

# Fostering

Promoting foster  
care in Scotland

Issue 26, Summer 2009

# in Scotland

## Minister Recognises Fostering at Castle Event



The Fostering Network were able once more to work closely with the Scottish Government in co-ordinating and hosting an event at Edinburgh Castle during this year's *Foster Care Fortnight*. The event celebrated and recognised the important and valuable role of all those involved in foster care across Scotland. Here, some of the guests who attended the event share their experience of the evening...

On the 20th May 2009, some of the Young People from the Young People's project went to a function in Edinburgh Castle for many of the charities and agencies associated with fostering and adoption hosted by the Minister for Children and Young People - Adam Ingram.

At the function from the Fostering Network there were myself (Kieran), Natalie, Nicky, Cheryl, Dawn, Cheryl and Kim from the Big Step. There were also Sara Lurie, Sarah Crangle and Marie Guckian, (my mum) and many others. Nicky and I were chosen to present the DVD to Adam Ingram, then Cheryl sang a couple of songs about fostering she wrote and finally we were shown round the Crown Jewels before heading home. I had a great time and had fun meeting lots of people.

By Kieran Guckian

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### Together for Change

The Fostering Network will be launching a new campaign in the autumn as we take forward our 'vision of foster care' for the 21st Century. The ultimate aim of the campaign is to encourage a society that recognises the positive difference that foster care can make to the lives of children and young people, and a society in which foster carers are recognised and valued for the work they do.

The campaign aims to ensure that foster carers are at the centre of decisions made about the children in their care. They will be enabled to make decisions and give consent for everyday activities to allow children to live a normal life like their peers. Ongoing learning and development opportunities will be promoted to ensure that foster carers are fully equipped with the range of training and skills they use daily in their role and the campaign will ensure that foster carers are properly rewarded for the work they do.

We would hope to work together with our members in taking this campaign forward and will be keeping you updated on this work. Keep an eye out for updates coming through your letter box as well as on our website for further news and developments. We are keen to ensure that members are actively involved in working with us together for change.



We would welcome your contributions on any news, views, articles or ideas. Please send to Sarah Crangle, The Fostering Network Scotland, Ingram House, 2nd floor, 227 Ingram Street, Glasgow G1 1DA  
t 0141 204 1400 e sarah.crangle@fostering.net

## Contact us at:

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227 Ingram Street  
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t 0141 204 1400

f 0141 204 6588

e [scotland@fostering.net](mailto:scotland@fostering.net)

[www.fostering.net](http://www.fostering.net)

### Advice, Information & Mediation

Sandra Moody

t 0141 204 1400

Sue Hardman (North East)

t 01330 811896

### Infoline -

For everyday fostering enquiries

t 020 7261 1884

### Legal, medical & stress helpline

24 hours, 365 days a year

t 0844 581 0404

### Core team

Linda Curran (office manager)

Deborah Cook (administrator)

### Director

Sara Lurie

### Project worker

Sarah Crangle

### Training & Development

Sue Robertson

(training & development manager)

Joy Crawford

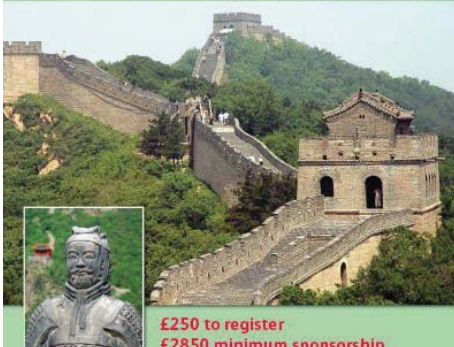
(training & development

co-ordinator)

## CHINA CHALLENGE

22 - 31 OCTOBER 2010

Trek the Great Wall of China and raise  
money for the Fostering Network



£250 to register  
£2850 minimum sponsorship

To join the team contact Lorna Patterson  
at the Fostering Network  
t 028 9070 5056  
e [lorna.patterson@fostering.net](mailto:lorna.patterson@fostering.net)

the fostering network  
the voice of foster care

Charity Registration No. 288812  
**MAKE A REAL DIFFERENCE TODAY!**

## Ambitious, Valued and Rewarded

### The Fostering Network's annual conference

Join us on 2nd and 3rd October at this year's conference where we will be raising ambitions and aspirations for fostered children and young people as well as for the foster care workforce.

