

welcare

strengthening families

This annual report tells the stories of just a few of the 400 families that Welcare supports each month.



Annual report 2008-09

Chair's message

Welcare helps families who are under stress. Our role is to strengthen families so that stress does not become critical and families can take control of their own lives – minimising the need for intervention from statutory services.

We divide our work into three areas:

- Contact services – both supervised and supported
- Family group meetings – where we help families already involved with social services to find their own way forward
- Family support – from parenting groups to one-to-one support, plus additional services like our Child Safety Scheme (see page 7) and Generation Link, which provides volunteer 'grandparents' to support isolated families.

This year Welcare services have expanded to include the Child Safety Project and the Greenhouse Project (see page 5).

After a great deal of hard work, Welcare in East Surrey is now the Sure Start Children's Centre in Redhill. At long last some additional funding is enabling work in Greenwich to expand and, in Richmond, we look forward to fresh developments. It is a special pleasure to have a presence once again in the Borough of Lewisham.

This has also been a year of steady progress financially and the increasing breadth of funded activities (and the variety of our funders) gives us some improved sense of security in the difficult economic circumstances that currently exist.

Some areas of Welcare's work could not function without our wonderful volunteers. The services they support include the Contact Service (see page 4), Generation Link, the Greenhouse Project and in many other ways too. To many service users their commitment, sympathy and sheer competence is valued and enhanced particularly because they *are* volunteers. We cannot thank them enough.

The geographical spread of Welcare is considerable and the Board's thinking encompasses specific developments in local areas within a broad "global" framework. For those of us who have soldiered through the processes of change it has been an exciting and rewarding time and I thank all our staff, volunteers and partners for their continuing support.

**Alison Cavendish,
Chair, Welcare**



Welcare seeks a society in which children, families and carers are valued and where parents and carers are supported to use their strengths and skills to nurture happy and confident children. It seeks a society which is inclusive, values diversity and in which the best interests of children are served.

The photographs used are for illustrative purposes only and do not represent the individuals named in the case studies. All names used in this review have been changed, to provide anonymity.

Welcome to Welcare

We all want to give children the best start in life. But conditions for some parents can make bringing up a child especially hard.

That's where Welcare can help.

We are a registered charity which helps families re-build their lives and family ties, and give children a happier, more confident childhood.

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Ali's story – how our contact service helped Ali see her Dad.

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Andrew's story – how our after-school Greenhouse project gave Andrew confidence.

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Hassan's story – how a family group meeting helped to keep Hassan with his mother.

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Monique's story – how our child safety scheme is making homes safer for children like Monique.

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Sophie's story – how one child's life was changed by a parenting skills group.

9

Marcia's story – how one-to-one family support helped Marcia and her two daughters.

For details of all our services visit www.welcare.org

Welcare is a Christian charity, which works with children and families in need irrespective of faith, culture, abilities or life choices. It seeks to provide services in response to local needs which encourage self-help and build communities.



‘If there wasn’t a middle ground like a contact centre I don’t know what we would have done.’

Mark Hadleigh, father of Ali, 5

Welcare’s contact service reunites Ali with her Dad

Mark Hadleigh hadn’t seen his daughter Ali for over five months – ever since her mother stopped Ali’s overnight visits after some trouble between the parents.

‘It was a big shock – like having the carpet pulled from under me,’ says Mark. ‘I was used to seeing Ali regularly and just felt anger and despair.’

Mark applied to the courts to start seeing Ali again, but his ex-partner would only agree if it was at a contact centre, which is when Mark’s solicitors approached Welcare.

Supervised

Mark started seeing Ali at the Welcare Contact Centre every fortnight for an hour and the visits went really well. ‘It was hard, especially at first,’ says Mark. ‘Because when you’ve been used to being a family at home, the contact centre can feel like an alien environment to begin with.’

At first the visits were supervised, with someone from Welcare in the room to observe how the sessions went. ‘At times I felt angry that the visits were supervised,’ says Mark. ‘I felt “Why am I here?” But I had to put my feelings second if I wanted to see Ali.’

After 14 sessions the court ruled that visits could become ‘supported’, with Ali and several other children meeting their parents in a large, friendly room for two hours a fortnight.

Moving on

Now, nearly a year after their first visit, Mark and Ali no longer need the Welcare Contact Centre. He’s back having regular time with his daughter every other weekend.

