



Annual Review

for the year ended 31 March 2020

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CONTENTS

Message from our Chair	3
Trustees' report	5
Vision, mission, values	5
What we achieved	5
Our plans for the future	13
Financial review	16
Risk management	18
Independent auditor's report	20
Statement of financial activities	24
Balance sheet	25
Statement of cash flow	26
Financial notes	27
Trustees Management and advisors	42

Message from our Chair

As the chair of the board of trustees, I am delighted to introduce The Fostering Network's 2019-2020 annual report.

Trusted. Together. Vital. These are the values of The Fostering Network and one of the reasons we are the UK's leading fostering charity. Over the past year, these values have been clearly demonstrated in the organisation's work. Take, for example, the programmes the charity delivers – in this report you will read about how care experienced young people are leading our new Young Advocates project which is bringing foster carers, young people and educators together; you will discover how our Mockingbird programme has increased the number of fostering service partners it is working with because of the trust placed in it by fostering services; and you will learn that our ground-breaking Step Up, Step Down project won a Children and Young People Now Award for the vital role it has played in the lives of families over the last 12 months.

The Fostering Network continues to be at the forefront of creating positive change for foster care. This year the charity has successfully campaigned for additional funding for Staying Put implementation and seen the Children's Minister in Westminster voice her support in Parliament for our *Not Forgotten* report – which highlighted the lack of support for children's relationships with their former foster carers.

The impact of our campaigning is hugely bolstered by the voices of our members and supporters who are the foundation of all the work The Fostering Network does. That is why I am extremely proud of what The Fostering Network offers to its members in return. I have been a foster carer and a member of The Fostering Network for six years now so I have some understanding of the pressures and strains of being a foster carer and I've seen the ways in which The Fostering Network offers support through its helplines and practice team and creates vital connections with foster carers and others involved in fostering through its membership offer. Foster carers and fostering services can not only benefit from help and advice with fostering issues but also legal matters via our 24-hour legal helpline and mental health support through our stress support service. These helplines took a combined total of over 1,000 calls this year. There are also a number of other benefits and discounts which continued to expand over the last 12 months.

Another crucial role The Fostering Network plays is to celebrate fostering and raise awareness in wider society of the positive and transformational effect foster care has on the lives of children and young people as well as the families they live with. There are many ways in which the charity achieves this but it is principally done through our celebratory events such as The Fostering Excellence Awards, The Northern Ireland Foster Carer of the Year Awards, Sons and Daughters Month and the UK's largest fostering awareness campaign and foster carer recruitment event, Foster Care Fortnight™. These events reached hundreds of thousands of people, and in the case of Foster Care Fortnight, millions.

Of course, we can only undertake much of this activity thanks to the generosity of organisations and individuals who support our work through grants, donations and sponsorship. This year saw the launch of our Platinum, Gold, Silver or Bronze partnership packages to welcome incredible supporters of all levels.

As chair of the board of trustees, and on behalf of the charity, I want to extend a huge thank you to all our fundraisers, campaigners, supporters, staff and, of course, members for working with us during the year to make foster care the best it can possibly be. Your commitment to children and young people in foster care cannot be overstated in our current situation – having ended 2019-

The Fostering Network Annual Review 2019-20

2020 and begun 2020-2021 amid an unprecedented pandemic which disproportionately adversely impacts some of the most vulnerable in our society including children in care.

I look forward to working with you during the coming year to ensure that all fostered children and young people can experience security, stability, safety and a loving family.

Nigel McCartney

Trustees' annual report (including strategic report)

About us

The Fostering Network is the UK's leading fostering charity and membership organisation. We are the essential network for fostering, bringing together everyone who is involved in the lives of fostered children. We support foster carers to transform children's lives and we work with fostering services and the wider sector to develop and share best practice.

We work to ensure all fostered children and young people experience stable family life and we are passionate about the difference foster care makes. We champion fostering and seek to create vital change so that foster care is the very best it can be.

Vision

Our vision is a society where the importance of fostering is understood, recognised and supported.

Mission

Our mission is to support those who foster, improve opportunities for fostered children and young people, and provide expert guidance to all fostering services.

Values

We are trusted – expert and independent.

We are together – a network, working in partnership, for community, for members.

We are vital:

- for raising awareness of fostering
- for creating change
- for up-to-the-minute information, advice and support for foster carers, fostering services and fostered children and young people – the whole fostering community

What we achieved – some highlights

The Fostering Network brings together everyone involved in the lives of fostered children to make foster care the very best it can be. In the 12 months to 31 March 2020, working with our members and other stakeholders, we took significant steps towards meeting our four strategic objectives. Here are some of the highlights from the year.

Objective: We will support fostering families and the services that work with them to provide the best possible care for children and young people.

Our range of innovative programmes, comprehensive training, resources and celebratory events have supported and connected our members all across the UK. Through our work we have promoted and shared the incredible work our 370 fostering service and 55,000 foster carer members are doing every day to help make foster care the very best it can be.

The Fostering Network Annual Review 2019-20

In the 12 months to 31 March 2020, we offered a wide range of training courses and workshops across the UK. In total, The Fostering Network delivered 100 courses to 1,228 delegates.

To support our members further we added new training opportunities to our portfolio, including therapeutic play, unaccompanied asylum seeking children and young people (UASCYP) and attachment focused parenting.

