



New Beginnings

Annual Report Sept 2022- Sept 2023

Our impact this year in numbers

We have carried out **30** QbChecks for parents and children

We have welcomed **36** new families to our service

We have trained **6** peer mentors

We have run **46** Life Laundry workshops;

We have run **20** Men's Groups

We have run **24** Drop the Mic groups

We have run **10** SMART groups;

We provided continuous weekly support to **34** parents post programme

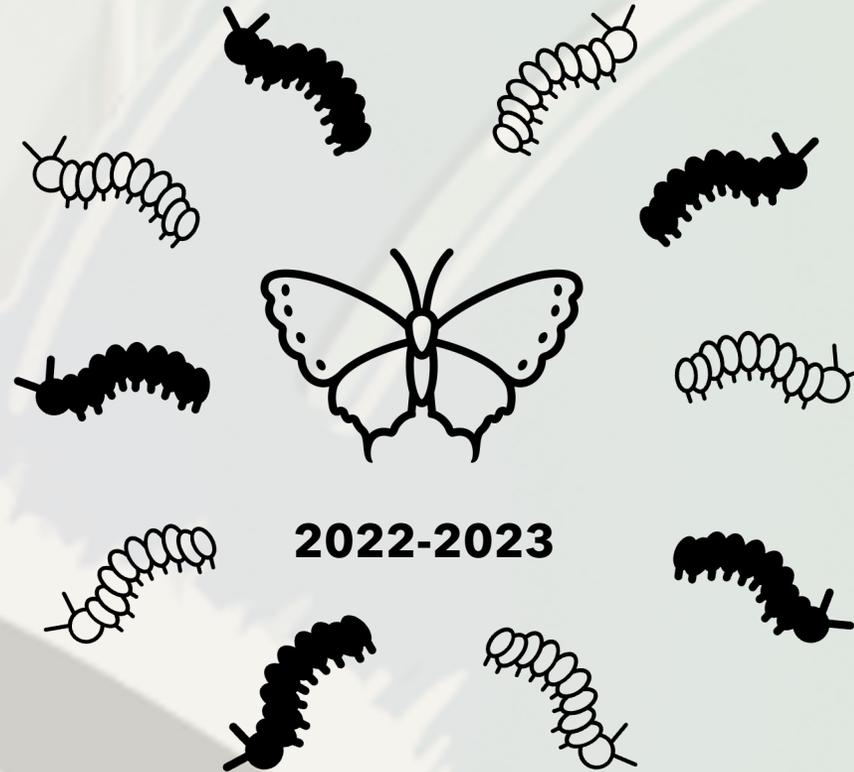
17 children from Cohort 10 are **no** longer in the child protection process

We received **42** referrals for **Cohort 10**

We received **59** referrals for **Cohort 11**

9 out of 12 families were stepped down for **Cohort 10**

7 out of 12 families had **no** CSC involvement at the end of **Cohort 10**



Welcome to our annual report

Foreword by Dr Jadwiga Leigh, CEO and Founder of New Beginnings Foundation CIO



As the CEO of New Beginnings, I am pleased to welcome you to our Annual Report for the Sept 2022-Sept 2023 period. We have had yet another impactful year this year with the families we work with in the child protection system.

We received 42 referrals for Cohort 10 and 59 referrals for Cohort 11, demonstrating that the demand for our service has risen considerably between the two cohorts, but also since we started the programme in 2018. In May 2018 when we ran our first Cohort, we received 10 referrals, and 5 parents joined us.

This year, we had 16 parents join us for Cohort 10 and 20 join us for Cohort 11.

As I write this report, we are still on week 20 with Cohort 11 which means it will conclude early November. While it is still too early to discuss the impact from Cohort 11, there are promising signs of positive change which I will be able to discuss in more detail in the next annual report.

Nonetheless, I can share good news about the impact we have had with Cohort 10 which ended in April 2023. 12 of the 16 families who joined us for this cohort completed the programme. And of those 12 families, 9 families were 'stepped down' which means that their level of need from statutory services decreased, because of the changes that the parent made to keep their children safe. What is even more impressive, is that 7 of those 9 families, had **no** social care intervention whatsoever by the time they completed the New Beginnings Programme.

Collectively, these 12 families have 22 children. As a result of being stepped down, 17 of these 22 (77%) children are no longer subject to child protection process. **This means that 17 children are no longer considered to be at risk of significant harm or at risk of being removed from their family.** Every child removed from the care of a family costs the Local Authority approximately £70k per annum. By potentially preventing 17 children from entering foster care, New Beginnings has saved the local authority £1,190,000. This figure is likely to at least double at the end of Cohort 11, because we have 4 more families who will complete the programme on that cohort than we did on Cohort 10.

Whilst we have made good progress, this year has nonetheless presented fresh new challenges for local authorities and families in the child protection system on a national level. In the context of the cost-of-living crisis as well as the post Covid pandemic era, recent government statistics demonstrate that the number of children being removed into care continues to increase. Data published on the gov.uk website in July 2023, shows that in 2022, 82,170 children are registered as being 'looked after'. In 2018, the number of children being looked after was 75,360. These figures show that there has been a 9% increase in children being accommodated in 4 years¹.

Although our team at New Beginnings have continued their efforts to ensure that children remain in their family home, when it is safe for them to do so, we are very aware that we are one of a few community projects in the country which is able to provide families in the child protection system with the intensive support that they need to effect positive change. Our intensive programme of support shows that we do make a significant difference and what is more, we do not close our doors to families when the 24-week programme comes to an end. We currently continue to provide weekly post programme support to 41 families.

At New Beginnings we believe therefore that by building meaningful relationships based on trust, respect and honesty we can keep children in the child protection system safe from harm. We do this by providing bespoke support to families who have experienced significant trauma for as long as they need us. But a challenge we now face, as an organisation, is that we cannot continue to do what we do without having a sustainable funding model in place.

And so, this coming year is crucial if we are to not only thrive but survive. One thing is certain: we need to reach a better position of financial security than the one we occupy at present. These coming months will involve us developing a robust business proposal so that we can continue the work we do with Stockport Local Authority. However, we also want to extend our reach and start working with other local authorities, and their families, across the Greater Manchester area. We are, therefore, looking to build new relationships with neighbouring local authorities which share the same vision as we do: keeping children safe from harm; and which are also, passionate about empowering parents to be the difference to their family.

¹ <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/children-looked-after-in-england-including-adoptions#content>.

Of course, we could not do any of the good work that we do without our core team, our peer mentors, our parents, our students, our sessional workers, our trustees, our funders and supporters and not forgetting, the social workers, social care professionals and the Senior Leadership Team at Stockport Local Authority. I extend my thanks to you all, without your endless creativity, (com)passion and innovation there would, quite simply, be no New Beginnings.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "J Leigh". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dr Jadwiga Leigh

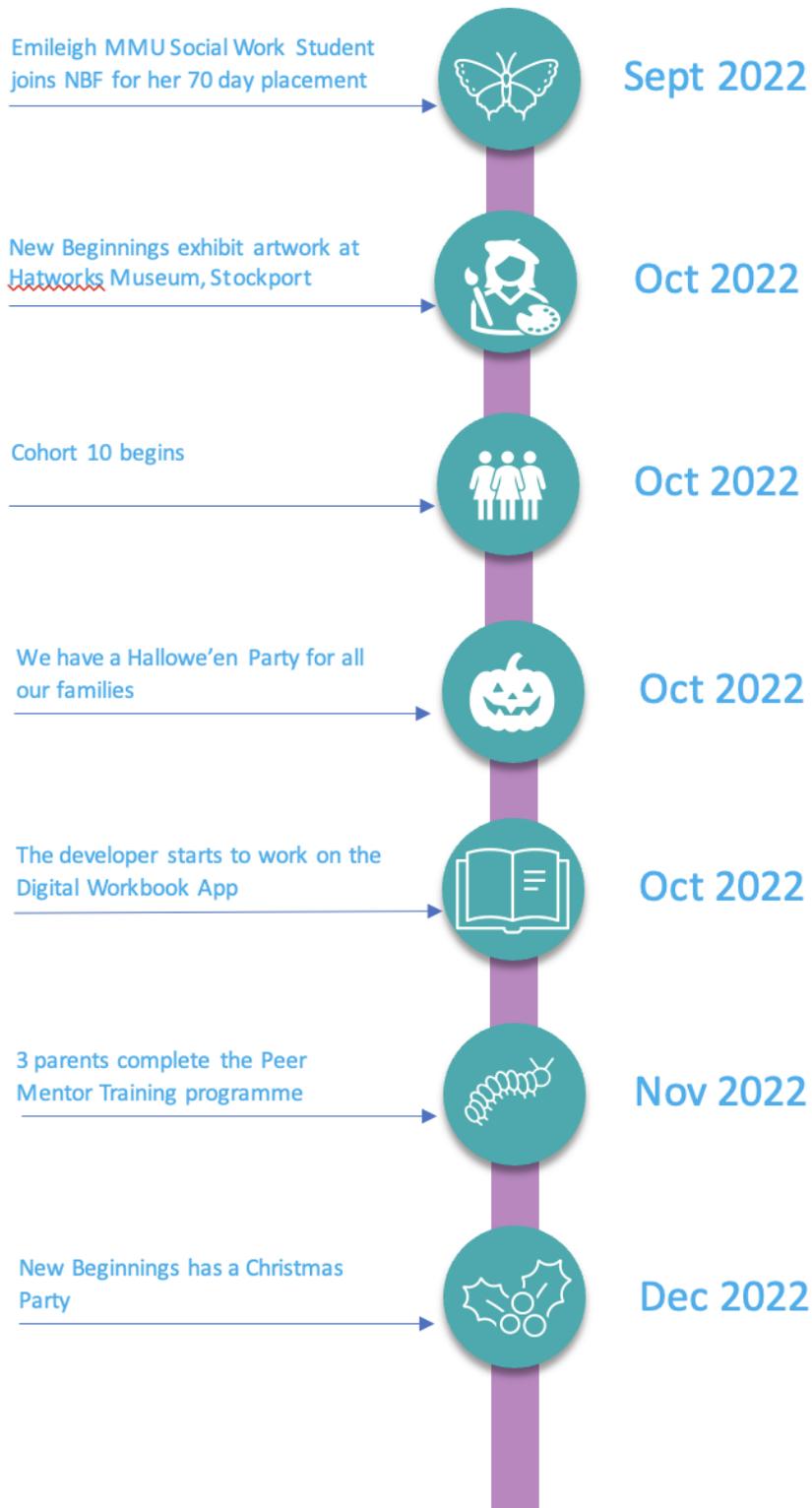
CEO of New Beginnings



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Our timeline of events from Sept 22 to Sept 23







Cohort 11 starts and we welcome 38 new parents to New Beginnings



May 2023

SMART support groups start, led by Peer Mentor Sara, supported by Matthew



May 2023

New Beginnings are finalists at the LGC and MJ Awards



Jun 2023

New Beginnings first ever podcast is released: Sylvia's Story



Jul 2023

3 parents completed their Peer Mentoring training



Jul 2023

RBU Consultants publish their report: Building a Sustainable New Beginnings Foundation



Jul 2023

New Beginnings releases its 2nd podcast: Navigating Timelines



Aug 2023

New Beginnings releases its 3rd podcast: The Story of the PPO Queen



Sept 2023



Our community and us

This year has been another year of change, development and growth. We have spent time maturing, adapting and adjusting to our new identity: a charity. We have also been developing our practice as a team through the learning of new skills and trying new ways of working in partnership with our main beneficiaries: the families who attend New Beginnings and the social workers who refer families into us.