Featuring a range of speakers, this event will be stimulating and informative and will allow delegates the opportunity to explore their vision for foster care while sharing practice with colleagues

from across the UK.

The conference is being held in York University and will be of interest to anyone with a personal or professional involvement in fostering. To secure your place, you can book by fax, email, post or online. Visit

[www.fostering.net/conference](http://www.fostering.net/conference) or call 020 7620 6445 for more information.

## Holyrood Royal Garden Party

The Fostering Network were delighted when Anne Black and Debbie Booth received an invitation to attend the Royal Garden Party in Holyrood Palace. This is a fantastic recognition of their work around fostering and kinship care and particularly the recent *Getting it Right for Every Child* reports. We were even more honoured when Anne invited Sandra Moody from our team to accompany her.

Along with about 8,000 others Sandra and Anne made their way to Holyrood Palace in Edinburgh, to enjoy the June sunshine while being served cucumber sandwiches, cake, tea and soft drinks.

Sandra commented: "The Palace gardens and Arthur's Seat provided a spectacular background to an incredible display of hats which definitely eclipsed the ones worn by Anne and myself. We watched from a distance as the Queen was introduced to carefully selected guests and while we didn't get to meet her we were pleased that the Fostering Network was represented at the event."

## International Screening of *Forgotten Voices*

The Fostering Network's *Forgotten Voices* DVD was produced in October 2008 and was the culmination of the work of the young people involved in the Fostering Network's Young People's project. We are pleased that this has recently been invited to be screened by Document 7 as part of their Young People's programme. This is an international film festival which takes place every year in Glasgow.

The film will be followed by discussion about the issues raised with the young people who produced the DVD.

We feel this is a great way of ensuring that the issues surrounding foster care continue to be raised and discussed with an ever widening audience. The festival will take place 21 - 25 October 2009, CCA, Glasgow. For programme details please see their website from the beginning of October - [www.docfilmfest.org.uk](http://www.docfilmfest.org.uk)



## Board of Trustees

The Fostering Network is managed through a board of trustees and senior management team. The board of trustees is made up of elected members of the Fostering Network from across the spectrum of UK fostering, including many individual foster carers. The board members are responsible for ensuring that the Fostering Network meets our strategic goals and objectives. Trustees from across the country are elected at the annual general meeting, held in October and can hold a term of up to three years.

The only trustee currently representing Scotland is Adrian Clark, a Glasgow foster carer, and we want to encourage other members to consider themselves as a suitable candidate for becoming a board member. Further information can be found on our website, and papers for the next AGM will be posted out to you shortly in advance of the October meeting. For further information, please contact Sara Lurie, [sara.lurie@fostering.net](mailto:sara.lurie@fostering.net)

# Dear Members,

**What a lot has been happening** since the last *Fostering in Scotland* newsletter!

We are looking forward to the start of the new *Fostering Links* project and the opportunities to bring together foster carers, social workers from fostering agencies and young people to talk about the important things in foster care services. As always, Sarah Crangle welcomes your ideas for topics for meetings as well as your contributions to the newsletter.

I have been involved with the Scottish Government as they were finalising the new *Looked After Children Regulations*. These will replace the current *Fostering and Looked After Children Regulations* in September. Timescales for training and preparing guidance and new procedures are going to be tight but we see the regulations as helping to promote better assessment and planning for

the future of each child who is looked after.

The Edinburgh Castle event was a great success and the Fostering Network is very grateful to the Scottish Government for their commitment to providing an event.

I am really thrilled that for the first time this edition of the newsletter has a letter from a young person who is telling us about his memory of the first time he lived with his foster carers. We look forward to other young people telling their stories and speaking about things that affect them and about what they hope for in foster care.

Since the last newsletter was published, the Scottish Parliament has appointed a new Children's Commissioner, Tam Baillie, and he has said that one of his key priorities will be looked after children.

Staff have been working hard over the last months and our fundraiser in Scotland, Linda Ogston with Phil Jacob from London have done tremendous work in getting funds from trusts and the Big Lottery Fund.

Sandra Moody from the Glasgow Office and I were invited to the Queen's Garden Party at Holyrood Palace at the end of June - quite an event and the fashions were amazing! We caught a glimpse of the Queen in the distance - it would have helped to be 6 feet tall but neither Sandra nor I fall into that category!