The practice support team, which provides specialist practice support and expertise to fostering services, handled 690 enquiries last year, visited 45 fostering services and attended 131 forums. The team also provided briefings and consultancy work and held workshops for fostering services across the UK.

We continued to directly support the fostering community through our national helplines throughout the UK, responding to 5,139 enquiries in total. We also gave free legal advice and stress support to more than 1,000 callers through our legal advice line and our stress support service. The latter was able to give sustained support to recipients for as long as they required it, which was on average eight months. Almost 335,000 visits were made to our website, which supplies fostering information and guidance. This is an increase of 29 per cent on last year.

From April 2019 to March 2020 we continued to support more fostering families and the children and young people in their care through our Mockingbird programme which now has a total of 1,913 people involved in constellations. The programme ran 14 events this year and had 694 people attending. Those included our annual conference and three Constellation Forums bringing together 163 hub home carers and liaison workers to share their experiences, as well as a weekend away for foster carers and their children and young people. The Mockingbird programme also proved particularly useful in the face of the coronavirus crisis at the tail end of the year. The extended family model provided extra support for foster carers and the children they look after throughout this difficult time.

Throughout the last year our Fostering Potential project continued to provide education peer support to foster carers across seven local authority fostering services and offered one to one support to foster carers from education champions. The project comprised locally organised events, groups and activities attended by foster carers, social workers and staff from virtual schools. In an initial evaluation, respondents reported the positive impacts of Fostering Potential, particularly on foster carers' confidence in supporting the education of looked after children.

The Fostering Network's Step Up Step Down project, a pioneering approach to support children to stay living at home when they might otherwise end up in care, supported 44 families consisting of 115 children and 62 adults. 20 parents and carers also benefitted from the Bond Attachment and Incredible Years training sessions as part of the project. We were also extremely proud that the project won the Family Support Award at the Children and Young People Now Awards 2019.

Also during this year we launched our Muslim Fostering Project report which explored the experiences of Muslim foster carers and prospective foster carers. The report summarised the findings of a programme which looked at areas of challenge in the recruitment and retention of

The Fostering Network Annual Review 2019-20

Muslim foster carers in England, with a focus on how to provide the right support to children and young people from the Muslim community.

To ensure our membership is best meeting the needs of our members, in 2019 we launched our first ever biennial member survey that was completed by hundreds of members and provided valuable insights.

In January 2020 we also relaunched our retired foster carer membership for former foster carers. This membership provides market-leading legal protection insurance that covers everyone in the household if they experience a historic allegation when they stop fostering. The membership now also includes a range of other benefits such as the opportunity to stay connected to fostering, campaign for change, and accessing our popular discounts. We look forward to seeing the number of former foster carers in our membership grow in the coming year.

Objective: We will provide opportunities for children and young people that benefit them, make their voices heard and enable them to reach their potential.

We worked directly with children and young people in foster care throughout the past year.

As part of the Fostering Attainment and Achievement programme, commissioned by the Northern Ireland Health and Social Care Board, we directly supported more than 1,000 children and young people of various ages with tailored educational resources and initiatives. We did this through the delivery of bespoke educational resources and initiatives such as the Letterbox Club, and our range of different summer schemes and residentials, including *Pathways to University*, to encourage aspirations to higher education.

As part of our Mockingbird programme we brought together 362 children and young people and their carers for weekends in 'the great outdoors' where they worked together to take on new challenges and overcome their fears.

Through our Youth Ambassadors project we enabled one young person to share key messages about their experiences of the safeguarding process with the Deputy Minister for Health and Social Services in Wales, Julie Morgan. The project also included the production of two issues of Thrive – a magazine for young people in foster care in Wales – for which we worked in partnership with National Youth Advocacy Service (NYAS), Voices from Care and Whitchurch High school. The partnership delivered two focus groups attended by 25 young people.

Our Young Advocates group in Scotland is led by young people with care experience and the children of foster carers, and creates learning opportunities for teachers and trainee teachers about the day-to-day experience of educational settings for young people in foster care. It also provides training for foster carers to help build their awareness of how they can best support the children and young people in their care. Since the project began in November 2019 to 31 March 2020, 32 care experienced young people engaged with the project. There were 227 learning and developments sessions delivered and 10 additional sessions for the young people in the project.

As part of our Foster Care Fortnight 2019 campaign, we held a reception at the Scottish Parliament with children from our Walking Tall project, alongside their foster carers and social workers. We were delighted to be joined by the children's minister, Maree Todd and the children's commissioner, Bruce Adamson.

The Fostering Network Annual Review 2019-20

We were pleased to be able to present resources from our Walking Tall project to First Minister, Nicola Sturgeon, at her official residence, Bute House. Among the resources was a poster on which children highlighted some of the key messages from the project.

333 young people living in kinship arrangements have benefitted from events, training and family activities as part of our Fostering Kinship Support programme. A particular success was the sports programme delivered in partnership with Sport Changes Life, where 15 young people worked towards an OCN qualification. The programme finished early due to the Covid-19 outbreak, but six young people obtained their qualification through online support, with a further four in the process of completion.

We have also heard the views of young people and their experiences of care through our UK-wide member magazine *Foster Care*, in the Fostering Changed Me feature.

Our Tick the Box campaign continued to inform young people about the support available to them during their time at university and how to access it.