In this section we will discuss the inauguration of our very first New Beginnings SMART Recovery Group; the series of consultation meetings we had with parents on the Drop In; the change to our core offer to families which is the 24-week Attachment and Trauma Informed Programme. We will also share feedback that we have received from those involved in all the above, from team members and beneficiaries. Later in this report we will discuss how we have taken on board their feedback and what we are going to implement the suggestions that have been made.

SMART Recovery Group

The New Beginnings programme has always been focused on supporting parents to understand how past experiences have affected their identity and their ability to parent. However, one group of parents we have always struggled to reach, or provide with effective support so that they can meet the needs of their family unit, were parents who battle addiction.

One parent, who we had worked with in Cohort 4 and who had struggled periodically with addiction, suggested that we run a peer support group with only New Beginnings parents to address this gap in our service. Although this thought had crossed our minds over the years, we had never pursued the idea because we were aware that there were already several other organisations in our local community which were already providing good support to this particular group of client. We also recognised that, as a team, we did not have the right kind of experience that might be of use to our parents who struggled with addiction.

Our views changed following a conversation with Karen Whitehead, CEO of Society Inc, who explained that peer support groups for parents would be best run by parents who had overcome addiction. We therefore did not need to have a team with expertise and knowledge of addiction, instead we needed to draw on the experience of our parents and support them to run a peer support group that could help other parents.



Karen gave us some tips on which training packages to investigate and after some research, Matthew, our Project Coordinator, decided that SMART (Self-Management and Recovery Training) would be best suited to our needs. SMART is a programme that provides training and tools for people who want to change a range of different behaviours that were, or are, creating a problem for adults, including addiction to drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, gambling, food, shopping, Internet, and so on.

In April, we purchased the SMART training package for 6 people, and in May, we ran our first SMART Recovery Group. It was led by Sara Smith (Peer Mentor) and Matthew Purves (Project Coordinator). This group has been running on a weekly basis ever since. Numbers of attendees have steadily increased and in September, 9 people attended the group- the largest attendance to date.

Feedback from those involved:

It feels great to be running SMART. It feels a privilege to be running something constructive and to be able to offer a service on behalf of New Beginnings that hasn't been there before. It will help lots of people and whilst it is helping lots of people at the moment, although numbers are small, it is already having an impact. People who attend regularly now are responding and engaging well with me. Some who are attending know me from the past so know where I have been and where I am at right now. This is keeping me focused as well.

Why SMART works is because the people who come are honest and reflect on their own personal experiences. We have heard from a range of different people with different addictions and what is great is the different dynamics that these different people bring to the group.

What needs to change however is the people who have signed up to do the training having not yet completed the training. I find that a bit overwhelming as it places a lot of expectation on me. So, it would help if those people finish their training and relieve the pressure. Plus, there is the positive part of finishing their training- it will be of benefit to them and help them to grow.

On the whole, I feel positive about the group, and I am really looking forward to the future as in where NB SMART is going to go.

Feedback from the peer mentor, Sara Smith, SMART Facilitator.



SMART Recovery is a fantastic new addition to New Beginnings. We have regular attendees who have shared how much they appreciate this supportive safe space. SMART is led by a facilitator who is in recovery. Her lived experience is invaluable and I am gaining new insight from both her and the attendees regarding the thinking and habits of people who struggle with addiction.

Matthew, NB Project Coordinator.

I really love the atmosphere you find during SMART sessions. They are friendly, warm and inviting with little pressure to join in and full encouragement when you share struggles and successes. I find I can be open about my struggles and it helps others see the side of me that is human, and this gives them encouragement as well.

*It's helped me by giving me tools to break down urges, not just addictive urges, but destructive and harmful ones that have plagued my life for decades. It's given me something to aspire towards on many levels and I hope to become a SMART facilitator soon, to help run additional groups or lead our main group during a time of illness or absence. **CW, SMART attendee.***

Consultation Meetings with Parents

In 2021, during the Covid pandemic, we recognised that many of our parents were feeling isolated and disconnected from one another. We decided it was time to find a space that would enable parents to reconnect to one another, and that space was offered to us by St Mark's Church in Bredbury. Within a few years, the Drop In became very popular with parents, and established itself as a place where parents could meet up with one another, have some food, attend workshops and have access to the team.

However, early in 2023, we learned that there were a growing number of parents who were feeling unhappy when they attended the Drop In:

- We learned that the Drop In Centre had started to develop some difficulties in that cliques were forming and therefore, when new people joined us, they were not feeling welcomed.
- We also noticed that a growing number of parents had stopped joining in with the workshops that were being run, such as Art or Yoga, instead preferring to sit in their own groups in the kitchen.
- Parents complained to us that the environment had become 'toxic' with parents gossiping about each other and/or not respecting each other's views and/ or being disrespectful of the way they parented their children.



- Some parents who were attending Life Laundry Sessions were not taking part in a productive way and this was affecting other people's experiences of that session.
- There was also an issue around childcare, or rather, who was expected to look after the children when parents came to the drop in.

We decided that rather than ignore the situation, we should address it and gathered all parents together so that we could listen to what they had to say, and they could also hear what was being said about each other.

After sharing our views, we considered what the best course of action might be to address the points we had noticed above. Together we agreed that the Drop In would pause temporarily and over the course of three weeks we would meet at a different venue to consider why things had changed, what people's views were on that change and what we could do to resolve some of the challenges we were facing. Between February and March 2023, we held three consultation meetings with the parents who attended New Beginnings.

These consultation meetings were well attended, and some thorny issues were discussed respectfully. It emerged that some issues had been bubbling under the surface for a while, so it felt good to take stock of the situation and reflect on how far we had travelled with the parents we had been supporting to date; what had changed for different people and what we could do together to make our Drop In space a place that was warm and welcoming for all.

Several outcomes emerged from these meetings which led to aspects of the Drop In changing:

1. The design of the Drop In would change into a space that delivered a series of workshops which could cater to different parents' needs. These would range from, to start with, SMART recovery; Life Laundry and Men's Group. There would be gaps in between these group workshops that would provide parents with the opportunity to meet their friends whilst also having access to different members of the team, from whom they could access any practical support and advice.
2. The number of parents at Life Laundry would be limited to 12. Parents would need to book their ticket via EventBrite in advance.
3. Due to parents struggling to listen to the Group Lead or other parents in Life Laundry, which resulted in many interruptions to the session, a new system would be created that would ensure everyone would get their turn to speak.
4. During the holidays, we would run family activities from a venue that was more child friendly than the one we currently used. This would give the



children an opportunity to play with other children in a safe space with room for their parents to be present.

5. We developed some ground rules with each other that were focused on what kind of behaviours we expected from each other at the Drop In. We also produced guidance on what we should do in certain situations if we noticed that problem behaviours started to emerge again. These guidelines covered a whole range of topics from cliques, to judging others, lending money, disagreements and mobile phone use. We even developed a process on what should happen if someone were to breach these rules. We also agreed that we would review these rules together every 6 months.
6. We agreed that peer mentors needed to take more responsibility in terms of welcoming newcomers to our Drop In but we also accepted that it was everyone's responsibility to help new and old people feel comfortable and welcome.
7. It was also agreed that Lisa and Clare would run regular group supervision with the peer mentors so that they could improve on their skills when they were helping the team facilitate group sessions with new Cohorts of parents.

In writing this annual report, I thought it was important to gain further feedback from some parents who attended the consultation meetings and have been present during the subsequent changes to the Drop In. Here is what they said:

I agree the consultation was needed. Rules and regulations etc. needed reviewing. I don't like the fact that there is no Drop In anymore as I feel that is missed a lot and needed by most parents, past, present and future. Current attendees are willing to help reopen the Drop In in anyway they can.

Feedback from parent, CW

The consultation meetings were very productive. Life Laundry seems to run a lot smoother. The workshops seem to be working well at the moment.

Feedback from parent, TW

I thought it was good because everyone got to have their say and give their opinion in a controlled way. Life Laundry is much better now that it is smaller. People now listen and get more from it. So on the whole the changes are good but I think we need to have a monthly gathering where we can all get together, chat and have food because for some people, like me, it's the only time they get to go out and socialise. One hour a week at Life Laundry isn't enough.

Feedback from parent, SW



Thinking back the consultation meetings were a little chaotic at first because everyone had so many ideas so it was hard to keep up. I have however noticed changes for the better, mainly Life Laundry. I feel like I get a lot more out of it now. I think also, even though we are adults and should know better, it's definitely helped me try and control my impulse to jump in and really listen more. I do miss the Drop In, but I do think the changes have been positive. The only negative thing I can say is that I don't think Life Laundry is long enough or perhaps there should be two sessions a week.

Feedback from parent, JT.

The Core Offer: The 24-week Attachment and Trauma Informed Programme

The main core offer of New Beginnings is that of the 24-week Attachment and Trauma Informed Programme which we have always delivered but which has changed significantly from 2018 when we ran our first cohort. Since Cohort 1, we have always sought feedback from parents who complete the programme, so that we can make changes to improve the service we aim to provide to new families.

In addition, as a team, we have continuously sought to improve on our core skills so that we can become more experienced in the areas of attachment and trauma informed practice. Two key theoretical changes to our practice have been the implementation of the following theoretical and practical perspectives:

1. The Dynamic Maturation Model of Attachment (developed by Pat Crittenden and Andrea Landini, 2011 and also Clark Baim, 2011) and
2. Video Interaction Guidance (developed in the UK by Hilary Kennedy, 2011).