Until next time, I hope that you are all having a sunny summer and an excellent holiday.

With best wishes,

  
Anne Black

## Sainsbury's is making a difference for the Fostering Network

**The Fostering Network** is delighted to have been appointed charity of the year by their local Sainsbury's store in Glasgow.

This partnership will mean that for the whole year Sainsbury's on Queen Street, Glasgow, will be supporting us by having collection cans in store, as well as displaying posters highlighting our work! Staff from the store are also being encouraged to organise a range of fun events, such as quiz nights, to raise funds to support our work.

We think this is a fantastic way for not only raising some much needed funds, but also to raise awareness of fostering and the ongoing need for more people to consider fostering.

If your local Sainsbury's is still looking for a local charity to support, why not suggest the Fostering Network?



## Young People's newsletter

The Fostering Network will be launching a newsletter specifically for children and young people in Scotland and want to hear from children of all ages.

If you are a young person, or know a young person who has a story, a poem, a picture or something else to share then send it in to Sarah Crangle and we look forward to seeing it printed in the first edition!

## Remember...

...our legal helpline number is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. If you need legal or tax advice call our legal advisers on **0844 581 0404**. If you need to make a claim under the insurance, or you require legal representation please contact the legal helpline immediately on 0844 581 0404. Delay may prejudice your legal position. If you are in any doubt about your need to notify a claim under this insurance or for your eligibility to make such a claim you should telephone the legal helpline and ask to speak to a legal adviser.

# Minister recognises fostering at Castle event



**I would like to say** how honoured I was to be representing Aberdeenshire at an event held by the Scottish Government in Edinburgh Castle on the 20th May 2009, to show their appreciation to all who provide children's services. THAT MEANS YOU.

It began with being taken to the Great Hall in the Castle, piper at the door, along with 180 other foster carers, residential workers, trainers, social workers, etc, being served drinks and delicious nibbles, whilst musicians played softly, giving us a chance to talk to and mix with everyone in the room.

Adam Ingram, MSP, Minister for Children and Young People, thanked all the different aspects of child care represented and expressed a wish to learn more about our work so that informed improvements can be put in place. He then introduced Sara Lurie, Director of the Fostering Network, who expressed her sincere appreciation for the professional role and achievements of foster carers. She highlighted the work of the Fostering Network and aspirations for the future.

After some delightful entertainment by the musicians, Cheryl Leggett played guitar and sang songs about her experiences in foster care, which were very moving. We also viewed some thought provoking clips from the *Forgotten Voices* film, made by the Young People's project.

To round up the delightful evening, Adam Ingram circulated, giving us a chance to put our ideas forward, listening to the personal experiences of our work, whilst we consumed more drinks and scrummy nibbles. Let's hope some of the suggestions were constructive and help improve conditions for the children we look after and attract more people into this essential service.



***"The event is a real opportunity for celebrating the success of fostering and the carers and young people that make fostering successful, an event at the Castle I feel does give the importance to fostering that fostering deserves."***  
**Worker, independent agency.**

Before going home we were shown the Stone of Destiny and the Crown Jewels, which were amazing.

Can I also thank Fiona Culbert, my link worker - Family Placement, Banchory for making the event into a special day out, allowing time for a little retail therapy, a dash of culture - the Turner Exhibition and a lovely meal at Browns.

**By Elaine Duthie, Foster Carer (Aberdeenshire)**



***"We had a fantastic day and it was wonderful to see recognition of all the hard work that foster carers do at the highest level."*** Worker, local authority.

# My life

We would love to hear from people of all ages about their experiences of fostering. So if you are a child or young person who fosters, who is fostered, or if you are a foster carer or social worker, why not send us in your fostering story?

A huge thank you to Declan who has shared his story...

One day i went to two carers one was called Sharon and the other was called Stewart and they had a boy called Nathan who was 9. It was very scary for me because i was only five years old. My mum and dad could not look after me because they were not coping as well as other parents.

I stayed at Craighouse Gardens and my first meal was baked potato and cheese and beans and i said i don't like that so Sharon gave me toast and i said i only like it plain. I had to get my teeth taken out when i was six years old and i had to eat something so i had toast cereal and a drink then i left.

