

# TFF NEWS



## Celebrating a year of achievements in 2022, The Fostering Foundations sets its ambitions for a milestone 2023

2022 has been a year of exciting growth for The Fostering Foundation, which has celebrated the recruitment of several passionate and expert individuals across departments as part of its goal to support and grow its communities of foster carers across the South West.

Chief among these has been the appointment of CEO Sakina Khan and Registered Manager Nita Yeowell. Having worked with the Foundation since its inception in 2000 in various roles – including as a Board Member and Finance Director – Sakina became CEO in February 2022.

Her vision has been to streamline The Fostering Foundation's operations, allowing the organisation to be more efficient across all areas, as well as to amplify the message of the Foundation through stronger marketing and communications.

Sakina says: *"We want to grow The Fostering Foundation in order to address the huge need for fostering placements across England, and especially in the South West where we operate. My goal is to have a positive influence on every stakeholder we engage with – from our employees and suppliers to government and local authorities – and support our teams."*

### Growing the team

Nita joined The Fostering Foundation on 29 November 2021, bringing her extensive knowledge and experience to improving and bolstering the existing high standards of social work practice within the organisation.

Nita's dedication has seen positive change at every level and, in 2023, will continue through the implementation of new specialised training courses and robust policies.

To support their goals, Sakina and Nita's first priority was recruitment. Natasha Daniel joined the Foundation as a second Recruitment and Placement Officer, while social worker Victoria Baker joined the Exeter team. The Foundation has recently recruited an additional social worker, starting in March 2023, to join the team.

Support worker Molly Blackler joined the team in November with the aim of working directly with children in care. Alongside our Therapeutic Practitioner Donna Conway, Molly will be based in Exeter where a new bespoke therapeutic room is being planned for child-centred work.

Sakina says: *"One of our aims was to grow our Exeter region. Victoria has made such a positive impact on that region as a social worker, and Molly's appointment is an exciting move for our therapeutic team. This is something that there is a huge need for, and I think it will be an important move for The Fostering Foundation in the future."*

### Regional success

Exeter: Another important step in The Fostering Foundation's growth has been the opening of new offices for the organisation's Exeter region. This new office is based in Cullompton, conveniently situated between the Foundation's offices in Tavistock and Bristol.

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Sakina says: *“We are so pleased with the new location of our Exeter office and hope we can push forward with our strategic aim to attract and support foster carers in the Exeter region for many years to come.”*

**Bristol:** Successes in Bristol have included two milestones within our foster carer community. Audrey and Lee Harper celebrated 20 years in fostering, and Sharon and Mark McCue celebrated 10 years as foster carers.

**South West:** In our South West region, our carers Ian and Becky Dowley celebrated a milestone 15 years in fostering. Our dedicated team of social workers continued to ensure short and long-term placements experienced minimal breakdown or change for young people in care. The South West has also welcomed its first Unattended Asylum-Seeking Child (UASC) into care in the region.

Nita says: *“Welcoming an Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Child is an important step and we hope it is the start of great things to come in this specialist area, for this region.”*

## OUR VISION FOR 2023

### Growing our community

Following the success of 2022's growth plan, The Fostering Foundation's goals for 2023 will expand on their pledge to attract and support foster carers, in order to address the shortage of available carers in local communities post-Covid-19. This commitment to the local authority tenders will include a focus on recruiting 'short breaks' foster families.

In 2022, the Foundation achieved a Good rating from Ofsted, and aims to achieve an Outstanding rating at our next full inspection in 2024. Sakina says: *“Our eyes are firmly set on achieving an Outstanding from Ofsted.”*

*When you aim for this, your journey naturally guides you to making the improvements that directly impact the children in care and foster carers that you serve, which also creates a positive impact on your entire organisation.”*

### Specialised training

The Fostering Foundation will not only implement new practice and policy guidelines throughout the organisation, designed to help social workers and foster carers alike, but unveil specialised training packages designed to enhance the skills of team members throughout the organisation.