Along with the changes that have been made to the programme workbook (which is currently being adapted into an app which will be full of videos, podcasts and interviews), we wanted to try out a new way of practice with Cohort 10 and 11 parents which would enable us, as a team, to integrate our new learning so that it can be of benefit to new parents.

The core offer for our cohorts of parents is now as follows:

Group Work

Each week parents attend a group session which has been designed to help them recognise who they are, understand why they parent in the way that they do and develop new skills which can help them progress and move forwards.



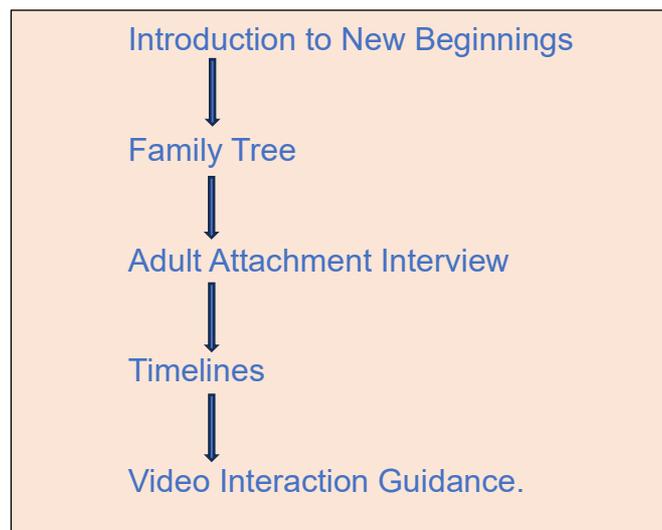
The group work sessions provide a safe and confidential space for parents to meet other parents who are in similar situations so that they can explore their stories together.

Group work is facilitated by qualified and experienced therapeutic social work practitioners who are supported by peer mentors (parents who have been through the programme who want to support others).

1:1 Keywork Sessions

Each parent is allocated a key worker when they start. The key worker will be an experienced therapeutic social worker and is the parent's first point of contact.

During key work sessions, the key worker will carry out various activities that will help them explore their family dynamics and cover the following:



Representation in professional meetings

When parents join New Beginnings their allocated key worker, who will be an experienced social worker and will have first-hand knowledge of how the child protection system works, will be on hand to attend professional meetings with them so that they can feel supported, get their point across, help them to better understand what is being said, whilst at the same time help other professionals hear the progress they are making on New Beginnings.



The 'Story of your Life' Workbook

The programme is accompanied by a workbook which has been designed to mirror the content of the group work sessions and the 1:1 key work sessions. Each chapter has been created with animated video and audio content to help meet parents' individual learning needs so they can learn, stay engaged and be encouraged to reflect on their own situations.

Feedback from the team and the parents on the new way of working:

I really think the new way of working is brilliant. I have been blown away with the power of the Adult Attachment Interview (AAI) and what it can do. Parents are also amazed when I explain their attachment strategy to them.

Something I do find hard however, is finding the time to read up on the AAI feedback and shape it into a format that the parents understand. This isn't a complaint as I know that it is a valid piece of work but when you have a lot of parents, it is hard to fit everything in. In saying that, I think it will get better as I get used to using the AAI and I'd hate for it not to be a part of the programme. I also think it would be good to develop a crib book of the AAI strategies that is written in language that is more attainable not just for me, but for the parents.

As for VIG this is a powerful tool but I think we need to start doing VIG at the beginning of our work the parents as it will help them be more in tune with their children from the start. I think that completing 11 VIG cycles towards the end of the programme will be too difficult to achieve. Therefore, decisions about when to start and with whom should be had in supervision at the beginning of our work. We would then perhaps be able to prioritise parents who are, for example, in PLO (pre-proceedings) or parents who are in conflict with their children.

Lisa, Keyworker

The 'new' New Beginnings programme is more attachment-informed than previous configurations. I like the changes that have been made and I am growing in confidence as a practitioner. Parents have greater opportunity to consider how their past impacts the way they interact with themselves, their children and the world at large. One parent has shared with me that knowing why and how her attachment strategy is rooted in childhood experiences has helped her understand how she has found herself in particular relationship dynamics in adulthood. It has helped her



become more self-compassionate, and given her insight regarding how she can form new and healthy relationships in the future.

Matthew, Project Coordinator and Keyworker

I've enjoyed the full course and meeting new people and other people's understandings. There isn't anything I haven't enjoyed about the course. I'm looking forward to learning new things and different techniques.

Parent from Cohort 11

I've really enjoyed being able to dive into myself with support and not worry it's going to spiral into another bender as I have been supported through my 'BIG' feelings. I haven't enjoyed the technology part which is on me to be honest as I've been in between internet providers. I am looking forward to being able to deal with my past, by being present and sober, and without having the anxiety of it keep popping back up all the time.

Parent from Cohort 11

I've enjoyed learning where I'm going wrong with how I speak to professionals and this has had a big impact on my anxiety when it was first written up in my CP (child protection) meeting. I was shocked. I've always dealt with professional people with my daughter doing theatre and tv work under management. I don't really enjoy being out of my comfort zone and being on camera talking to strangers but I pushed through it and it's working now. The group now feel like extended family. I am looking forward to meeting everyone at a coffee morning and maybe being invited back to support other people on future New Beginnings courses.

Parent from Cohort 11

QbCheck Screening Tests

In November 2021, we purchased the QbCheck package due to a growing recognition that many of our parents had undiagnosed learning needs as well as, possibly, undetected neurodiverse needs. We were aware that the NHS waiting list for an ADHD/ Autism assessment was (and still is) 4- 5 years. We were also aware that private assessments cost in the range of £850-1800. Many of our families do not have this amount of money available and many cannot wait 4-5 years for an assessment if they are in the child protection process or the court proceedings process which are both time limited processes.



To counter these two issues, and support families as best we could as soon as we could, we bought the QbCheck, which is an ADHD Screening Service and is often used by psychiatrists to support a diagnosis. The screening test can be very helpful for parents, adults or children in determining whether ADHD is present as it measures the core ADHD symptoms including inattention, activity, and impulsivity. Furthermore, we can test children and adults in the range of 6-60 years old.

Each participant who is tested is then compared to an age and gender-matched control group and an ADHD control group, which enables the test reader to understand the severity of the symptoms. This then allows you to make informed decisions about next steps: future referrals or formal diagnosis.

Since we started screening for ADHD, we have learned more about autism than we originally anticipated. The QbCheck is only designed to robustly screen for ADHD but, we have learned from training courses and in-depth analysis, that when a participant performs extremely well, much better than their comparative control group, they are likely to be showing signs of autism. This insight has helped us change narratives that have often developed in relation to, for example, why a child is school avoidant.

Adults:

Since we started screening for ADHD, we have tested 22 adults, all of whom had struggled at school and many of whom left with no qualifications. All 22 parents produced results that were indicative of ADHD being present. However, 1 parent, also showed that in addition to having ADHD she also showed signs of having autism.

This parent was in the court process and was struggling to understand why her child had been removed from her care. By carrying out a QbCheck screening test we were able to understand why she was struggling to process information that had clearly been shared with her by the allocated social worker. This enabled us to support her with the decision that had been made by the court.

We were also able to refer her to the ADHD/ Autism Department at Stepping Hospital and request a full assessment be expedited. The parent was seen by a Consultant Psychiatrist within 4 weeks of that referral who confirmed the diagnosis of ADHD and Autism. The outcome of this assessment meant that the parent was in a better position to understand what was being said during her final care hearing. All professionals involved (social worker, solicitor and Judge)



were informed of her additional needs and were able to change their approach to meet those needs.

Table of New Beginnings’ parents who have completed the QbCheck:

	No of parents	Positive ADHD Test	Indication Autism Present	Autism & ADHD	Referred for full assessment
Men	3	3	0	0	3
Women	19	19	1	1	19

Children:

There have been occasions where children have been referred into children’s social care because of concerns around the child missing school or because of their behaviour whilst at school. In most of these cases, concerns have been raised by the school about a potential attachment disorder being present between the child and the parent. This may be because the school feel that the parent should be doing more in relation to addressing school avoidance or because there has been reported domestic abuse within the home at some point of the child’s life.

The QbCheck screening test has shown us that when there have been issues with school avoidance, autism has been detected in the QbCheck screening test. For those who have been struggling to sit still and pay attention, ADHD has been detected.

Of the 8 children tested, 3 tested positive for ADHD. 2 showed signs that there was no ADHD present, but there was an indication that they were likely to have Autism. 3 children showed that there was a high likelihood that they had Autism and ADHD.

Table of New Beginnings’ children who have completed the QbCheck:

	No of children	Positive ADHD Test	Indication Autism Present	Autism & ADHD	Referred for full assessment
Male	5	3	2	1	5
Female	3	0	1	2	3

Of the 8 children screened, 7 have been referred for a full assessment with CAMHS. 1 child was referred for a full assessment with a private psychiatrist which New Beginnings funded to prevent court proceedings from being



initiated. The psychiatrist's assessment showed that the child had a social anxiety disorder which was likely to have contributed to the child's reluctance to attend a large school. The same child did attend a small school provision while the school considered the psychiatrist's findings, and during that period, the child attended daily and was reported to be enjoying school. However, after the period of consideration the main school felt that the child could return to mainstream provision and since that decision was made, the child has not returned to school.

The Centre for Social Justice (CSJ) has recently carried out research that demonstrates that disadvantaged pupils are particularly susceptible to educational failure. They found that a child in one of England's poorest areas is 10 times more likely to go to a substandard school than one in its richest areas. Only 12.3% of the most disadvantaged pupils in England access full-time higher education by the age of 19. For children excluded from school, only 4.3 per cent of pupils are likely to pass English and Maths GCSEs, in an alternative provision. They also found that 58 per cent of young adults in prison had been permanently excluded from school.

However, researchers at the CSJ recognise that adults, too, need help to upskill and reskill. Around 6 million adults in England, are not qualified to level 2 (GCSE level). But there is hope for those who left education with no/low-level, qualifications, because adult learning can offer a way back. Working adults with basic digital skills are paid an average annual salary that is 50% higher than those without these skills¹.