A couple of months later i started to eat fruit and veg and my adult teeth started to grow in. I now go to school every day and work hard and Stewart takes me to football 4 times a week and i play left back and my number on the back of my top is 3 which is my lucky number. Last Saturday i had lived with Sharon and Stewart for five years so we all went to the cinema to see Transformers which was quite long but good. I got to take my three best friends with me then we went to a restaurant called Bisque and had a great meal it was yummy and then one of my friends came for a sleep over. Sharon and Stewart got me lots of very nice presents. I like living with Sharon and Stewart and i think i will live here till i'm 35 lol. It's the school holidays next week and we're going to Greece - yippee

By Declan P

## Recognising Sons and Daughters

The Fostering Network recognises the fantastic contribution that sons and daughters make to fostering and are holding their first Sons and Daughters Week in October.

The campaign will encourage everyone to recognise and celebrate sons and daughters of foster carers throughout the October school holidays by running different activities and events. The team in Glasgow are also planning events so get in touch to find out more!

### What's happening in your area?

We would love to hear what is going on locally in your area. So if you have any events coming up during Sons and Daughters week, or any other time, please get in touch with Sarah in Glasgow, [sarah.crangle@fostering.net](mailto:sarah.crangle@fostering.net)

### Thank you

The Fostering Network want to make sure that the sons and daughters of foster carers feel appreciated and valued. We received loads of amazing photos in our recent competition and are using the winning picture to make a card that fostering services can use to send out to say a huge "thank you" for everything sons and daughters do within a foster family.

Fostering services can order the cards free of charge by contacting Harriet Campbell at [harriet.campbell@fostering.net](mailto:harriet.campbell@fostering.net) or call 020 7620 6445

### Fostering film showcase

We will also be showcasing films made by young people with experience of fostering at the Channel 4 cinema in London on 27 October. The event is open to all sons and daughters between 11 and 21 years old and places will be allocated free of charge on a first come, first served basis. Lunch and refreshments will be included but unfortunately the Fostering Network will not be able to offer travel expenses.

For more information on this, contact Harriet (number and email info is above).

## Looked After Children Scotland Regulations...

...have now been laid before Parliament and can be viewed on the OPSI website:

[http://www.opsi.gov.uk/legislation/scotland/ssi2009/ssi\\_20090210\\_en\\_1](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/legislation/scotland/ssi2009/ssi_20090210_en_1)

These regulations will be replacing the existing version of the *Fostering and Looked after Children Regulations* and contain information related to fostering, kinship care and residential care and will keep the

child at the centre, while also underlining the significant role that foster care plays in the lives of so many children.

The Fostering Network and BAAF Scotland have been commissioned by the Scottish Government to write the guidance to support these regulations and look forward to updating you on these regulations in the next newsletter.



## You Can't Hear Me (Face of Time)

By Cheryl Leggett

The world around me crumbles down,  
The standing stones lie on the ground,  
I'll keep on digging through the rain,  
There's a way to stop this pain.

The face of time is running fast,  
I know I will not be the last.

And you can't hear me,  
It doesn't mean I'm silent.  
And just because I don't react,  
It doesn't mean my demons aren't violent.

I'm here for all the unlucky ones,  
They are your daughters and your sons,  
So why help me and not help them?  
Each single one's a rough-cut gem!

And you can't hear me,  
It doesn't mean I'm silent.  
And just because I don't react,  
It doesn't mean my demons aren't violent.

I'm freezing cold, and my hands are numb,  
We're breaking free of the mighty thumb,  
I think it's time you heard the truth,  
And we all stand here as the proof.

And you can't hear me,  
It doesn't mean I'm silent.  
And just because I don't react,  
It doesn't mean my demons aren't violent.

Most wrong things can be put right,  
But why on earth should we have to fight?

## Foster Care Fortnight

This year's *Foster Care Fortnight* kicked off in Scotland with an Open Day on Monday 11 May at the Fostering Network's office in Glasgow. The team welcomed prospective foster carers as well as those with experience (foster carers and workers) to find out more about fostering and the work of the Fostering Network. We had a great response to the day and will be holding regular open days with another event planned on Tuesday 15 September. If you know of someone who would like to find out a bit more, why not get in touch with us and come along to one of the sessions? Check our website for further information:

[www.fostering.net/scotland](http://www.fostering.net/scotland)

We were delighted to be involved in the Celebration of Foster Care event hosted by the Scottish Government in Edinburgh Castle on 20 May.

