups also meet in small geographic areas. Young people who foster are also supported individually and through groups.
- Each foster carer is reviewed annually and the fostering panel or Director of Country endorses the decision of the Area Manager who oversees the review.

The first review and every seventh review are fully considered by the panel.

5. Monitoring of fostering service

The fostering service is monitored through provision of formal supervision for all staff and foster carers, the auditing of case files and supervision records as well as day to day management of the service and support to staff and foster carers. The quality and effectiveness of the complaints procedures is also regularly monitored and kept under review.

TACT also undertakes annual reporting of performance indicators, based on the outcomes central to Every Child Matters philosophy for improving the life chances of all children.

In July 2005, it held a national Young People's Participation Day during which young people's views of TACT were obtained. Both the report on the participation day and the performance indicators are available on request.

6. Review of Statement of Purpose

The Statement of Purpose is reviewed on a regular basis, at least annually but more frequently as and when information changes.

7. Number of approved foster carers

As at 1 March 2017 London & South East has **50 approved foster carers** with 16 families currently being assessed.

8. The number of children in placement

As at 1 March 2017, there were **46 children/young people** in placement covering the whole age range 0-17 years inc. child & parent placements. TACT has a clear matching policy and will only place children with suitable carers who can meet the child or young person's needs.

9. Children's guide

TACT has a guide for children and young people cared for by the charity.

The TACT Children's guides set out clearly what young people can do if they are unhappy about the service they are receiving and young people were actively involved in designing and producing these. These are provided in a range of formats, both for young and older children and with a 'drama documentary' called Chloe's journey – a DVD produced by TACT young people which covers joining a foster family and how to use advocacy / make complaints etc

7. Team structure