¹ <https://www.centreforsocialjustice.org.uk/about/the-five-pathways/educationalfailure>



Working in partnership

The work we do with Stockport Local Authority

The work we do would not be possible without the unique partnership we have with Stockport Children's Services. This year we have received 101 referrals from social workers and social care professionals in the Stockport borough. Part of the work we do with parents involves their allocated social workers and therefore, our work requires their investment if we are to effect positive change for the family. This means that social workers need to be prepared to invite us to professionals' meetings and attend meetings with us and the parent, when required.

To monitor our progress and reflect on our practice, we attend the Stockport Advisory Board that has been designed specifically to support the work we do at New Beginnings. It is through this collaborative way of working that we have been able to develop and improve on the core offer we provide to families and their social workers. We have also been able to benefit from making connections with other services within the local authority such as FDAC; COMMA and Caring Dads.

Feedback from social workers who refer into our service:

I did a parenting assessment for a dad and at the time there was very limited insight into domestic abuse, his own life course and how his childhood experiences impacted upon his behaviours to his intimate partners. There was no responsibility and placed a lot of blame on the ex-partners for their behaviours causing him to be abusive and in this justifying his behaviours. He did the New Beginnings course alongside support from social care. As an outcome of my assessment there was a recommendation to do some 'Caring Dads Inspired' one to one sessions. There was an agreed delay with this due to various things going on for the dad. When I completed the sessions with him the change was actually really outstanding in terms of his new understanding of how his childhood experiences had impacted him and his behaviours in relationships, he was able to accept responsibility with a level of guilt but no shame, able to reflect in a way that wasn't focused on deflecting but taking responsibility. He also had a much greater impact on how his behaviours have affected his children both past and present and had really changed and adapted his parenting style. I think that the support for New Beginnings supported him to be an expert of his own life experiences and how this had previously shaped his decision making and after being able to process this this supported him in making changes. I think the support of New Beginnings and the



support from social care equally supported these changes. **Social Worker, Stockport Children's Services**

I have worked with a number of families who have been supported by New Beginnings and personally I feel NB colleagues have gone above and beyond to support our families. I have a couple of mums who have struggled with group work so NB colleagues have worked individually with these mum's to enable them to access the programme and benefit from their support.

I have had New Beginnings work with two of my families. With one family there was a great success and they have helped be part of the mum's journey to turn their life around. With the second family there was less success but that was due to what was going on in the mum's life rather than the work from NB. However, the work with both mums had the following positive features:

- *Lots of emotional support and positive relationship building.*
- *Support to attend meetings, which was effective in getting good engagement.*
- *Support to challenge the social worker.*
- *Getting a good understanding of the parent's emotional wellbeing and their inner working model which could be shared with the social worker. For example, who should sit next to mum in the meeting and how the room should be set up.*
- *Good communication with the social worker and appropriate sharing of safeguarding concerns.*
- *The key worker not being afraid to challenge safeguarding issues with the family.*
- *Access to resources that can effect change, such as VIG.*

I think NB is an invaluable service that enables Stockport to offer support that is bespoke and therapeutic so that there are more likely to be positive outcomes for families.

Support Worker, Stockport Children's Services.

I think New Beginnings is an excellent support for our families and I hope it remains on the agenda that Family Hubs would appreciate the opportunity to refer without the need to escalate.

Social worker, Stockport Children's Services.

I also have experience of working with a NB colleague who is going to carry out VIG with a mum, and another colleague who is supporting a mum with a gambling addiction. NB staff are creative and innovative in the ways they work with families and I personally feel that NB is a real bonus for Stockport, especially the way they work



collaboratively with social workers as well as families. This programme is amazing and helps so many families not just during the programme but providing post programme support too, so that individuals feel they have support they can access even after NB ends.

Social worker, Stockport Children's Services.

I've had a couple of parents attend New Beginnings – both of which started on the most recent cohort.

One of my mums dropped off as she found the online aspect really difficult – she discussed feeling that she couldn't connect with the other parents and I think she was getting at the nuances of informal chatter etc.

The one who is still on has grown so much, she is so much more confident and much more reflective about her experiences. With this mum we were worried about her being able to fully access NB due to English being a second language and as an Afghani Muslim woman, given the demographics of Stockport being predominantly white British, HOWEVER, she loves it.

Social worker, Stockport Children's Services.

NB is a valuable resource for Stockport and we are lucky to have it

Social worker, Stockport Children's Services.

I cannot speak highly enough of this service. New Beginnings are currently working with three of my families. One of the families has had involvement from ourselves for 20+ years. The keyworker, in particular has worked really hard with this Mum, the Mum trusts him and accepts the valid challenges he gives her and she is enjoying going on her journey of unpacking her trauma and how this affects her parenting and the children. This is a family that initially we were at legal gateway with and are on CP. Personally, the change for me and what makes me feel as though the Mum is able to make the necessary changes to step down from legal and potentially step down from CP is the support from New Beginnings. The support available to the families after they have closed to the service is invaluable.

The two other families have had a long history of social care, one in particular has had four of her children adopted. The Mum actually requested the service from New Beginnings as she had heard such good things from her own Mum who was on the first ever cohort! The support has been amazing, the Mum has not felt judged and they have supported her and continue to support her to go onto her journey of unpicking the trauma she has experienced. New Beginnings service have been pivotal in the support for the baby and Mum.

The final family again have had lots of involvement from social care for 12 years. New Beginnings have been working with the Dad in this family. The Dad has found it challenging at times but he is able to reflect on his behaviour and how his trauma is presenting itself.

From my perspective, I have loved working with the staff at New Beginnings. It allows me the opportunity to have reflective discussions about the families we are working with and other ways of thinking and understanding patterns of behaviour. The team are always so approachable and have a wealth of knowledge!

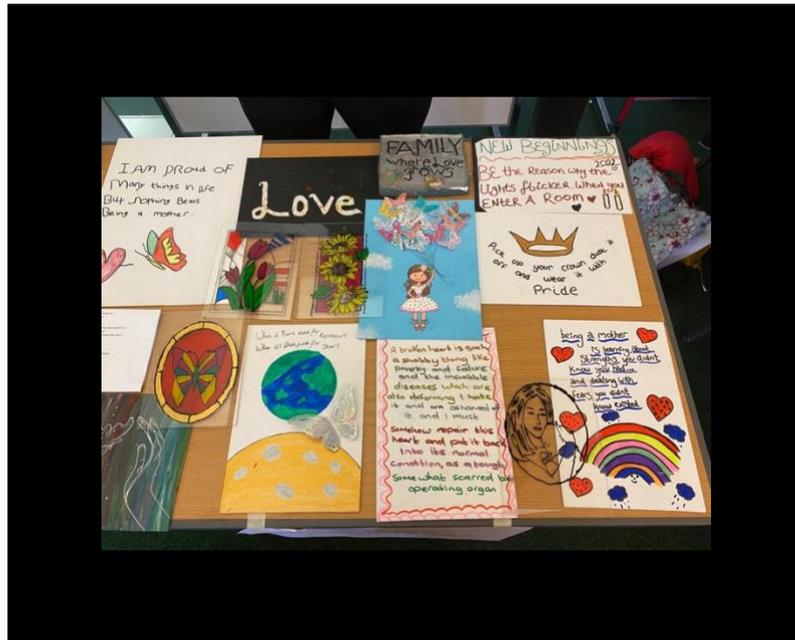
Social worker, Stockport Children's Services

ARC Exhibition at the Hatworks Museum, Stockport

In October 2022, our resident artist, Andy Fear, told us about ARC holding an art exhibition at the Hat Works in Stockport to celebrate the artwork of different community groups in the area. We applied to present our artwork and were proud to be offered a stand from which we could exhibit our work.

All the women whose artwork was exhibited attended the exhibition and talked to visitors about their art and what it meant to them to be part of New Beginnings. It was interesting to observe how pre-conceptions of parents in the child protection system could be simply deconstructed through conversations relating to art. Visitors learned how and why parents found themselves in the child protection system; why they struggled to make positive change to their lives and how through the support they were offered from New Beginnings they were finally able to make changes for the benefit of both them and their children.





The exhibition was a great day. We were able to prepare the artwork with Andy's support and we were also allowed to attend and discuss what New Beginnings was and how it had helped us. I also know that it was a proud moment for the parents to show their artwork and what it meant to them and we also had a look around and joined in a few of the other activities they had on.

Feedback from parent EM.

Peer Mentor Training

Every year, since we have been running New Beginnings, we have offered parents the opportunity to train as a peer mentor when they complete the 24-week Attachment and Trauma Informed Programme. Our new peer mentors then join the peer mentor rota, and work alongside Lisa and Clare in helping run new cohorts. Their roles are extremely valuable. It is because of their recent experience of being part of the child protection system that they are able to provide new parents with the kind of advice and support that no one else can offer. Furthermore, their new learning enables peer mentors to put into practise what they have learned from their time on New Beginnings.

Being a peer mentor is not easy and there is a fine line between being a parent with former experience of the child protection system who is still in need of support and being a parent who can offer support to others who are in need of support. Louis Colclough, our peer mentor trainer, recognises that supporting parents through this transition needs to be carried out carefully and with



sensitivity if parents are to become good peer mentors and not burn out at the same time.

Louis has been training our parents on New Beginnings to become peer mentors since 2018. This year he has run two peer mentoring courses for us which has enabled 6 of our parents to become peer mentors. I asked Louis for some feedback:

I was really impressed by [names of parents] throughout the 2 x 4 days of training. The learners proved themselves to be professional in their approach and represented New Beginnings brilliantly. During the sessions, learners readily engaged with the material, and were respectful and supportive of all voices/opinions. Learners offered excellent insight during group discussions and appropriately shared from personal experience to illustrate points.

During training, a reoccurring theme amongst learners was a feeling that helping and supporting others is a significant and important part of their identities. To help build confidence/competence in their roles, I would encourage learners to continue to familiarise and rehearse the skills they have learned. I have full confidence that [name of parents] will make excellent mentors. It was a pleasure to have work with such a welcoming and fantastic group.

Louis, Peer Mentor Trainer

The peer mentoring course was a great course to undertake and future myself and to give back. I've done the peer mentoring course previously over Teams and as brilliant as it was, it just wasn't the same as when it was delivered face to face this time round. The support from Clare and Louis was great too. I think we have the tools we need to go onto be peer mentors. I can't wait to get started.