‘To be honest, filling two hours in a contact centre isn’t always easy, but now I see her for three hours a fortnight the time just flies by! But if there wasn’t a middle ground like a contact centre I don’t know what we would have done.’



The Welcare Contact Service helps around 95 families a month keep in touch. The contact service is based in a large family centre with friendly rooms, lots of toys and a garden.

Greenhouse helps Andrew find his feet

Andrew was struggling to make friends at school when he was referred to the Greenhouse project, age 7.

New experiences would make him cry and he was easily upset by other children. His teachers were worried that Andrew, who has special needs, wasn't integrating with other children.

The Greenhouse runs after-school children's groups with a therapeutic focus. The aim is to increase the children's resilience, emotional literacy, self-worth and foster a sense of fun and adventure.

Emotional support

With Andrew, staff at the Greenhouse quickly saw that he needed help with emotional literacy – understanding his own feelings and being able to express them in a positive way.

Sometimes it was a case of 'tough love' and not always giving Andrew lots of attention when he cried. Or setting clear boundaries, so that if Andrew chose not to join in a game, he knew he wasn't allowed to spoil the enjoyment of others.

Mixed groups

Each Greenhouse group contains children with different backgrounds who are facing different challenges – the bullies and the bullied, the loud and the withdrawn, and those causing trouble at school and home.

'When you get something wrong, no one laughs at you.'

Greenhouse participant

Through Greenhouse, children at the school have come to understand Andrew better and accept his differences. Being part of Greenhouse has improved Andrew's resilience and self-esteem too.

'We've noticed a big change in Andrew in the four years he's been at Greenhouse,' says Ria Mason of Crawford Primary School. 'He's come on in leaps and bounds socially thanks to the work of Greenhouse.'



The Greenhouse is a long-term after-school club with a therapeutic focus. Last year the Greenhouse supported 36 children. The long-term, sustained nature of the Greenhouse project is one of the main reasons for its success.

‘Getting the whole family together was extremely beneficial.’

Family member

Family group meeting turns it around for Hassan

Social workers were worried that Hassan, 7, was in danger because of his parents’ volatile relationship. They had concerns over the parents’ drinking and mental health issues.

The parents kept cancelling appointments with the social worker and Hassan was at serious risk of being taken into care.

Breaking deadlock

That’s when children’s services decided to ask Welcare to run a family group meeting, as a way of breaking the deadlock.

Unlike other child protection meetings, family group meetings are independent and run on the parents’ terms. It was a chance for the whole family to listen to the social worker’s concerns and then, in their own time, answer the critical question: ‘What did they have to do to keep Hassan safe and with his mother?’

Extended family

As well as Hassan’s mother and father, the grandparents, cousin and a family friend all agreed to come along. Their social worker came too but only as an ‘information-giver’, and when the time came for the family to discuss what to do, the social worker left the room.

The family rallied round and came up with a written plan which included Hassan’s grandmother visiting 2-3 times a week and the mother’s cousin passing the flat on her way to school to see if Hassan was OK.

Review meetings

The social worker was happy with the plan, which was closely monitored and reviewed after a few weeks.

‘The family group meeting really galvanised the family to come together,’ says Jo Foster, principal social worker in Wandsworth. ‘It was their meeting, their plan and their ideas. They came together to keep Hassan safe and with his mother. It was a turning point for the whole family.’



Welcare’s Family Group Meeting service helps families create their own workable family plan when a child might otherwise be at risk of being taken away from the family. Last year we facilitated 302 family meetings, attended by 1,390 family members, including 478 children.

Monique is safe at home with our **Child Safety Scheme**

Most accidents happen in the house but for children like Monique, who's just starting to walk, the home can be particularly dangerous.

That's where Welcare's child safety advisers can help. They visit parents in their homes to give friendly and professional advice on how to make their home safer for children. And they also supply and install safety equipment such as stair gates, socket covers and door jambs, to stop fingers getting caught.

Friendly advice

Monique lives with her parents in a small two bedroom flat in Camberwell. Our adviser spent well over an hour with the mother talking about child safety and installing two stair gates.

The adviser also gave the family a fire blanket and corner cushions to protect the toddler's head from sharp furniture edges.

Less stress

By creating safer homes, the scheme reduces parental stress because parents no longer have to worry about children getting hurt. If children can be protected in dangerous places like the kitchen, for example, it can give them more freedom to play in the home.