Objective: We will influence policy and the legislative framework so it supports and promotes excellence in foster care.

Campaigning and influencing policy at every level to ensure foster care is the best it can be for all involved is a key area for the organisation.

A key aspect of successful foster care is stability especially in post-18 (post-16 in Scotland) arrangements. To improve these arrangements we secured an additional £10 million for Staying Put, which was announced in October. We continue to monitor the implementation of Staying Put, and have conducted 'deep dives' with four fostering services to understand the issues and we are feeding back to the Department for Education.

The year to 31 March 2020 also saw the publication of our *Not Forgotten* report, highlighting the lack of support for children's relationships which can aid stability and form the foundations of a positive fostering experience. Children's Minister, Vicky Ford, recognised this and stated her support for our Keep Connected campaign in Parliament.

Financial support for foster care underpins much of the practice within fostering so it is crucial to ensure it remains at an adequate level. We monitored the fostering allowances paid across England and Wales and called for those paying below the national minimum to raise it. As a result, two local authorities in Wales and one in England raised and backdated their allowances to meet the national minimum allowance

Our supporters wrote to 111 of 129 MSPs to calling for the introduction of a national minimum allowance in Scotland.

As the leading fostering charity in the UK we ensure we drive change where it is needed both nationally and locally and in 2019-20 representatives from 28 Foster Care Associations (FCAs) joined our forums to share best practice and work collaboratively to tackle various issues. We also addressed MPs at the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for Foster Care Workers about the benefits of a register of foster carers.

We contributed significantly to the working groups which were part of the care review in Scotland. We welcomed the findings of the review when they were published in February, but emphasised

that the findings simply presented us with a starting line for change with a lot more work yet to be done.

In conjunction with the proactive work we undertook to influence policy and practice in 2019-20 we also submitted responses to five consultations:

1. The Education Committee: Children's Social Care Workforce Inquiry (England)
2. A Healthier Wales: A workforce strategy for health and social care (Wales)
3. Children (Scotland) Bill call for views
4. Proposed Disabled Children and Young People (Transitions) (Scotland) Bill
5. Briefing from The Fostering Network regarding the independent care review (England).

Objective: We will promote foster care to ensure society understands, values and recognises how foster carers transform lives.

Throughout the year we responded to fostering issues in the news, regularly offering comments and interviews to press and broadcast media. For example, we have written responses to key events such as the announcement of additional funding for Staying Put in England, a letter from the Department for Education written to directors of children's services across England urging them to prioritise adoption for children in the care system, and the publication of the findings of the independent care review in Scotland. We have spoken on national and regional BBC radio, various regional television shows and secured national press to raise awareness of fostering.

In addition, we proactively released our own reports and statements to inform the fostering sector and wider public of our work and the work and views of our members. In total we received over 1,000 pieces of media coverage throughout the year, reaching tens of millions of people.

We raised awareness of the many positive aspects of foster care by utilising all channels available to us, including social media. We increased our following across all our social media accounts in the past 12 months and saw engagement rates more than triple on LinkedIn. On Facebook we have 15,161 followers – a gain of 1,633; 970 more followers on Twitter – taking us to 13,841; on Instagram we saw an increase of 1,597 followers to a total of 3,531; and our LinkedIn following has also risen by 90 per cent to 1,794.

We offered expert fostering advice to TV programmes such as EastEnders and Doctors. We were also delighted to be recognised in Jacqueline Wilson's new book *The Beaker Girls*, as well as at the end of a Jess Glynne video which has received 7.2 million views on YouTube.

An important time for disseminating our message of the importance of foster care is during our Foster Care Fortnight™ campaign – the UK's largest fostering awareness and recruitment campaign. In 2019 the #changeafuture campaign reached tens of millions of people through social media, with more than 800 pieces of coverage in the press and broadcast media. Our campaign film featuring Pandora Christie was viewed more than 1,500 times on YouTube and reached 25,000 people on Facebook. There was also strong support from celebrities, politicians and other key fostering decision makers from across the UK.

Our Fostering Excellence Awards are another opportunity for us to shine a spotlight on the transformational power of foster care. They are the UK's most prestigious foster care awards, celebrating outstanding achievement in fostering and recognising those who make exceptional contributions to foster care every day. In 2019 the Fostering Excellence Awards received 374

The Fostering Network Annual Review 2019-20

nominations and selected 18 winners including foster carers, sons and daughters, social workers, young people with experience of foster care, Fostering Friendly employers and supporters.

In addition we presented four remarkable people from the fostering community in the four countries of the UK with a President's Award. We also held our annual Northern Ireland Foster Care Awards which received widespread media coverage across Northern Ireland.

Our annual Sons and Daughters Month campaign in October celebrated the hugely significant role the children of foster carers play in ensuring fostered children and young people have a loving stable home. We reached almost 1,000 listeners with our Sons and Daughters podcast featuring Lydia and Roma Bright. Our Sons and Daughters Month competition highlighted the value of foster care for young people growing up in a fostering family through children and young people's entries demonstrating what fostering has taught them. The winning entries across the four age categories were featured on our website alongside the runners up.

We have continued to work with a range of long-standing partners this year. The Mortgage Brain, who are foster carer mortgage specialists, and Williams Giles, who are fostering tax specialists, have both worked closely with us throughout the year, supporting our members and key activities such as Foster Care Fortnight and the Fostering Excellence Awards.