Peer mentor, ED

It was broken down and delivered well, any and all questions were answered. I like being able to help others. I'm looking forward to having more to do as a peer mentor as well. I can't wait to have a bigger more helpful role for all New Beginnings clients and team. **Peer mentor, CW**

Supporting Families Employment Adviser

The majority of parents we work with on New Beginnings are considered to be living poverty. Research has shown that children who live in the most deprived



neighbourhoods in England are over ten times more likely to be in care or on a protection plan than children in the least deprived 10% (Bywaters et al., 2018). Poverty is associated with a wide range of negative outcomes both in childhood and in adult life. Poverty can affect a child's educational attainment as well as their physical and mental health. It can also have far-reaching consequences on their adult lives in terms of gaining employment, their income as well as their wealth, health and wellbeing (Bywaters et al., 2016).

In addition, we have learned that many of our families are not receiving the full benefits that they are entitled to. And to make matters worse, the cost-of-living crisis has made life even harder for our families, as the price of everyday essentials such as food and bills has increased more quickly than that of the average household income.

To help our parents address the inequalities in our system, Stephen Grattan, our Supporting Families Employment Adviser, has been visiting our Drop-In centre for the past 2 years. With his extensive experience in this area, Steve has been able to provide parents with much needed financial advice and support. His calm and collected presence is much appreciated by all who have needed his expertise.

I asked Steve what he thought of coming to New Beginnings and here is what he said:

I have really enjoyed being part of the New Beginnings drop in and feel that it has benefited a large number of parents. Over time, I feel that I have built up a good connection and have noticed the trust building between the parents and myself.

As you are aware, the benefit system is often a complex process to navigate around and having the system access, the connections within the Job Centre & Benefit centre and also the knowledge to answer a whole range of enquiries in a simplistic way, has really supported some of the families. I feel that it is easier for the parents to ask for help when I am present in the centre as the stigma associated within DWP is broken down considerably when engaging in a safe space.

I have conducted a number of benefit checks in which I have found incorrect entitlements (often where the family is not receiving what they should be) and have supported a number of families in claiming the correct benefits – often resulting in a greater entitlement financially. I have also discussed training options, volunteering positions and employment with those who are ready to take the next steps.



I feel that my role is required and appreciated within the group – this is apparent by the number of questions and queries I receive on each attendance!!

Stephen Grattan, Supporting Families Employment Adviser

Although Steve has provided many of our parents with support and advice there has been one parent in particular who has massively benefitted from Steve's wisdom. I asked her if she had any feedback on Steve's involvement with New Beginnings:

Well what can I say about Steve?! He has helped me so much with making sure I'm getting the right benefits and also disputing them on my behalf especially if he doesn't agree with the decision that was made, I honestly don't know what I would of done without his help and I can't thank him enough, he's passionate about his job and takes it very seriously and just wants to help people he's definitely a keeper for us!!

Parent, EM



Drawing on the strengths of our community

New Beginnings Film



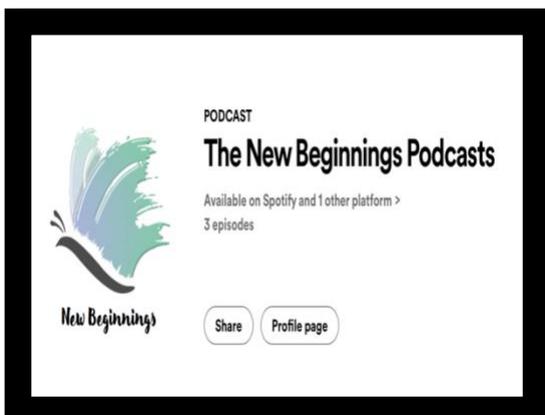
Feedback from parents who attended New Beginnings last year, was that they found it difficult to understand what kind of support we offered. With funding from the British Academy, we responded to this feedback by carrying out interviews with 20 parents who attended New Beginnings. We used extracts from their interviews to create a short film describing what life is like in the child protection

system from the parent's perspective. The film is now featured on our website. The short film provides newcomers to the project with a more coherent explanation of what we can offer them as support. If you would like to take a look at the film please follow this link: www.nbfoundation.co.uk

Peer mentors

Peer mentors have always been a crucial and integral part of our project. Their insight and experience of the child protection system, and our programme, is valued by the new parents who go onto join us. This year, on finishing the New Beginnings Attachment and Trauma Informed Programme, 6 parents went onto complete their Peer Mentor Training. Together with our other peer mentors they now not only help run the Group Work Sessions, but they also run the Drop Mic Session.

The New Beginnings Podcasts



Earlier this year, Clare, our Post Programme Support Worker, stumbled across a new social work podcast on Twitter that she found interesting and enlightening. However, whilst it offered a good contribution to members of the social work world, Clare also felt it was missing something very important: the voices of those who had direct experience of the child protection system. The podcast



had only focused on professionals' views and experiences. Clare realised that we could fill this gap by drawing on the knowledge of our parents at New Beginnings. In July 2023, we made our first podcast called '*Sylvia's Story: Neglect, Addiction and the Child Protection Process*' which was received well by the social work community. This podcast was followed by '*Navigating Timelines: A story of trauma, healing, resilience and hope*' and then '*The Story of the PPO Queen: From a social worker with a spoiled identity to the founder of a community project*'.

Feedback on our growing podcast series has been incredible. We have heard from social work lecturers, trainers, social workers, students and parents about the impact these rich interviews have had on their practice.

Fabulous podcast series – my favourite is the Timelines Podcast. Both the social worker and the parents are amazing. I have nothing to else to add, as I am sure we will use this. Thank you for sharing.

Social Work Lecturer

Wow! These podcasts have formed an integral part of our social work programme delivery. Well done.

Social Work Lecturer

I loved making Sylvia's Story. It helped me reflect on the journey I have been on with New Beginnings and Children's Services. I've been asked to do a talk for the social services near me so that they can hear more about my story and perhaps they can learn something for their practice. I am really excited about this opportunity and where it may lead.

'Sylvia' parent who made the first podcast

The podcasts are now featured on Spotify, Apple, Amazon and have been listened to 150 times so far. You can access the podcasts via this link:
<https://podcasters.spotify.com/pod/show/new-beginnings5>

Hallowe'en party and Christmas Party

In October 2022, we decided to throw our first Hallowe'en party for families. We knew that it would be well attended but with having a small team, we knew we would not be able to run the whole event without the support of our parents and asked for people to help where they could. As a result of everyone getting stuck in, it turned out to be a great day!



The Christmas Party was another event that was supported by the parents and peer mentors. We had singing, dancing, pass the parcel, musical chairs and a big roast dinner!

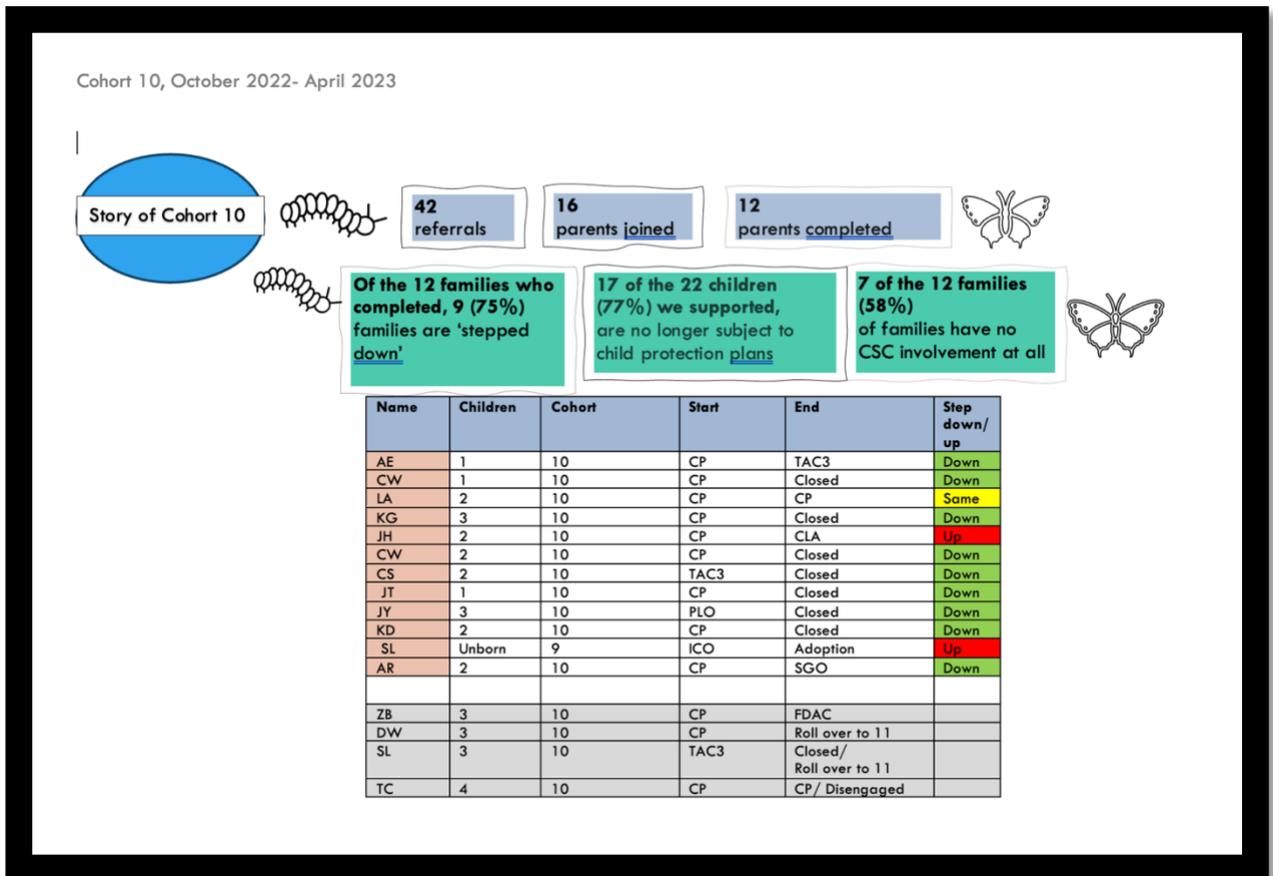




The differences we are making (both big and small)

Cohort 10

This year we have run 2 cohorts. Cohort 10 ran from October 2022- April 2023. We received 42 referrals for Cohort 10 which was the highest number of referrals we had ever received. Of those 42, 16 parents joined our programme in October 2022.