Under the theme **fostering: a career that changes lives** the Fostering Network and fostering services generated a vast amount of media coverage during *Foster Care Fortnight*. We launched the campaign with warnings of an impending recruitment crisis. Our new survey discovered that over two-thirds of Scotland's foster carers are aged over 50 and are likely to consider retiring within the next 10 to 15 years, potentially



putting further pressures on fostering services.

Highlights included interviews on GMTV, STV, Radio Scotland, Radio Forth, Radio Central, Real Radio, and brilliant features in the Herald, and in the Scotland on Sunday's Spectrum magazine, as well as many more magazines, newspapers and radio stations.... Furthermore foster carers who had recently attended media training organised by the Fostering Network were able to put their newly developed skills to use in a number of interviews.

The Fostering Network is really pleased with the great coverage especially as it promotes the real need for more people to consider fostering as well as celebrating the amazing contribution so many fostering families make every day. We are confident that the quality media coverage will generate an increase in enquiries to fostering services as *Foster Care Fortnight* does every year.

Please let us know about any local activity taking place near you and your achievements.



# Fostering project brings people together

**With our recent funding** boost from the Big Lottery fund, the Fostering Network is looking forward to starting the Fostering Links project in the autumn.

The project will build upon many areas of work which were successful within earlier work. In particular it aims to reduce the isolation experienced across the country by all those involved in foster care and especially those located in the more rural areas of Scotland.

We are currently planning a series of events including focus groups and membership meetings as well as assertiveness skills training, advocacy skills training and will also be offering more media skills training for foster carers. The project will also produce a series of information fact sheets on topics of interest and we are really pleased that the funding from the Big Lottery will enable us to continue to produce this quarterly newsletter, *Fostering in Scotland*.

One of the key themes of the Fostering Links project is to support people directly involved in fostering to be able to take the lead in addressing the issues affecting them. The project will encourage the development of local support networks to make sure that people don't find themselves alone and feeling isolated.

The Fostering Network is also keen to appoint four Regional Advisers across Scotland who will take on a voluntary role and be supported by the organisation to link in with the project and work closely between their local area and the project. They will keep in touch with those in their local areas and be aware of the issues affecting foster carers near them. They will also feed these issues into the wider, national discussions and will play a key part in the work of the project.

We feel this is a valuable role and are looking for some special people to fill this. If you would like to find out more about this and how you could get

involved, contact Sarah Crangle.

If you have topics you would like raised through the meetings or fact sheets, or for further information on any of the work of the project contact Sarah Crangle, or keep any eye on our website, [www.fostering.net/scotland](http://www.fostering.net/scotland)



## Fostering panels...

**...we need you** to sign up to our fostering panel members database, [www.fostering.net/activities/panels](http://www.fostering.net/activities/panels). This was launched on the Fostering Network's website earlier this year and we are encouraging members from across the country to sign up.

We are looking for a range of people including care experienced young people, experienced foster carers, parents of looked after children, independent chairs, education, medical, legal or other background to register their experience and the geographical areas they could cover.

Your details will be listed on the members only area of the website and fostering providers can search the database for potential candidates. Fostering panels carry out roles such as looking at applications from people to become foster carers and making recommendations about their approval, including terms, recommending whether someone should remain as a foster carer, and carrying out a carer's first review.

By registering your details on the website and widening the pool of panel members available, you are helping to ensure that fostering panels are made up of a range of individuals and experience.

We will also be piloting training to support care experienced young people to be involved in fostering panels - contact Sue Robertson for further information on this.



## Life After Care Young Peoples Conference

**Saturday 26th SEPTEMBER 2009  
Trades Hall, Glasgow**



**Have fun, meet new people, get your voice heard  
and talk about issues that are important to you!**

**Come along to our free day  
with lunch provided.**

**Contact details**  
**Tel: 0141 357 4124**  
**Mobile: 07789461804 (you can text 2!)**  
**Email: [amy@scottishthroughcare.org.uk](mailto:amy@scottishthroughcare.org.uk)**

**More details to follow soon on our  
Website [www.debateproject.org.uk](http://www.debateproject.org.uk)**

  
LOTTERY FUNDED



## Scottish In-Car Child Safety Campaign 2009

A major new campaign designed to improve in-car child safety launched in June throughout Scotland. It aims to raise awareness of the importance of using correctly-fitted child seats and restraints. Clinics are taking place across Scotland until September 2009.