Towergate Insurance, who provide home insurance for foster carers, have also provided a service to our members and taken part in fundraising, and Haven continued to offer a discount to our members, and this year supported the Fostering Excellence Awards and Foster Walk London.

Arthur Cox chose The Fostering Network as their charity partner for 2019. Staff volunteered their skills and experience to provide hands on support as well as fundraising to support our programmes that transform the lives of children fostered in Northern Ireland. In recognition, Arthur Cox received the Community Supporter Award at our Fostering Excellence Awards.

All of our partners have helped us to raise awareness of the importance of fostering, supported our work and raised vital funds for The Fostering Network. We are grateful for their ongoing support and contributions.

Our fundraising

We are grateful to all the donors, supporters and funders who joined us in our cause and support us to achieve our missions across the UK.

The Mortgage Brain and Towergate continued their support for us through formal partnerships and from staff fundraising events and activities over the year. Staff from Haven also held fundraising events and generously sponsored our London Foster Walk.

Arthur Cox supported The Fostering Network as a charity partner in Northern Ireland for 2019. Staff teams fundraised for us over the year and took an active role in volunteering their skills and time to support our projects and beneficiaries. Jancett Childcare also kindly selected us as a charity of the year in celebration of their 50th anniversary, holding a series of events over the year.

We are grateful to all partners – The Mortgage Brain, The Exilarch's Foundation, Williams Giles and Haven – who chose to sponsor our prestigious Fostering Excellence Awards in October.

The Fostering Network Annual Review 2019-20

Our growing network of community supporters helped make Foster Walk a success this year. Around 250 people joined us at our Foster Walks in London, and Cardiff, and many, including East Riding of Yorkshire, held their own.

We also had a host of fundraisers taking on their own challenges, from the Great North Run, to the Southeast 50 Ultramarathon and the New York Marathon. Two groups of young people raised funds to support our work as part of their National Citizenship Service challenge.

Towards the end of the year we launched a new charity lottery, offering players a chance to win cash prizes while supporting our work. It has seen steady growth to date.

We are grateful to all our grant funders, including the National Lottery Community Fund, British and Foreign Schools Society, Sir John Cass's Foundation, and Axa XL whose support allows us to deliver innovative projects that are improving foster care across the UK.

Fundraising practice

Our fundraising activity is focused on organisations and individuals that have an established relationship with The Fostering Network.

We support and adhere to the code of practice of the Fundraising Regulator and pay their levy. During the year we did not receive any complaints related to fundraising, we followed the best practice recommended by the Fundraising Regulator in order to protect vulnerable people and did not use third parties to raise funds on our behalf.

The majority of fundraising expenditure is staff time and a significant proportion of this is spent developing formal bids for major projects and services. During the year the team supported operational staff in winning grants or contracts worth more than £1.8m.

We would like to recognise the enormous contribution that the following funders and supporters have made to our work over the year and to thank them for their vital support, as well as all our generous donors and fundraisers.

Arthur Cox	Coral Samuel Trust
Astor of Hever Trust	DCR Allen Charitable Trust
Axa XL	Department for Education (England)
BBC Children in Need	Department of Communities (Northern Ireland)
British and Foreign School Society	Department of Education (Northern Ireland)
Casey Trust	Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (Northern Ireland)
Child Concern Consortium	Exilarch's Foundation
Clara E Burgess Charity	

The Fostering Network Annual Review 2019-20

Haven

Health and Social Care Board, Northern
Ireland

Helping Hands Quilters

Jancett Childcare

Lee Trust

Marsh Christian Trust

Mrs M A Black's Charitable Trust

Murphy-Neumann Charity

National Lottery Community Fund

Patricia Dalby Charitable Trust

Santander

Scottish Government

Sir Jeremiah Colman Gift Trust

Sir John Cass's Foundation

Syder Foundation

The Harrison Frank Family Foundation

The Mortgage Brain

The Porta Pia 2012 Foundation

The Robertson Trust

Towergate Insurance

Ulster Garden Villages

Vassiliou Family Charitable Trusts

Waitrose

Welsh Government

Wexbaby

Our strategy and our future plans

We start the next 12 months under the challenging conditions of lockdown and a coronavirus pandemic. Although this has inevitably curtailed some of our activity, particularly in relation to fundraising, our teams have already responded and adapted so that much of our policy, practice and support work has moved online. We anticipate that this move to online provision will continue and grow through 2020-21. We will be looking at how we can adapt to overcome challenges associated with the pandemic that we face as a charity and those which our members face. As ever we will continue to strive for improvements to and within fostering to ensure it is the best it can be, especially in regards to the impact of the coronavirus on the fostering sector.

As well as Covid-19, another very significant issue impacting the whole world is racism. The Fostering Network condemns racism and prejudice in all its forms, and during this year will be establishing a working group to look at equality, diversity and inclusion within our charity to ensure that we are able to play an increasingly positive role in opposing racism and prejudice in the future. We will also develop approaches that enable us to play our part in being an instrument for change in tackling racism in society, especially when these impact on fostering.

In the past year work progressed to prepare a new strategic plan for the three years to March 2023. The fundamental elements of the strategy are that we continue to work as a single organisation the four countries of the UK responding to local need. We will continue to be an organisation that is geographically diverse and representative of the community it supports.