The logical framework following Cohort 10

Input: The 24-week New Beginnings Programme

- Group Facilitator, Post Programme Support Worker and Peer Mentor run 1 x group of 16 parents
- Two key workers provide 12 x 1:1 sessions to parents & attend professional meetings



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervision for staff from Project Lead • Supervision from Group Facilitator for Peer Mentors • Workbook app • Funding to run the programme
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 x week group work for 16 parents • 12 key work sessions to 12 parents • Support at professional meetings • Access to workbook app
Outputs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 16 parents joined the programme. • 12 parents completed the programme and participated in: • 24 x 2 hour weekly workshops • 12 x 2 hour key work sessions
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9 of the 12 (75%) families were stepped down from the child protection process or child in need process. • 7 of the 12 (58%) families have no social care intervention at all.
Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collectively these 12 families had 22 children. 17 of these 22 (77%) children are no longer subject to child protection process. • This means that they are no longer considered to be at risk of significant harm.



Further information;

4 of the 16 families did not complete the programme.

- It was felt that 1 parent would have benefited from the Family Drug and Alcohol Court (FDAC) due to issues with cocaine addiction
- Due to health issues, 2 parents stepped off and returned for Cohort 11 in May 2023.
- 1 parent felt that the programme was too intense and voluntarily stepped off.

Feedback from parents on Cohort 10:

I enjoyed all aspects of the programme. I liked the fact that everyone was welcoming and supportive. I was a little overwhelmed at first because the group was so big, and everyone wanted to have their say but after a few weeks we got into the swing of it and it calmed down. The group facilitator also got better at keeping us in check. I feel I have definitely changed and I think my children are pleased with the new me. I definitely see them differently. The one tip I would give to the team, is to check in with some 1:1 checks after group, if someone gets emotional in group.

Cohort 10 Parent, CW

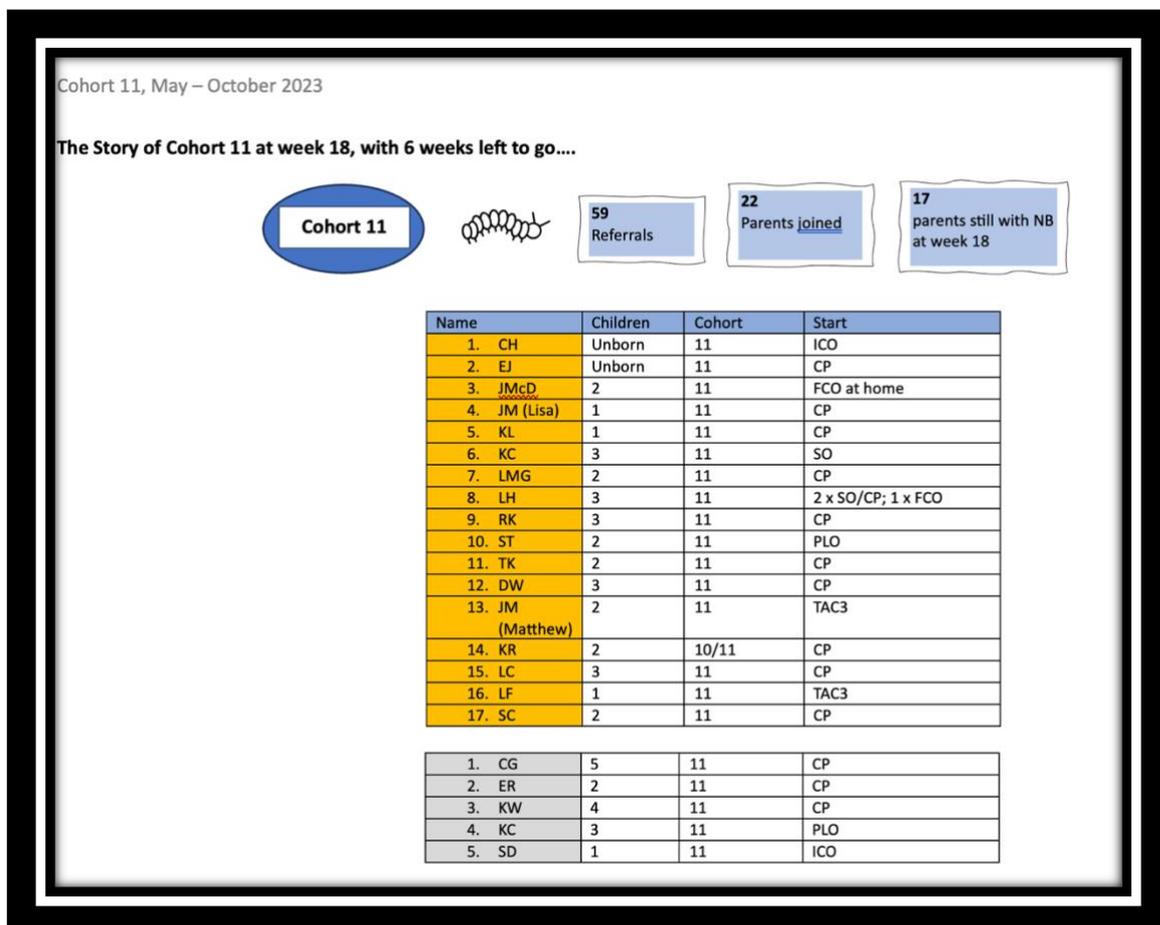
I loved the 'family' feel of it all, how people with similar struggles and experiences came together to share and support each other, just normal people like me and not professionals with degrees telling us how we should think, feel and deal with what's happened or is happening to us. I loved that it was a huge safe space I'd never had before with a judgment free atmosphere telling me that what I was going through was normal, that it was ok to feel the way I did and other people just like me have experienced the same things. It's been an incredibly healing experience and it has definitely changed me, it's still a work in progress but I'm on the right path to becoming who I want to be and it's all thanks to the help from New Beginnings. I also love that once the course has finished it's not all over like most therapy or support groups where it's "ok, we're done here bye bye!" and they're just gone. After the initial 24 week course has finished there's the post program support, mic drop and life laundry where there's even members from as early as Cohort 2 still attending. It's the most invested and supportive group I've ever been in.

There isn't really anything about New Beginnings that I didn't enjoy, I do wish that there was a 'hub' space or a permanent centre we could go to for drop ins but that is something that is being worked on.

Some advice for the future. It would be good to have a website or 'portal' for members to log into to access an online copy of the workbooks, submit notes on their workbooks for their key workers to view and look at resources that have been covered in Life Laundry and the online sessions for people who have missed occasional sessions due to work, education or childcare commitments. I think this would help increase engagement within the members of the group and new members who are a little closed off at first and are initially uncomfortable with home visits or meeting in large groups.

Cohort 10 Parent, CS

Cohort 11



We received 59 referrals for Cohort 11 which is by far the highest number of referrals we have ever received. Of those 59, 22 parents joined our programme in May 2023.

Since we started running New Beginnings in 2018, we have learned that parents need to be ready to effect change because what we provide has many different



components and requires investment from the parent referred. This means therefore that the intense service we offer is not for everyone and we anticipate a retention of circa 70%. This cohort has been unusual because this is the first time where we have experienced a retention rate of 77%. With only 6 weeks to go until the cohort ends, we still have 17 parents on New Beginnings.

From looking at the data presented above, it is evident that the level of need is complex as:

- 11 families are in the child protection process (with one in PLO, pre-proceedings).
- 3 families have been, or are going, through the court process and have children on either care orders or supervision orders.

Of interest, is that 3 of the families who have disengaged from the programme have 3+ children in the child protection process which raises the question as to whether our programme is too intense for families who have more children in their care.

Although it is too early to see what kind of impact, we have had on the families we are working with, the high level of retention of families on this cohort has superseded our expectations. We anticipate that the number of children we prevent from entering care will be higher than we achieved with Cohort 10.

Running cohort 11 feels different for many reasons; First is my self-confidence. I am firmer with parents and make sure everyone gets a turn and that we don't lose sight of what the group topic is for those who can go off on a tangent. Second, I have learnt that parents don't need theories; they just need me to deliver the topic (which is underpinned by theory) and help them understand that topic. By changing the course wording and adding in prompts for me has been immensely helpful. The third important thing is providing a safe space which in turn, has led to great peer support. I think the reason we have more parents on the group this time is due to their commitment to change. However, I also try to offer them praise on every group session as I have recognised this is something that they're not used to receiving. The group would be possible without the support of the peer mentors and Clare, Post Programme Support Worker.

Lisa, Cohort Facilitator

I have attended the New Beginnings course for 2 cohorts now. The first time round I missed a lot of vital sessions due to a difficult pregnancy. I requested to do the course again as I found the few sessions and 1:1 key work that I did have were very beneficial and started to make a positive difference in regards to my mental health. The work I have done this cohort has continued to improve my mental health and is



now helping me to make positive changes to my life for the benefit of my children. Each session is ran well, making sure each person is able to share and feel like their heard. The group promotes us all to support each other and help each other through our challenges as well as uplift each other. I am extremely grateful to have been given the opportunity to work with the amazing people who run new beginnings and am so thankful in all the help they have given me.

Parent from Cohort 11, SL

Becoming a charity

Trustee recruitment

In last year's annual report, we discussed how we would like to recruit new trustees to our board. We recognised that the current board had been established by supporters who had grown with New Beginnings since its inauguration because of a passion for the work we do. But we also recognised that they did not have the experience of being a trustee of a charity. We wanted to, therefore, recruit expertise that would help us create a stronger more diverse and experienced board of trustees who could support us over the next two years of confirmed funding more effectively.

In February 2023, we recruited Dr Ann Potter and Cordie Gwilym to the board. Both Ann and Cordie are registered social workers, and both have been trustees on other charity boards. Ann is a former social work academic and has extensive experience of the child and family court arena. Cordie is a former Service Unit Manager of Children and Family team.

Although Ann and Cordie are relatively new to the board, they have already brought fresh insight and wisdom to the way we work. This has been reflected through having more regular board meetings; identifying gaps in our recording and feedback processes; improving our current governance and offering advice and welcomed critique when challenges to the running of New Beginnings have arisen.

In the summer, we recruited 3 more trustees to our board, two of whom have direct experience of being practitioners on New Beginnings and another who has extensive experience of the housing sector. Background checks are currently being carried out but once completed we look forward to them joining us.