The service includes supplying and fitting child safety equipment tailored to the home. As one parent says: 'It has saved us money and trips to A&E.'

'We are living in quite cramped conditions. The equipment has made our lives less stressed.'

Parent's comment



Welcare's Child Safety Scheme helps parents make a safe home for children to learn and play. Our child safety advisers visited 748 families between July 2008 and March 2009.

‘I am more confident about my parenting role.’

Parenting group participant

Parenting group lets Janice learn new skills



Welcare parenting groups support around 500 parents each year. Groups of around eight parents meet weekly to learn new ways of parenting. They learn how to support each other, and how to feel less isolated in the community.

Janice had major problems managing the behaviour of her eight-year-old daughter, Sophie.

Sophie was effectively ‘out of control’. She appeared rude, ignored her mother’s instructions and seemed to rule the family. Often Sophie and her mother would get into a slanging match and throw things around. There were no boundaries which could be enforced. The tensions in the family were affecting Sophie’s younger sister too.

That’s when Janice was referred to one of Welcare’s Strengthening Families parenting groups in Richmond.

Consistent

Over the 12-week course, Janice learned about being consistent and about how to assert herself as a parent. She also learned how to create ‘special time’ with her children and tune in to Sophie’s concerns.

‘Janice learned how to parent in a completely different way,’ says Lorna White, one of two facilitators running the course. ‘Sophie’s father was involved too so that there was consistency from both parents.’

‘Not a failure’

Janice also learned about nutrition and how to steer clear of bad food which can often be a significant factor in children’s behaviour.

Like many parents, Janice admits the course has helped her turn things around. As another parent said: ‘I gained new friendships and explored new parenting skills. I know now I’m not the only one going through things and that it happens to people of all ages and backgrounds! I’m not a failure. I had fun and I feel valued and not stupid when asking questions.’

One-to-one family support helps Marcia

Marcia, 28, was having difficulties with her four-year-old daughter, who she felt was behaving badly and had no respect for her mum. Marcia's younger child was slow learning to talk and Marcia was having problems in her relationship with her partner.

Our family support team has been working with the family for several months, visiting every couple of weeks for an hour or so.

Out and about

Marcia was a little agoraphobic and found getting out of the house difficult. This was making life harder for the children, so our support worker accompanied Marcia on a few family outings – to the park or shopping – to help Marcia feel more confident going out with her family.

Bedtimes were also a real problem for Marcia. Our support worker suggested a way to make it more enjoyable by putting the children to bed at different times so she could spend individual time with each of them. The support worker gave Marcia a special bedtime story book to use, with reward stickers for good behaviour, which was a great success.

Community support

We helped Marcia find a toddler group and nursery place for her youngest daughter, to give her a break and also offer the child interesting new experiences. And we linked Marcia with a specialist agency to get extra support for her youngest child's communication needs.

Although Marcia's children were not 'at risk', Welcare's support prevented her family situation from worsening and gave Marcia a new sense of hope and positive strategies to manage the children's behaviour.

Marcia is really excited as she has just been offered a place on our next ten week 'Parenting Puzzle' course, to be held at Welcare.

'Welcare has been a stepping stone for us and supplied us with fantastic advice and support.'

Marcia

Welcare's family support workers offer one-to-one advice and support to individual families. Each family support worker has a case load of around 12-14 families. Family support work also includes running groups, outings and activities to help families build a wider support network.



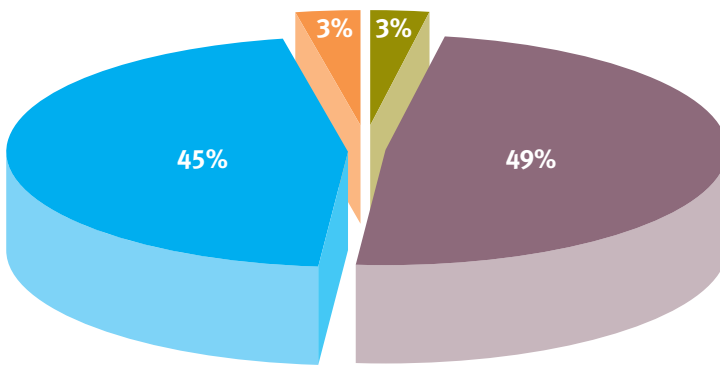
Facts and Figures

Income

Where our money comes from

		£	%
1	Donations and events	84,930	3%
2	Grants	1,438,637	49%
3	Contracts	1,306,985	45%
4	Investment and other income	98,955	3%
Total		2,929,507	