We are an organisation that is striving for excellence in everything we do. Using research and our practice wisdom alongside cutting edge pilot programmes to drive forward change for children and young people. We want to be an organisation that uses technology to make us more efficient and effective in all we do, including engaging effectively with our community and members, both organisations and individuals, so that we can represent their views and opinions.

We want to be an organisation that is focused on improving practice and we are striving to be an organisation that is truly child centred and has a real focus on improving outcomes for children and young people in care, helping them reach their potential, and supporting foster carers and others to achieve this. We know that to improve outcomes for children we must influence key decision makers to create necessary change.

While we continue to view the key drivers of change that we have developed over the past three years (outstanding leadership, exceptional customer service, a high performing and engaged workforce and financial security) we will build on those with new drivers, a deeper engagement with our members, developing our evidence-based practice – including building relationships with research academics - and ensuring that we continue to grow our influence in the fostering community. Here are some of the activities we have planned:

Member engagement

- Ensuring we listen to our membership is essential to ensure we remain effective and relevant. The coronavirus will mean that our face-to-face events and conferences will be limited, but we will develop our online offer and increase the number of digital webinars, training courses, consultations and events that we will hold. In this way we will continue to hear the views of our members so that we can represent these views to key stakeholders and decision makers.
- We will survey our members as to their views on foster care in the UK as part of our biennial State of the Nation's Foster Care. This year, for the first time, we will seek the perspectives of members of staff of fostering services so that we can build a holistic view of issues facing fostering.
- We will continue to gain useful insight into supporting children and young people with their education, especially in light of coronavirus. As a result of this insight we will develop education projects and programmes which will help close the attainment gap between children in foster care and their non-looked after peers.
- Following feedback from our members, we will further develop our member offer for family and friends carers.
- We will move our Fostering Excellence Awards online to ensure we continue to shine a spotlight on the incredible achievements of the fostering community.

Evidenced-based practice

- We will use the findings of our 2020 State of the Nation's Foster Care survey, as well as other surveys and focus groups throughout the year, to guide our campaigns, policy and practice work.
- We will continue to review our resources and information to ensure we offer the most appropriate content. This will include a hub for information relating to the rapidly-changing guidance around coronavirus, as well as new resources on Foetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorder.
- We will continue to develop our training offer, growing the range and scope of courses and ensuring that our training remains in line with current best practice and legislation. This will be an element of our service which will be made available digitally to ensure it can continue in light of the pandemic.
- We will also seek to build new partnerships and improve the range of services and discounts we provide to our members.
- We will campaign to influence the scope of this review by ensuring fostering is kept on the agenda and that the stocktake report ('Fostering better outcomes') is not used in place of a review for fostering, as its recommendations were cost neutral and not evidence based.
- We will develop closer working relationships with research disseminators such as What Works and Research in Practice and relevant academics.

The Fostering Network Annual Review 2019-20

- We will further develop our view on the impact of a change of employment status for foster carers and how to support the sector were a change to take place.

Growing our influence

- We will continue to work towards our vision of a society in which the importance of fostering is understood, recognised and supported.
- We will continue to work to improve the status of foster carers within the team around the child. One key way of doing this will be to push for a central register of foster carers.
- We will seek to influence the National Fostering Framework in Wales, in particular the work on standardising fees and allowances. We will also be feeding into the proposed review of When I Am Ready.
- We will hold the implementation group of the care review in Scotland to account as they deliver on 'The Promise'.
- Following the re-establishment of the Northern Ireland Executive we will be working to ensure key pieces of legislation (Adoption and Children Bill), fostering regulations and standards and the draft looked after children's strategy are prioritised, appropriately funded and implemented.
- We will continue to campaign for the proper funding and implementation of post-18 care across the UK, including influencing the comprehensive spending review.
- We will develop our Young Advocates programme in Scotland, which will enable young people with care experience to influence the education system.
- We will launch our Fostering Communities project in Wales, funded by the Welsh Government, which will take a co-production approach meaning foster carers, children and young people in care and fostering services will all be equal partners in planning and delivering the programme.
- We will continue to chair the Alliance for Children in Care and Care Leavers in England.
- We will continue to strive to grow the reach and impact of our awareness raising work through the media, social media and campaigns such as Foster Care Fortnight and Sons and Daughters Month.

Key Management Personnel

The Charity's trustees and the senior leadership team comprise the key management personnel of the charity in charge of directing, controlling, running and operating the charity on a day-to-day basis. The pay of the Chief Executive is reviewed annually and increased when possible following formal approval by the trustees. Key managers and all staff are part of a formal grading system that facilitates fair and transparent comparison of roles. The bands are reviewed each year and salaries are increased when possible following formal approval by the Chief Executive and Trustees.

Country advisory committees

We have a dedicated group of members who form the Country Advisory Committees, chaired by Janet Smith (Scotland), Dr Karen Winter (Northern Ireland), In Wales this work is supported by a foster carer advisory group. In Scotland this committee includes a care experienced young person.

We thank the chairs for their contribution to furthering the work of the organisation in the countries, and the hard work of the committee members who give of their time to help guide our work and who are invaluable in helping us ensure that foster care works for every fostered child and every foster family.