Feedback from a new trustee:

I was aware of the development of New Beginnings and had followed their early work with interest. I have experience of board membership and governance in the charity sector, and I was pleased to be appointed as a trustee in January 2023, along with another experienced charity trustee. I agreed to take up the role of chair of the board when the existing chair began maternity leave in February 2023. Since I joined the board, we have been attending to and building on existing 'good governance' processes and developing the board of trustees. We have recently recruited 3 more trustees, who we hope will join the board very shortly. In line with the values and ethos of NB, we are also actively seeking to create and integrate ways for NB parents and staff to engage and exchange views with the board of trustees. Since joining the board of trustees of NB, I have been particularly impressed by the expertise, dedication and determination of the CEO, who at all times has held the beneficiaries of NB, and in particular the parents and children involved with NB, at the forefront of her thinking and her leadership.

Dr Ann Potter, Chair of New Beginnings Board of Trustees

Creating a financially secure future: The RBU Report

In last year's annual report, I discussed how the current funding model for the way in which New Beginnings Foundation (NBF) was delivered was not sustainable. Later that year we contracted in RBU business consultants to help us.

Initial discussions were held between me, Jadwiga Leigh (CEO, NBF) and Chris Wilson and Mike Bradburn (Directors, RBU), to decide on the best way the project could be carried out. This was followed by RBU holding conversations with stakeholders, workshops and assessments of overall governance. They later carried out a deep dive into our finances, how they related to the operating model, and then using all of the information above, built a forecasting model that would allow investigation into the potential impact of the work that New Beginnings does. Several recommendations emerged from the RBU Final Report which are as follows:

Recommendation 1: NBF should develop a top-level conceptual model to help the charity articulate its growth strategy

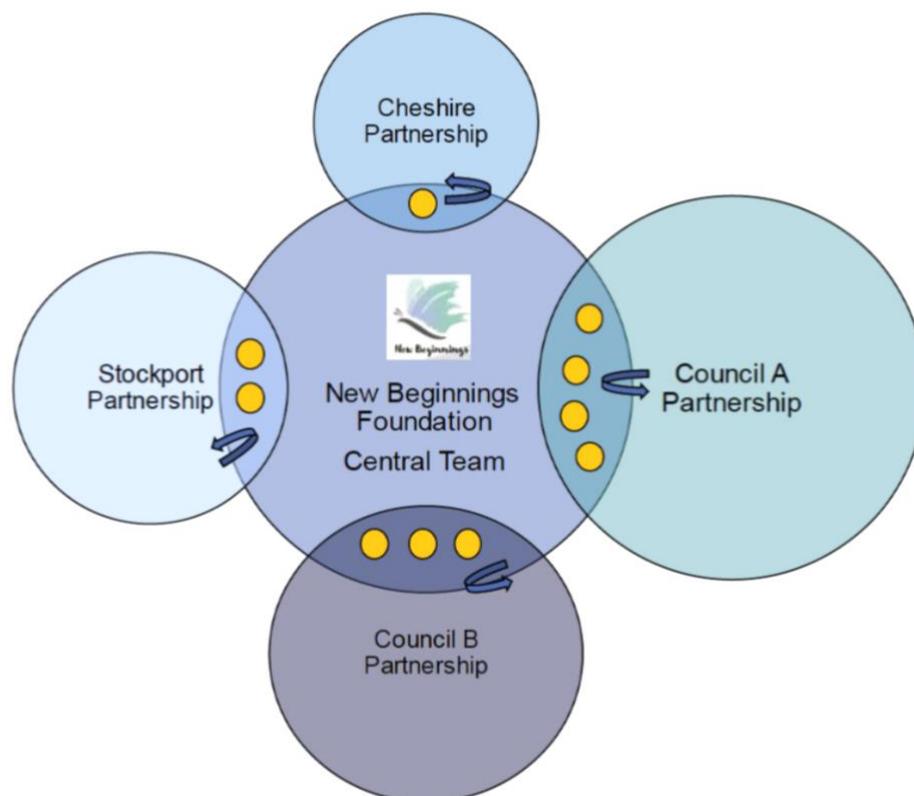
RBU felt it was essential that NBF develop a conceptual model that was based on its current provision which was clear and consistent for its potential partners whilst accepting that some local variation was both likely to occur. In short, in

order to grow NBF and begin servicing other communities across a variety of Local Authorities, NBF would need to bring clarity to its current offer, how it was delivered, and how it was sold. RBU identified that NBF was currently using a “Unit” based model. They suggested that by codifying and formalising the current aspects of this relationship – primarily the combination of the seconded staff and the associated Central NBF support – internal understanding would improve external communication of what NBF’s offer was.

The Unit Model (shown below) demonstrates key aspects:

- Units consist of a number of seconded staff from LAs, alongside support from the central NBF team
- Some Units may only require a single secondee, others may be of a larger scale, but within a given Unit all efforts and activities will be focussed on the LA-specific cohorts
- Seconded resources can be released back to the LA at any point, but with Programme durations of 24 weeks, there would be a decent level of security and tenure in the role for the seconded resources
- Each additional Unit would benefit from Central support without the need to grow the Central Team at the same rate. In other words, the Central Team grows at a slower marginal rate than the increase in secondees.

Figure 1: The Unit Model



● Each dot represents a seconded member of staff

● Each dot represents a seconded member of staff



RBU recognised that even with a slower Central Team growth profile (see inner circle), it would remain likely that fundraising would always be required to support multiple units. However, RBU also identified that with the increased portfolio diversification that was a stronger likelihood that NBF would remain successful beyond the lifetime of any given partnership.

Recommendation 2: NBF should use the Unit approach to clarify its offer (especially in respect to Local Authorities)

RBU also recommended that in order for NBF to articulate to external stakeholders what it offered, a standardised language would need to be adopted. This would help provide uniform understanding of the component parts of the service and the activities that form the basis of the service being offered.

RBU proposed we use the following set of terms to help clarify our structure:

<i>The Unit</i>	<p>The combined efforts and activities of seconded employees from a given LA with central support from NBF in order to provide a programme-based set of activities and support for families from that same local authority.</p> <p>This language of establishing a unit is important, especially given that some LAs articulate a desire for NBF to ‘sort it all out’ or have Jadwiga act as a consultant to improve performance. Co-establishing a unit emphasises that they need ‘buy-in’ to NBF’s approach and build the unit together.</p>
<i>The Programme</i>	<p>The defined set of activities and support provided to families over the course of a 24-week period, including group sessions, peer-mentoring, 1:1 sessions, access to the online workbook and resources.</p>
<i>The Core Offer</i>	<p>The core offer to LAs is the delivery of two programmes each year. We recommend that, where possible, these programmes have advertised, fixed starting points, common across multiple geographies.</p> <p>The core offer includes ongoing support for families who have completed the programme (‘post-programme support’ or ‘The Butterfly Project’).</p>
<i>The Local Offer</i>	<p>The local offer is anything that supplements the core offer delivered through the unit. It is envisaged that this local offer will vary unit-by-unit. Examples of the activities that are effectively provided through the local offer in Stockport have include: working with fathers who are</p>



	<p>not registered on a programme and Life Laundry. This is the part of the offer which can be described as 'co-designed'.</p> <p>Over time, particularly impactful and transferable aspects of the local offer might be built into the core offer.</p>
<i>A Cohort</i>	<p>The set of families who are being supported by a specific programme as part of the core offer. A greater emphasis in NBF's language should be placed on children, to acknowledge that working with one parent may lead to benefits for a number of children, including future children.</p>
<i>NBF Families</i>	<p>All families that a unit works with, including those involved in the core and local offer.</p>
<i>The Service</i>	<p>All aspects of the Programme, plus updates / reporting to, and relationship management with, the LA.</p>
<i>A Step Down</i>	<p>A measure of improvement in the status of a child within a family within an NBF Programme</p>

In addition, RBU recommended we codify what NBF delivers. They felt that there were two, separate but linked, priorities which they recommended NBF addressed. The first was to codify the programme, its outputs and outcomes. The second, was to build a language for describing what makes the programme and service unique, including the limitations of local offer. Combined, RBU felt this would allow for better forecasting of resourcing, and a clearer explanation of NBF to LAs.

RBU recommended that we do implement the following:

<i>Leading Statement</i>	<i>Rationale</i>
<p>1. Through its units, NBF delivers a well-tested, codified programme, supplemented by locally-developed innovation.</p>	<p>We think it is important that councils and funders understand that there is a consistent, core programme at the heart of NBF’s delivery, but that it sits alongside a more organic local offer. For LAs who are paying for NBF’s service, they need to be satisfied that there is a ‘minimum service’ (the core offer) which would be satisfactory, even if the exact components of the local offer might be difficult to define. This feels true to NBF’s commitment to scale through greater codification, but also its desire to respond to local conditions.</p> <p>This statement could be substantiated by reference to the key features of the programme, and by examples of the type of locally-developed innovation which has characterised the Stockport Unit (e.g. Life Laundry).</p>
<p>2. The NBF’s programme provides families with Transitional Attachment Figure, and is inspired by international best practice.</p>	<p>We think it is important that councils and funders understand the theoretical underpinnings of NBF’s approach. There are a number of potential ways to highlight this, but NBF’s commitment to providing a Transitional Attachment Figure featured prominently in discussion. Alternatives or additions might include NBF’s commitment to trauma-informed practice, to narrative therapy, to Dynamic-Maturational Model of Attachment and Adaptation (DMM) or to restorative practices.</p> <p>Sitting alongside this, we think it is sensible to highlight that the NBF approach has precedent in Stobbe, and is based on extensive study of this approach. Combined, this should give potential partners excitement about the novelty of the NBF approach, but reassured that it is based on tested practice from elsewhere.</p> <p>This statement could be substantiated by discussing how the theory informs practice (for example, through video interaction guidance).</p>
<p>3. NBF units have a measurable impact on families and children, and save local authorities money.</p>	<p>This statement is explored in more depth in the section below. Essentially, NBF should be clear on how many families a unit works with and what the anticipated impact of that engagement will be.</p> <p>We suggest that you select some key pieces of data to substantiate this statement, and some potential examples are provided below.</p>

4. NBF units deploy a unique secondment model which builds up expertise and capacity within local authorities.

We think that is important that partners and potential partners understand the unique advantages presented by the secondment model. In speaking to colleagues at NBF and in local authorities, we believe that the secondment model as a professional development opportunity and a route to capacity building within councils is underplayed in the existing literature. Whilst we understand that it is desirable that secondees stay with a NBF unit for as long as possible, we think that exploring how to formalise elements of the training into a programme may be worth exploring in the future. For example, you may want to establish the expectation that a secondee returns to the local authority after 2-3 years. Establishing this expectation will also help NBF to explain the rationale for levying a financial contribution from the Local Authority (see Recommendation 3), as training and professional development costs are currently all covered by the charity. Framed like this, NBF might even be seen as a retention tool for local authorities.