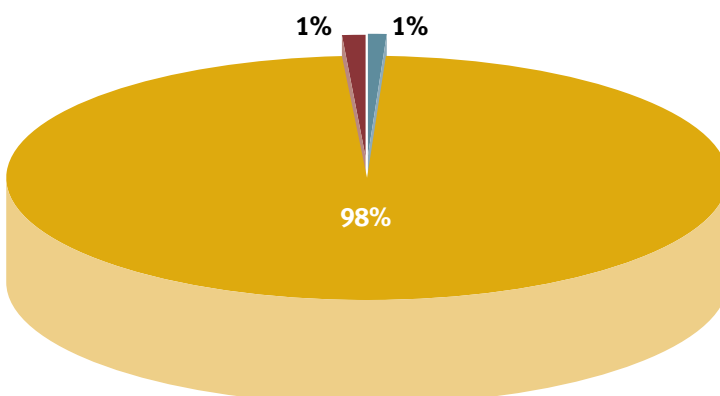
Included in grants are amounts of £361,047 capital grant funding towards the Children's Centre in Redhill and £143,486 residual funds committed to expenditure on the Greenhouse project.



Expenditure

How our money is spent

		£	%
1	Fundraising, communication and publicity	15,059	1%
2	Charitable activities	2,329,352	98%
3	Governance	25,809	1%
Total		2,370,220	



Reason for referral to Welcare

Domestic violence issues	14%
Child protection	13%
Child with behavioural difficulties	11%
Child contact	10%
Lone parent family	10%
Parent with mental health problems	4%
Debt/financial problems	4%
Parent with substance misuse problems	4%
Parental conflict	3%
Parent with learning difficulty	3%
Housing problems/homelessness	2%
Parent with other health issues	2%
Child with learning difficulties	2%
Child with other health problems	1%
Parent with physical disability/sensory impairment	1%
Child with mental health problems	1%
Other/self referral	15%

The financial information presented does not comprise the statutory financial statement of Southwark Diocesan Welcare for the financial year end 31st March 2009, but represents extracts from them.

The complete annual report, including auditors' report, can be obtained free of charge from our Director of Finance at our principle address or downloaded from our website.

Thank you

Welcare is grateful for the support it received in 2008/09 from the following funders:

CAFCASS
 Church Welfare Association
 Croydon Primary Care Trust
 Croydon Relief in Need
 Diocese of Southwark – South London Church Fund
 Greenwich Play Association
 Lambeth Endowed Charities
 Lambeth PCT
 London Borough of Barnet
 London Borough of Croydon
 London Borough of Greenwich
 London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham
 London Borough of Kensington and Chelsea
 London Borough of Lambeth
 London Borough of Lewisham
 London Borough of Newham
 London Borough of Richmond
 London Borough of Southwark
 London Borough of Sutton
 London Borough of Wandsworth
 Margaret Chapman Trust
 Marryat Trust
 Nation Family & Parenting Institute
 Netherby Trust
 Opportunities for Volunteering – Churches Together in England
 Reigate & Banstead Borough Council
 Sir Walter St John-Educational Charity
 Southwark PCT
 St Faith Trust
 Surrey Connexions
 Surrey County Council
 Surrey Lifelong Learning
 Tandridge Borough Council

Client grant funders

Family Action
 Family Holiday Association
 Frank Buttle
 John Beane trust
 London Catalyst
 National Patients Trust
 RL Glasspool Trust
 Ragamuffins
 Three Oaks trust

Trustees 2008/09

Chair

Alison Elizabeth Cavendish

Treasurer

David Atterbury Thomas

Judith Ann Saunders Foster

Peter Jacques Johnson

The Venerable Daniel Stephen

Kimbugwe Kajumba

Bridget Mary Knapper

Alexander John Mervyn Murdock

Marion Joyce Parsons

Andrew Michael Horsfall Simon

Gerlind Richards MBE

Andrew Pegg

Chief Executive

Reverend Anne-Marie Garton

Senior Staff

Director of Finance and Company

Secretary

Atawa Aryee FCCA

Directors of Operations

Sharon Goodridge

Chris Price

Lorna White



We would like to extend a very special thanks to the many individual donors who support our work. We also thank our supporting church congregations in the Anglican Dioceses of Southwark and London and in other Christian denominations.