These training packages will include First Aid needs such as sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), safe administration of medication, as well as crucial child protection and safeguarding packages directly relating to the organisation's regional needs. Another element of The Fostering Foundation's new guidelines is to finetune child-specific policies and procedures to be more accessible to young people, as well as providing training to staff members and foster carers, to move to a restorative language model.

This approach, which is being adopted by many local authorities and social work, is designed to move away from archaic social work language, such as terms like 'contact', meaning allocated time for children in care to spend with members of their family, which is more appropriately referred to as 'family time'.

### Building connections

The Summer Forum: As part of The Fostering Foundation's commitment to supporting its foster carers, the 15 June 2023 will see the organisation host The Summer Forum – an all-regions foster carer event.



**DON'T FORGET!**

**SUMMER FORUM – ALL CARERS EVENT**  
Holiday Inn, Taunton TA1 2UA  
10.30am – 2.30pm



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Taking place at the Holiday Inn in Taunton, foster carers from all regions can attend for activities including a meet and greet across all teams, carer consultations, training exercises and more.

The Young Person's Panel: The Fostering Foundation's Young Person's Panel invites children in care from aged 8+ to gain accredited skills and get directly involved with The Fostering Foundation's work. During the panel process, young people take part in activities and form an interview panel where they question foster carer and staff candidates. The young people then have an open discussion with the Fostering Foundation team and their opinions form part of the prospective carers' assessments and staff recruitment processes.

Sakina says: *"The Young Person's Panel gives children confidence and life skills through both the training and execution of these panels. We have seen young people go from strength to strength. We're delighted to see the interest in this ongoing feature grow and grow."*

**Digital:** The Fostering Foundation will also launch a newsletter in early 2023, designed to be informative and inclusive for both our team of foster carers and potential carers interested in beginning their journey with the organisation.

NEWS

UPDATE

## Latest News By Region

### Exeter Region

We are really excited to tell you about the new TFF Exeter region office, based in Cullompton and easily accessible from the M5 and A roads. The new office will be opening sometime after the new year once all necessary renovations are complete and you will be invited to come, take a look and join us in celebrating with tea/coffee and cake! The office will be open every day and will be a space where we can hold training events specifically for you all and a place where you can come to see us and each other. Molly will also have a room there, crammed full of toys, games, puzzles and art/craft materials especially for your children in care and your birth children to enjoy.

### Bristol Region

You, Bristol carers, have made some amazing achievements and we are always the most proud of the stable, loving, family homes that you provide. There have been many challenges and through everything you have remained committed and child-focused. Some of the particular challenges have included supporting young people with serious health issues and dealing with the impact of significant trauma. It has required all of us to use our skills and knowledge to carry on learning and developing together to meet the individual needs of every child in our care. This is always our common goal.

We have had two Hubs introduced over the past 12 months and we thank Sharon and Saadat for being there for you and providing a listening ear. A massive thank you!

We have had some milestones in terms of Sharon and Mark fostering for 10 years and Audrey and Lee marking their 20th year with TFF. It is brilliant to think of the differences you have made in the lives of young people, parents and children over this time. You are remarkable! (... and Audrey we hope you take up the offer of a cup of tea and tour of the House of Commons that your MP offered when you have time😊).

Other achievements have included reunifying two sanctuary seeking brothers who are now living together with our carers. We have had two new families approved in this past year (one has a sibling group and one is supporting sanctuary seeking young people currently). These families are a great addition to our community. Finally, we would like to thank you once again. We know that 2023 will be a busy year for you all but we know that together we will get through whatever challenges arise!



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## Tavistock Region

A big thank you to all our carers in the South West Team. Despite some considerable challenges, the children in your care are thriving, making great progress and seeing the benefit of all the love, stability and care they are given. We have seen 2 new Fostering Families join TFF in the last 12 months which has been great additions to the Team and I hope that in 2023, the numerous support groups being provided, will enable you to get to know other carers and build up your TFF support network.