Over the last seven years, checks on almost 7,000 child seats, carried out by Road Safety Officers across Scotland found that more than half (51%) were either incorrectly-fitted or were incompatible with the child or with the make or model of car in which they were being used.

The main areas of concern were:

- Seats that were either too big or too small for the children using them
- Seats which were incompatible with the cars in which they were used
- Seatbelts which were twisted or too loose to keep the seat secure
- Buckles that were bent or which rested on the car seat frames, known as 'buckle crunch'
- Child harnesses that were twisted or not pulled tightly enough, leaving the child insecurely fastened.

Michael McDonnell, Director of Road Safety Scotland said: "Parents must understand

that there is a real life-and-death difference for their children if they fit the wrong seat, or fit the right seat incorrectly.

"Unrestrained children can be killed at speeds as low as 5mph, so it's vitally important that children are properly restrained on every trip."

### What the law says

- You must use a restraining system if one is fitted in your vehicle
- You must not carry an unrestrained child in the front seat
- The child MUST use an adult belt in the rear if the correct child restraint is not available

### Which seat should I use?

Infant Carrier - weight up to 13kg, from birth to 9-12 months

Combination Seat - weight up to 18kg, from birth to 4 years

Child Seat - weight 9 - 18kg, from 9 months - 4 years

Booster Seat - weight 15kg and upwards, aged 4 years and over

Booster Cushion - height up to 135cm (4ft 5 inches), age 6 years and upwards

Adult Seat Belt (or lap belt) - height 135cm (4ft 5 inches) upwards, aged 12 years and over

For further information on in-car child safety visit

[www.protectchild.co.uk](http://www.protectchild.co.uk) or [stv.tv/childsafety](http://stv.tv/childsafety)

## Our training courses

**Our training team** continue to work across the country delivering training on both our open courses, where places can be booked by anyone, and our in-house courses which can be organised by your agency. We have more dates available for our popular courses: **the Role of the Supervising Social Worker and The Skills to Foster Leaders Course**, as well as some places still available on our **Competency Based Assessment of foster carers** and our fantastic **Men in Foster Care** course, run by men for men.

We are also really pleased to be able to work with Dr Helen Cosis Brown from Middlesex University and will be delivering a training course for those involved in the recruitment, assessment and training of lesbian and gay foster carers.

Dates for all these courses are below, and if you would like further information on

any of our training range, please contact Sue Robertson, training and development manager or Joy Crawford, training and development co-ordinator, t 0141 204 1400

### Competency Based Assessment of foster carers

One day course  
5 November 2009, Glasgow

### Men in Foster Care

One day course  
21 November 2009, Glasgow

### Role of the Supervising Social Worker

Two day course  
27 and 28 January 2010, Glasgow

### Assessing and working with same sex couples **\*\*New Course\*\***

One day course  
11 February 2010, Glasgow

### The Skills to Foster Leaders Course

Three day course  
9, 10 and 11 March 2010, Glasgow

## Sign up to receive an e-version of the *Fostering in Scotland* newsletter

**We would like to encourage** people to receive this quarterly newsletter by email. If you would prefer to have it mailed directly to your inbox rather than your post box then get in touch and we will arrange this for the next edition.

Contact Sarah Crangle, [sarah.crangle@fostering.net](mailto:sarah.crangle@fostering.net) to add your name to the e-list. And remember, we are always looking for local news to include in the newsletter, so if you have something to share, then get in touch!

## 10K fun for the Fostering Network

To coincide with this year's *Foster Care Fortnight*, staff from the office, along with family, took part in the ladies 10K in Glasgow. The race was held on Sunday 10 May and after a sunny start to the day, the weather broke as we ran through Pollok Park. Thankfully, the rain and hailstones didn't dampen the spirits of the runners! Our t-shirts and balloons certainly raised awareness about fostering and we even got a big 'shout-out' from Clyde One radio as we crossed the start line!

If you think you would like to join us in future similar events, why not get in touch?