Financial review

Income from restricted projects reduced from £2,020K to £1,700K between the years. This reduced total income from £7,198K to £6,902K. Membership income was unchanged at £2,413, (£2,423K in 2019). The long-term consistency of Membership income is welcome after 9 years without increasing fees.

The combined income from training, advice, consulting and publishing has grown 15% from £941K to £1,081K the growth is driven by the successful Mockingbird programme a key part of the range of high quality services that The Fostering Network provides to support its members.

In 2018 the trustees agreed that total reserves were enough and operational plans only required The Fostering Network to maintain unrestricted reserves at a stable level. Charitable expenditure on unrestricted activities has increased by 3% to £4,969K as a result.

During 2018 we received a compensation payment for rights of light at our London Office of £145K. The trustees agreed to set aside £261K in a designated fund to provide the core finance for the next stage in our digital transformation programme the Rights of Light award provided the majority of this investment. Detailed planning for this program started in November 2019 with the implementation planned for December 2020.

Towards the end of the financial year the Corona Virus epidemic caused a closure of our offices and reduced income in the final month. The financial impact for the year ended March 2020 was not substantial and we closed the year continuing to support our members but while working from home. Overall, the net unrestricted surplus was £103K and well ahead of our budget for the year.

Cash balances have increased during the year by £525K mostly due to timing differences on restricted project funding and the operational surplus for the year.

In keeping with the charity's policy of holding owned property at market value the Trustees have taken advice about the property market which has been destabilised by the pandemic and have agreed to reduce the valuation prepared by Lamberts LLP in December 2018 of £3,550K by £443.8K being guided by further advice from Lamberts LLP in August 2020. Total reserves have reduced as a result and are now £3,912K. This is mostly represented by property and restricted reserves.

General reserves policy

In deciding on the level of unrestricted reserves required the board of trustees carries out an annual review to establish the level of reserves necessary to cover future investment and operational costs.

The policy for the level of unrestricted general reserves is now based on a detailed evaluation of the risks included in the risk register. Each risk is discounted by a percentage based on the likelihood of that risk occurring. The reserve also provides for material future investment plans (shown this year as a designated reserve), and for specific working capital required to manage large projects.

On this basis, general reserves required are calculated at £1,330K. Actual reserves are 110% of target at £1,466K (including designated funds). The financial plan for the coming year is to maintain general reserves at this level but to increase the proportion of total reserves held as liquid assets as circumstances permit. Property is held at market value of £3,106K, which remains a significant asset should there be a need for additional funds.

Going concern

We have set out above a review of the financial performance during the financial year and our reserves position at the year end. We have adequate financial resources and have the structures in place to manage the business risks. In addition, our annual budgeting and forecasting processes have taken into consideration the current economic climate and its potential impact on both our various sources of income and expenditure.

We have a reasonable expectation that we have adequate resources and control mechanisms to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future.

Further, we believe that there are no material uncertainties (and this includes the global pandemic) that may cast doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern. Therefore, we continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the annual financial statements.

Risk management

The trustees have identified and reviewed the major risks to which the organisation is exposed and have established systems and procedures to manage those risks. This involved identifying more than 50 potential risks and then assessing the likelihood of their occurrence and their impact. Where systems are already in place to mitigate these risks, schedules for regular monitoring and reviews have been adopted. Where systems are not already in place, deadlines have been set for their development by staff and approval by trustees.

In managing risk, trustees have taken into account the following principle areas of risk.

Diversity of income streams and the significance of membership income. We have increased the staff and cost budgets to support members in order to provide improved services and have continued to strengthen other income such as Mockingbird.

Ensuring child safety. We ensure staff are trained and supported in their work with Children and that appropriate policies, risk assessments and statutory checks are carried out.

Clarity of long term strategic plans. The trustees meet each year to review and assess long term strategic plans.

Global Pandemic. The trustees have reviewed and evaluated the potential impact of the global pandemic on our short term and long term income and expenditure. We have provided for the evaluated impact in the total unrestricted reserves required of £1,330K.

Maintaining adequate reserve levels. We set a reserves level that reflect a financial evaluation of the specific risks that we face together with our fixed asset and working capital plans. We then set annual operating plans in order to ensure that we maintain enough reserves or so that we build towards the agreed level of reserves if there is a shortfall.

Financial management and financial control. We use professionally qualified staff in our accounts department and have detailed budgets and operating plans that are reported against each month.

The physical condition of the principal property asset at 87 Blackfriars road. We recognise that this property represents the majority of our financial reserves and have an annual maintenance plan to keep it in good condition. In 2018 the building was completely refurbished.

The trustees continue to develop plans to grow unrestricted income, to invest in new income streams, to improve our services to our members and to maintain reserves at our agreed level.

Disclosure of information to the auditor

The trustees who were in office on the date of approval of these financial statements have confirmed, as far as they are aware, that there is no relevant audit information of which the auditor is unaware. Each of the trustees has confirmed that they have taken all the steps that they ought to have taken as directors in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that it has been communicated to the auditor.