I thought it is worth noting some of your achievements this year. This is just a small segment and in the next newsletter, it would be great to see some of your contributions.

- Regular respite arrangement established to support stability for a young person, and excellent working together with the Team around the Child, through a challenging time.
- P and C foster carers supporting a baby as she transitioned to her adopters, they remain in communication, completed follow up visits, and provided continuity of care.
- Re-uniting and keeping siblings together.
- Permanent matching of a young person in accordance with his wishes.
- Supporting the successful transition of a young care experienced adult from Staying Put arrangement to independent living and employment.
- Supporting a young child through the turmoil of Care Proceedings, until the final plan is decided and contributing to his assessment for a suitably matched long term family arrangement.
- Supporting hobbies, young people achieving at clubs after school, completing the Duke of Edinburgh Award and for one promotion to Lance Corporal at Army Cadets.
- Supporting young people with their career goals and finding work placements.
- Enabling foster carers to make decisions about the right type of fostering for them through changes in circumstances.

In terms of changes, we are listening to the feedback and know that there is always a need for respite care and how important this is to support you to do what you do. We now have 3 carers in the region providing 'respite only' foster care. However, as you can imagine they are quickly booked up and there is always a need for more. Natasha and Noorie will be focussing on this as one of the recruitment aims for 2023. One of the best ways to recruit carers to the Foundation is recommendations from yourself, so thank you for those that have done that this year and please continue to bear this in mind for the year ahead.

***Thank you again for all that you do.***



**REFER A  
FRIEND**

**Do you have a family member or friend who is interested in Fostering?**

If yes, you will receive **£500** when the referral goes to panel and **YES** another **£500** when a placement has been made with them!



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# MEET MOLLY



## Dear Carers,

"I have previously worked within the Early Years sector; managing 2 nurseries and working as an Early Years Development Worker. I then moved to the Local Authority as a Community Care Worker on the frontline in the Safeguarding Children and Families team. I am looking forward to transferring my skills and knowledge into my support worker role at TFF and continue to build relationships with children and young people, allowing them to have fun, feel safe and be heard".

## Dear Young People,

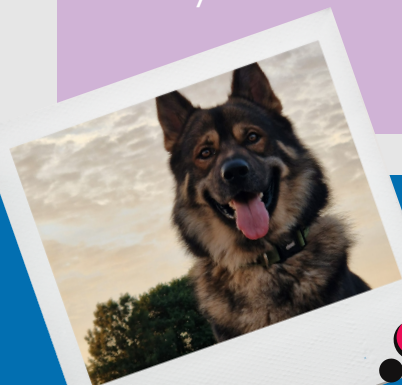
"Hello, my name is Molly and my role within the fostering foundation is a support worker. A support worker to me means to build fun and trusting relationships with children and young people, to listen to your thoughts and feelings and support you in any areas you may find challenging. I can help to share your views and opinions and be someone to turn to if you are feeling sad, angry or just fancy a chat. We will have lots of fun together and I am excited to meet you and explore our surrounding world together, learning lots of new things along the way"

**DID  
YOU  
KNOW?**



**FACT-CHECKED** 🔍

- **I have a German Shepherd cross Malamute named Vinnie, he is 1.5 years old and very fluffy!**
- **I have 2 horses named Allie and Bert who love to eat lots of carrots and apples and sometimes even swede!**
- **I own a bearded dragon called Pablo who loves to climb my stairs and run around my home!**
- **I love being outdoors and enjoy long walks and exploring the world around me**