Local Welcare Centres

Welcare Central Office

St John's Community Centre
19 Frederick Crescent, Myatt's Field,
London SW9 6XN
e: info@welcare.org
t: 020 7820 7910
f: 020 7735 3700

Welcare in Croydon

56A Mitcham Road, Croydon,
Surrey CR0 3RG
e: families@welcarec.org.uk
t: 020 8688 5151
f: 020 8686 9741

Welcare in East Surrey

Welcare House, 24 Warwick Road
Redhill, Surrey RH1 1BU
e: Redhill.admin@welcare.org
t: 01737 780884
f: 01737 826781

Welcare in Greenwich

248-266 Nightingale Vale, Woolwich,
London SE18 4HN
e: Greenwich@welcare.org
t: 020 8854 3865
f: 020 8488 6558

Welcare in Lambeth

19 Frederick Crescent,
Myatts Field, London SW9 6XN
e: Info@welcare.org
t: 020 7820 7910
f: 020 7735 3700

Welcare in Lewisham

Eagle House, 290 Lewisham Road,
London, SE13 7PA
e: Lewisham@welcare.org
t: 020 8297 5830
f: 020 8318 3245

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Welcare principal address

St. John's Community Centre
19 Frederick Crescent
London SW9 6XN

Tel: 020 7820 7910

Fax: 020 7735 3700

Email: centraloffice@welcare.org

Web: www.welcare.org

Welcare in Richmond

26 The Green, Twickenham,
Middlesex TW2 5AB
e: admin@richmond-welcare.org.uk
t: 020 8893 9123
f: 020 8893 3993

Welcare in Sutton

Sutton Family Centre, Robin Hood Lane,
Sutton, Surrey SM1 2SD
e: childcontact@welcarec.org.uk
t: 020 8643 6285
(Saturdays only)

Welcare in Wandsworth

79 Trinity Road, London SW17 7SQ
e: info@welcare.org.uk
t: 020 8767 1020
f: 020 8767 7066
and
Tooting Integrated Children's Centre
Smallwood School, Smallwood Road,
London SW17 0TW
t: 020 8767 4795

Welcare Contact Services

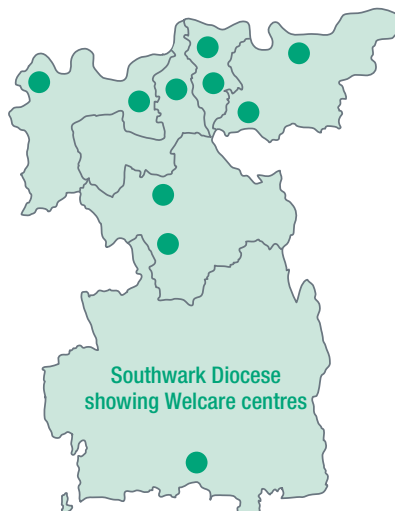
56A Mitcham Road, Croydon,
Surrey CR0 3RG
e: childcontact@welcarec.org.uk
t: 020 8256 9292
f: 020 8686 9741

Welcare Family Group Meetings Service

79 Trinity Road, London SW17 7SQ
e: fgmproject@welcare.org.uk
t: 020 8767 1020
f: 020 8767 7066

Greenhouse

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Camberwell, London SE5 0LD
e: Greenhouse@welcare.org
t: 020 7703 8419



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A Prayer for Welcare

Living God,
you have made us in
your own image
and we live and grow
best in companionship
with others;
bless the work of
Welcare with parents,
carers and children.

May Welcare staff,
volunteers and
supporters continue
to provide
places and spaces
where trust is grown,
understanding enabled,
relationships developed,
new confidence found
and potential released.

Amen

Welcare's services address
real need in our communities,
offering practical help at
times of crisis and acting as
vital support before problems
get bigger.

We rely on a wide range of
funding to offer this type of
help and also on the very
valuable contribution that
our 200 plus volunteers make
in working with families and
children.

If you would like to support
Welcare, please contact
Anne-Marie Garton at the
Central Office on 020 7820
7913 or the Welcare centre or
service you wish to support.