The Fostering Network Annual Review 2019-20

The trustees' annual report, including the strategic report, is approved by order of the board of trustees in their capacity as the directors at a meeting on 30 September 2020 and signed on its behalf by:

Nigel McCartney
30 September 2020

The Fostering Network Annual Review 2019-20 Independent auditor's report

Independent auditor's report to the members of The Fostering Network

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of The Fostering Network (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 March 2020 which comprise the statement of financial activities, balance sheet, statement of cash flows and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- Give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2020 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended
- Have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice
- Have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006, the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and regulation 8 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended)

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the ISAs (UK) require us to report to you where:

- The trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is not appropriate; or
- The trustees have not disclosed in the financial statements any identified material uncertainties that may cast significant doubt about the charitable company's ability to continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting for a period of at least twelve months from the date when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

The Fostering Network Annual Review 2019-20 Independent auditor's report

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the trustees' annual report, including the strategic report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- The information given in the trustees' annual report, including the strategic report, for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements
- The trustees' annual report, including the strategic report, has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the trustees' annual report, including the strategic report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended) require us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- Adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- The financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- Certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- We have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the statement of trustees' responsibilities set out in the trustees' annual report, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine

The Fostering Network Annual Review 2019-20 Independent auditor's report

is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

We have been appointed as auditor under section 44(1)(c) of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and under the Companies Act 2006 and report in accordance with regulations made under those Acts.

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with ISAs (UK), we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the trustees
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the entity's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the entity to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation

The Fostering Network Annual Review 2019-20
Independent auditor's report

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006 and section 44(1)(c) of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Joanna Pittman (Senior statutory auditor)

10 December 2020

for and on behalf of Sayer Vincent LLP, Statutory Auditor

Invicta House, 108-114 Golden Lane, LONDON, EC1Y 0TL

Sayer Vincent LLP is eligible to act as auditor in terms of section 1212 of the Companies Act 2006

The Fostering Network

Statement of financial activities (incorporating an income and expenditure account)

For the year ended 31 March 2020

	Note	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2020 Total £	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2019 Total £
Income from:							
Donations and legacies	2	255,229	-	255,229	330,131	-	330,131
Charitable activities							
Membership subscriptions		2,412,898	-	2,412,898	2,423,068	-	2,423,068
Specific projects		1,394,446	1,700,142	3,094,588	1,331,942	2,020,087	3,352,029
Publishing		132,727	-	132,727	158,892	-	158,892
Training and events		231,213	-	231,213	272,190	-	272,190
Advice services		244,544	-	244,544	243,732	-	243,732
Consultancy		472,512	-	472,512	266,437	-	266,437
Other trading activities		54,484	-	54,484	-	-	-
Investments		3,427	-	3,427	6,836	-	6,836
Compensation for property rights		-	-	-	145,000	-	145,000
Total income		5,201,480	1,700,142	6,901,622	5,178,228	2,020,087	7,198,315
Expenditure on:							
Raising funds	5	(126,308)	-	(126,308)	(142,610)	-	(142,610)
Charitable activities							
Membership services		(2,647,424)	-	(2,647,424)	(2,621,011)	-	(2,621,011)
Project costs		(1,396,428)	(1,606,278)	(3,002,706)	(1,386,353)	(1,669,837)	(3,056,190)
Publishing		(86,980)	-	(86,980)	(76,131)	-	(76,131)
Training and events		(285,517)	-	(285,517)	(266,823)	-	(266,823)
Advice services		(285,292)	-	(285,292)	(288,412)	-	(288,412)
Consultancy		(268,001)	-	(268,001)	(199,725)	-	(199,725)
Total expenditure		(5,095,950)	(1,606,278)	(6,702,228)	(4,981,065)	(1,669,837)	(6,650,902)
Net income before net gains / (losses) on investments		105,530	93,864	199,394	197,163	350,250	547,413
Transfers between funds		(2,580)	2,580	-	(1,132)	1,132	-
Net income before other recognised gains and losses		102,950	96,444	199,394	196,031	351,382	547,413
(Losses) on revaluation of fixed assets		(443,750)	-	(443,750)	(326,491)	-	(326,491)
Net movement in funds		(340,800)	96,444	(244,356)	(130,460)	351,382	220,922
Reconciliation of funds:							
Total funds brought forward		3,410,562	745,324	4,155,886	3,541,022	393,942	3,934,964
Total funds carried forward		3,069,762	841,768	3,911,530	3,410,562	745,324	4,155,886

All of the above results are derived from continuing activities. There were no other recognised gains or losses other than those stated above. Movements in funds are disclosed in Notes 3 and 20 to the financial statements.

The Fostering Network

Balance sheet

Company no. 01507277

As at 31 March 2020

	Note	£	2020 £	£	2019 £
Fixed assets:					
Tangible assets	12		3,280,807		3,679,127
Investments	13		2		2
			3,280,809		3,679,129
Current assets:					
Stock	14	36,385		46,219	
Debtors	15	1,251,854		1,547,991	
Cash at bank and in hand		1,037,190		512,452	
		2,325,429		2,106,662	
Liabilities:					
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	16	(1,443,708)		(1,283,333)	
Net current assets			881,721		823,329
Creditors: amounts falling after one year	16		(251,000)		(346,572)
Total net assets			3,911,530		4,155,886
The funds of the charity:					
Restricted income funds	20		841,768		745,324
Unrestricted income funds:					
Designated funds		261,000		100,000	
Revaluation reserve		1,603,759		2,047,509	
General funds		1,205,003		1,263,053	
Total unrestricted funds			3,069,762		3,410,562
Total charity funds			3,911,530		4,155,886