**WOOF**

Vinnie the German Shepherd

# YOUNG PEOPLE EVENTS FOR 2023

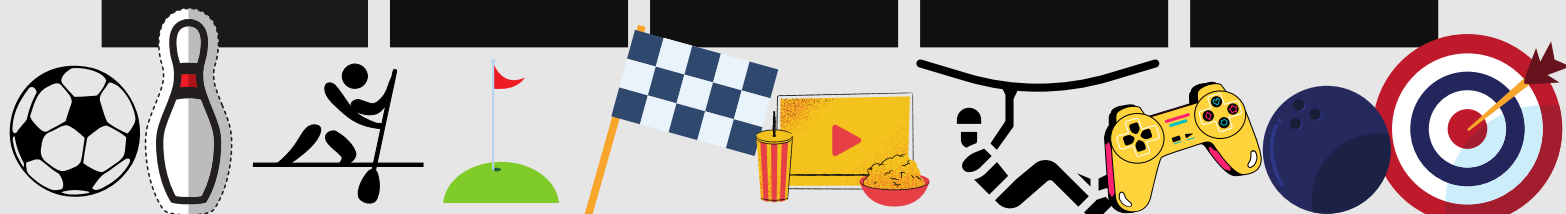
Tash and Noorie have penciled in some dates for this year's young people's activities. In 2022 whilst out with the young people we tried to gather new ideas of places they would like to visit. GO-Karting was a BIG ask from most. We are exploring this, however, this does need very careful exploration due to the high risks that come with this activity, so with this said we would love it if you could take a moment with the young people and drop us an email with a wish list of places that they would like to visit.

As explained to the young people, some of the activities suggested do cost considerably more and generally take less time to complete - but this is what the adrenaline seekers want! Dependent on the requests received we may need to complete an online Easter Event to allow a bigger pot of money for the summer activities. Once we have your suggestions collated we will send out a new table highlighting the event to be completed against the date suggested. We will need to place a RSVP date in for some activities to ensure that we are able to secure the booking and therefore we may need at least 1 months notice prior to the date, especially in the summer holiday activities.

Noorie and I are bracing ourselves for this years adventures!!!!

**Please email suggestions to [NDaniel@fosteringfoundation.co.uk](mailto:NDaniel@fosteringfoundation.co.uk) by January 31st 2023**

Extreme Team (over 12's)	Wolf Pack (under 12's)	Bristol Young People	Teddy bears (under 8s)	Squad (son's and daughters)
Wednesday 5th April	Tuesday 4th April	Wednesday 5th April	Date TBC	Wednesday 5th April
W/C 7th August - TBC	W/C 7th August - TBC	Wednesday 26th July	Thursday 10th August	W/C 7th August - TBC
Wednesday 25th October	Wednesday 25th October	Tuesday 24th October	Monday 23rd October	Monday 23rd October



**INTERESTED IN BECOMING A YOUNG PERSON'S PANEL MEMBER.**  
**This will require a short training session, followed by vouchers for each panel attended.**  
[NDaniel@fosteringfoundation.co.uk](mailto:NDaniel@fosteringfoundation.co.uk)

# DATES FOR 2023

## Training events - Virtual and On-line 2023

Look out in your inbox for your invite from 'communications' to the training events scheduled for 2023

TRAINING	DELIVERY
First Aid (Mandatory)	Face to Face
Managing Violent Behaviour in the home (Mandatory)	Face to Face
Safeguarding and CSE (Mandatory)	Virtual
Equality and Diversity (Mandatory)	Virtual
Safer Caring (Mandatory)	Virtual
Anti - radicalisation (Mandatory)	Training Hub
ASD	Virtual with Becky Dowley
Record Keeping Training	Virtual
Allegations against Foster Carers	Partner Agencies
Computer and Internet Safety	CEOP Virtual with Jim W. Training hub
6 week attachment course	Virtual with Donna
Modern Slavery	Partner Agencies
Parent and Child	Virtual. Nita/Jlm W and carers
SEN and the role of the virtual schools	Partner Agencies
Working with sexualised behaviour	Online training hub
LGBTQ+	Online training hub
Managing Teenage behaviour	Virtual. Donna

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LOCATIONS - CAN NOW BE FOUND ON  
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