This will also allow the NBF secondment model to be seen as adding capacity and expertise to the system by building a movement of practitioners committed to NBF's unique features as described above. In consultation with the NBF team, they expressed an ambition that returning secondees might embed NBF-inspired practice having taken on senior management positions. Framed like this, the high standards for being appointed as an NBF secondee can be more easily explained.

This statement could be substantiated by testimonials from secondees and local authorities about the knowledge exchange and professional development which has taken place.

Recommendation 3: NBF needs to build a financial model which includes local authorities in making a fair financial contribution to the charity's work

A clear finding of the RBU consultancy project was that NBF's partner local authorities are – and will continue to be – major beneficiaries of our charity's work. However, although they currently pay secondees to work in an NBF unit, they do not make a contribution to the charity's central costs – not least the time of the CEO. RBU felt this was necessary if the programme was to be successful. RBU felt it would allow NBF to secure 'buy-in' from its partners; it would also diversify its income streams, and it should lead to a more predictable income profile.



Alongside developing plans to increase the amount of income that NBF generates, increase headcount of 'central' staff, and expand into new geographies, RBU identified that NBF would also need to formalise its governance. RBU stated that to do so should not undermine some of the key qualities of NBF's current engagement with the trustees, which is rooted in deep understanding of beneficiary experience. However, it suggested that both local authorities making a financial contribution, and potential funders interested in supporting an expansion of NBF's services, would want to see robust accountability that considers risk (including financial) and consistent measurement of impact data, alongside the qualitative evidence provided by beneficiaries.

RBU recommended that NBF establish:

- A Finance, Audit and Risk Committee (or similar) to review the financial and risk metrics and provide a report to the full Board of Trustees at each meeting.
- A Programme Advisory Group which would sit alongside the Board of Trustees (maybe preceding each meeting) where trustees would be able to interact with a range of beneficiaries and discuss the delivery of the programme in more depth.

RBU also recommended that as and when NBF grows, the board could also consider how trustees might be able to support the charity outside of the board meetings as it would help build relationships beyond Stockport and it would attract fundraising opportunities.



Reflections on the year

By Dr Jadwiga Leigh, CEO and Founder of New Beginnings Foundation CIO

This year, like every year, at New Beginnings has been very busy. We have implemented some major changes to our service which, from the wide range of feedback we have included in this report, appears to have been received well.

For example, thanks to funding from the Awards for All grant, the SMART Recovery Group was inaugurated. SMART, which is run by one of our peer mentors has grown in attendance. Initially starting with just a few people, it has expanded steadily over the weeks. We anticipate that in time, more peer mentors will train in SMART which will enable more groups to be run for more people to attend. Something that SMART has shown us is that we (the core team) do not need to have expertise in everything- we can draw on the lived experience of our parents. This is the first group we have run that has been peer mentor led; we have learned that there is a wealth of lived experience we, and our families, could benefit from moving forwards.

The series of consultation meetings with parents and peer mentors led to a change in the way we ran the Drop-In centre. From being a space with ad hoc provision, we have become a place that runs continuous professional development workshops that parents can tap into to keep their skills and knowledge up to date; prepare them for greater responsibilities; boost their confidence; help them become more creative in tackling new challenges and enable them to make better decisions. However, with change also comes a recognition that there were some benefits to the Drop In space in that it created connection that is not as easily made during a workshop. We will need to, therefore, think about how we can build in time for those connections to be built for both parents, and their children. Reserving the Drop In space for holidays only is not sufficient for everyone.



The New Beginnings (NB) Attachment and Trauma Informed Programme has also changed. What began as a series of weekly workshops accompanied by key work sessions and a workbook, has now developed into a more specialist, therapeutic approach that has been adapted to meet our parent's needs more effectively. Thanks to a grant from the Winston Churchill Activate Fund parents will soon be able to access the workbook content via an app, and this content will no longer require them to have skills in reading and writing;

instead, parents will be able to enjoy the visual and interactive element of



learning, through film and from interviews carried out with the parents who have travelled before them.

In addition, key work sessions have changed. Whilst there is a similar format to the way in which these will be delivered, in that each key worker will have core tasks to complete, the content of the key work sessions will be driven by the experiences of the parent. That means, that Timelines will focus on exploring the significant events that emerge during the Adult Attachment Interviews that are carried out with the parent. Video Interaction Guidance will also form part of the NB programme to help parents identify their strengths and see that some of what they are already doing that is helping their baby/child.

Challenges and the Future

This year will be the last year of our Big Lottery Reaching Communities Funding. One of the objectives of this grant was that we would use our time as a new charity to develop a more sustainable funding model. This goal was made possible through funding received from the Judith Foundation which enabled us to contract the services of RBU consultants. Chris, Johnny and Mike worked closely with us for a period of 6 months, and from their findings we have been able to make sense of what we need to do next. Something that has been made clear to us, is that at present we are not running a project that can grow, thrive or even survive on the limited resources we currently receive.

This coming year will therefore involve us building on the recommended 'funding model' concept that has been designed for us by RBU so that we can reach a better position of financial security than the one we occupy at present. We recognise that the New Beginnings Foundation needs to generate a reliable revenue base if it is to deliver its mission and core programme to families in the child protection system. The next few months will involve developing a business proposal to continue the work we do with Stockport Local Authority.

The development of this relationship is important if New Beginnings is going to continue providing a service. We can no longer rely on grant funding or donations. This year we have applied for 10 grants ranging from £1k to £20k and have only been successful in receiving 4 of these grants which is a significant reduction to 8 out of 10 we received the year before. What we know is that the competition for grant funding is fierce and many good not for profit organisations are closing due to the change in funding landscape.

The future vision for New Beginnings is to connect with other people and other organisations who care about the type of work we are doing. We want to build,



therefore, on the relationship we have with Stockport Family by using their insight and experience of our service to help us connect with other local authorities across Greater Manchester. At present we only accept referrals for families in the Stockport area, which means that other families in the child protection system in neighbouring localities are being deprived of our service. We believe that all families in the Greater Manchester area should be able to access our support and representation if they wish to.

Support

We have recently recruited five new trustees (2 joined us in February and three are joining in November) to our Board whose background and experience is aligned to the work we do as well as what we hope to achieve in the coming year. The contributions from Ann and Cordie have already made a difference to our governance, strategy development, future planning, and our budget reporting process. Over the coming year we intend to use our parent advisory board more effectively in our Board Meetings so that we can better draw on the strengths of our main beneficiaries and include them when planning for the future.

A few weeks ago, we recruited our first volunteer- although it was more of case of us being found by the volunteer rather than finding a volunteer! We have in the past tried to actively recruit volunteers to our project, but we have not been successful. This is most likely because we do not have someone in a dedicated role who can concentrate on growing, training and providing continuous support to volunteers when they do express an interest in working with us.

So, when we were approached by Debi, we thought we could try a different approach. Debi's arrival has prompted us to re-consider the role of volunteers and we have agreed with Debi, that if we are to develop a volunteer training and development programme, we need to learn from each other rather than us teaching her what we do. Over the coming weeks, Debi plans to attend Life Laundry sessions and observe the work that we do. She has also agreed to support us in running workshops that will help us prepare for the Christmas Market at Stockport Town Hall on 2nd of December.

We have also found support from other people that we did not know a year ago. Recently we have connected to, are in conversation with, and are learning from, new relationships which have developed with the Centre for Social Justice (CSJ) and the Acumen Fellowship. The CSJ has expertise in research and policy making. Kawika Solidum, the North West Lead is a mentor and activator for small not for profit organisations like New Beginnings.



The Acumen Fellowship and its Academy has been integral to my own learning and development. The Fellowship programme has been challenging in many ways, especially in relation to my leadership skills. The Acumen Academy has been helpful in terms of teaching me the essentials of being a CEO of a charity and supporting me to develop a steadier foundation for New Beginnings to grow from. The short courses that I have completed have provided me with insight and access to the world of business- something that I did not have before I embarked on this new stage of my career.

Although there have been positives, there have undoubtedly been challenges. We often say to our parents at New Beginnings that they need to “Learn to sit with discomfort’. And yet a lot of this year has been uncomfortable for me. And so, like our parents, I have been practising what we preach, and this has, in turn, allowed me to identify where my strengths are and what I have yet to learn. Whilst I cannot be certain what the future holds, I am hopeful that by listening and learning from those who make a difference to the work we do, we will do our very best to create a more secure future for families in the child protection system by building a stronger foundation for New Beginnings to work from.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J Leigh".

Dr Jadwiga Leigh
CEO New Beginnings Foundation CIO



Budget Report

	Forecast for YE 31 st March 2023	Actual Spend for YE 31 st March '23	Forecast for Year End 31 st 2024
Revenue			
Grants	113,231	117,151	155,500
Donations	1,000	16,161	5,000
Training & Consultancy	4,000	4,374	5,500
Sales	1,500	1,537	1,777
Fundraising Events	500	1,224	500
NB Unit Mgmt Fee	-	-	50,000
Total Projected Revenue	120,231	140,447	218,277
Expenses			
Salaries & Pensions	66,161	66,161	87,579 ²
Sessional Workers	4,500	4,574	1,782 ³
Professional Fees (HR, Insurance & Accountant)	3,800	4,104	4,200
Training & Development	2,500	2,675	4,760 ⁴
Travel & accommodation	3,000	3,913 ⁵	805
Rent	2,600	1,750	1,600
Other admin costs	5,000	7,410	5,161 ⁶
Other project costs	5,000	4,838	16,297 ⁷
NB Digital App	-	3,750	26,550 ⁸
Total Projected Expenses	97,061	99,175	148,734
Operating Surplus/ Deficit	23,170	41,272	69,543
Reserves	30,000	33,790	45,000

² The increase in salary reflects the intended employment of a Project Lead

³ The reduction in cost of Sessional Workers (Art & Yoga)

⁴ The increase in training & development costs reflects the DMM training required for the Project Lead

⁵ The rise in travel & accommodation costs reflects the national response to NB following the publication of the Social Care Review Report

⁶ Admin costs include: Computer costs; Office & Gen Admin; Phone Costs; Printing, Postage & Stationary

⁷ Project costs include: Funding Model Report; Meals & entertainment; Family Activities; Gifts/ Donations; Equipment

⁸ A separate cost for the NB Digital App has been include to cost in development & ongoing maintenance costs



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