THE BLOSSOM DEVELOPMENT TRUST

Helping children and young people

with special and additional needs on the journey towards independence,

self-worth and a fulfilling, happy life.

Dear Blossom Supporters October 2026

We are now able to share details of **the changes taking place within our Board of Trustees**. You may recall **that Kate, Eleanor and Jacqui will be stepping down** from their trustee roles, and we would like to take this opportunity to thank them for their dedication, commitment and support of Blossom over the years.

We are delighted to introduce our new trustees:
Lizzie Ayling, Andy Baines, Claire Gulding and Jo Wooster,

Please see their profiles below to learn more about the experience, skills and enthusiasm they bring to Blossom. We are excited about the future and look forward to working with this talented new team as we continue to support children, young people and families in our community.

Exciting times ahead for Blossom! ❀

Elizabeth Ayling



Alongside her business partner, Elizabeth co-founded **"Becoming our Potential" – known as B.O.P**., a Community Interest Company that supports children, young people and adults with learning differences. The organisation's values closely align with those of Blossom making this is a natural opportunity for both organisations to work alongside one another while maintaining their independence.

Although B.O.P. is a funded, not-for-profit organisation, Elizabeth regularly encounters families whose needs extend beyond what statutory funding can provide. A strong relationship between B.O.P. and Blossom could help create opportunities for families who might otherwise be unable to access support, while also furthering Blossom's charitable aims.

Elizabeth has already achieved so much through B.O.P., showing her commitment to supporting vulnerable individuals and families. She will make a valuable contribution to Blossom's continued development. As B.O.P. grows, there is significant potential for both organisations to extend their reach and create meaningful, sustainable support for the communities they serve. **To find out more about B.O.P. their website is https://boponline.co.uk/**

Andy Baines



Andy's career has always centred on service, responsibility and practical problem-solving. He has worked in IT and telecommunications within both the Armed Forces and industry, developing strong teamwork, leadership and adaptability skills. Andy also served as a trustee with Veterans in Action, gaining valuable experience in governance, accountability and strategic oversight.

Andy now runs a LEGO-based therapy business, supporting children and young people to build communication, confidence and social skills. Through this work, he has developed a deep understanding of additional needs and the importance of strength-based support.

Andy experience will be valuable and enhancing to Blossom. He brings a unique combination of trustee experience, technical expertise and hands-on experience supporting children and young people, together with a genuine commitment to helping individuals reach their potential.

Claire Goulding



Claire's career spans two very different fields, giving her a broad perspective and a diverse range of skills. She began her career in publishing and marketing, where she developed strong expertise in communication, relationship-building and engaging with a wide range of audiences.

After having children, Claire retrained as a dyslexia therapist and assessor and also worked as a Speech and Language Therapy Assistant. These roles have given her extensive experience supporting children with additional needs, particularly those facing communication and processing challenges. Through her work, she has seen first-hand the difference that individualised, strength-based support can make in helping children achieve their potential.

Claire will bring both professional expertise and practical insight to the Board. She has a strong understanding of the realities faced by children and families, combined with valuable experience in publishing, marketing and communications. She will help raise Blossom's profile, helping to communicate it’s impact effectively and build relationships that broaden Blossom’s reach.

Above all, Claire will bring a genuine commitment to the individuals and families Blossom exists to support, together with a desire to play an active and constructive role as a trustee.

Jo Wooster



Jo brings over 30 years of experience in financial services, during which she has developed strong financial, commercial, organisational and interpersonal skills. Alongside her professional career, she has also gained valuable governance experience through her voluntary involvement with the Parents Association at The Pilgrims’ School, building a solid understanding of accountability, constructive challenge and collaborative decision-making.

Jo is at a stage in her career where she is keen to use her experience to make a meaningful contribution to the wider community. Blossom’s long-standing commitment to supporting children, young people and families resonates strongly with her. Jo will bring a range of complementary strengths to the Board, including financial and commercial expertise, strong organisational skills and an extensive network of professional and personal contacts.

Jacqui will be stepping down as Chair and Trustee at the beginning of November, although she will continue to support our new trustees over the coming months until they are fully familiar with Blossom's processes and procedures. Blossom is extremely grateful for her ongoing commitment and willingness to share her knowledge and experience to ensure a smooth transition during this handover period.

The role of Chair of Blossom will be handed over to Elizabeth Ayling.

Update on Fundraising

St Francis' Social & Sports Club in Haywards Heath continues to be a fantastic supporter of Blossom. Through their social events and fundraising activities, they have raised an incredible amount of money to help support our work.

With two months still remaining before the end of the year, there is plenty more to come, and we will keep you updated on the final fundraising total in our December newsletter. We would like to thank everyone at **St Francis'** for their continued generosity, enthusiasm and support of Blossom

Thank you for your continued support for Blossom.

Yours faithfully

Carol

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"Blossom" Administrator

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