Approved by the trustees on 30th September 2020 and signed on their behalf by

Nigel McCartney
Chair of the board of trustees

Mervyn Erskine
Honorary treasurer

The Fostering Network

Statement of cash flows

For the year ended 31 March 2020

	2020		2019
	£	£	£
Cash flows from operating activities			
Net income for the reporting period (as per the statement of financial activities)	199,394		547,413
Depreciation charges	48,403		61,382
Investment income	(3,427)		(6,836)
(Increase)/decrease in stocks	9,834		(23,627)
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	296,137		(847,438)
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	159,504		(127,259)
	<hr/>		<hr/>
Net cash provided by / (used in) operating activities		709,845	(396,365)
Cash flows from investing activities:			
Dividends, interest and rents from investments	3,427		6,836
Purchase of property, plant and equipment	(93,833)		(1,158,224)
	<hr/>		<hr/>
Net cash provided by / (used in) investing activities		(90,406)	(1,151,388)
Cash flows from financing activities:			
Repayments of borrowing	(94,701)		(44,953)
Cash inflows from new borrowing	-		500,000
	<hr/>		<hr/>
Net cash provided by / (used in) financing activities		(94,701)	455,047
		<hr/>	<hr/>
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year		524,738	(1,092,706)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		512,452	1,605,158
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year		1,037,190	512,452
		<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>
Analysis of cash and cash equivalents			
	At 1 April		At 31 March
	2019	Cash flows	2020
	£	£	£
Cash at bank and in hand	512,452	524,738	1,037,190
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total cash and cash equivalents	512,452	524,738	1,037,190
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

The Fostering Network

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2020

1 Accounting policies

a) Statutory information

The Fostering Network is a charitable company limited by guarantee and is incorporated in England and Wales. The registered office address is 87 Blackfriars Road, London, SE1 8HA

b) Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) - (Charities SORP FRS 102), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005.

Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy or note.

The subsidiary company did not trade in the year. Therefore the results of the charity and the group are the same.

c) Public benefit entity

The charitable company meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

d) Going concern

The trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern; the charitable company has sufficient reserves and adequate controls to mitigate the risks posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The trustees do not consider that there are any sources of estimation uncertainty at the reporting date that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next reporting period.

e) Income

Income is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the income have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and that the amount can be measured reliably. The following specific policies apply to categorise of income:

- ~ Membership subscriptions are recognised over the period of membership (equally over 12 months).
- ~ Publications income is recognised at point of sale.
- ~ Advice, training and consultancy income is recognised on the date the service was provided.

Income from government and other grants, whether 'capital' grants or 'revenue' grants, is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the grants have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred.

Income received in advance of the provision of a specified service is deferred until the criteria for income recognition are met.

f) Donations of gifts, services and facilities

Donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised as income when the charity has control over the item or received the service, any conditions associated with the donation have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use by the charity of the item is probable and that economic benefit can be measured reliably. In accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102), volunteer time is not recognised so refer to the trustees' annual report for more information about their contribution.

On receipt, donated gifts, professional services and donated facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the charity which is the amount the charity would have been willing to pay to obtain services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market; a corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

g) Interest receivable

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the bank.

1 Accounting policies (continued)

h) Fund accounting

Restricted funds are to be used for specific purposes as laid down by the donor. Expenditure which meets these criteria is charged to the fund.

Unrestricted funds are donations and other incoming resources received or generated for the charitable purposes.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds earmarked by the trustees for particular purposes.

i) Expenditure and irrecoverable VAT

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is classified under the following activity headings:

- ~ Costs of raising funds relate to the costs incurred by the charitable company in inducing third parties to make voluntary contributions to it, as well as the cost of any activities with a fundraising purpose.
- ~ Expenditure on charitable activities includes the costs of delivering member services undertaken to further the purposes of the charity and their associated support costs.
- ~ Other expenditure represents those items not falling into any other heading.

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

j) Allocation of support costs

Support and governance costs are re-allocated to each of the activities on the following basis which is an estimate, based on staff time, of the amount attributable to each activity

- Membership	58%
- Specific projects	29%
- Training and events	3%
- Advice services	3%
- Consultancy	3%
- Raising funds	2%
- Publishing	1%

Governance costs are the costs associated with the governance arrangements of the charity. These costs are associated with constitutional and statutory requirements and include any costs associated with the strategic management of the charity's activities.

k) Operating leases

Rental charges are charged on a straight line basis over the term of the lease.

l) Tangible fixed assets

Items of equipment are capitalised where the purchase price exceeds £1,000. Depreciation costs are allocated to activities on the basis of the use of the related assets in those activities. Assets are reviewed for impairment if circumstances indicate their carrying value may exceed their net realisable value and value in use.

Freehold land and buildings are recognised under the revaluation model under FRS102, and any excess between the revalued amount and the historic cost of the asset will be shown as a revaluation reserve in the balance sheet.

Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write down the cost of each asset to its estimated residual value over its expected useful life. The depreciation rates in use are as follows:

~ Furniture and equipment	Over four years
~ Computers and software	Over two to six years
~ Freehold improvements	Over three to seven years
~ Freehold premises	Not depreciated
~ Freehold land	Not depreciated

1 Accounting policies (continued)

m) Investments in subsidiaries

Investments in subsidiaries are at cost.

n) Stocks

Stocks consist of publications for resale and materials for use in training courses. They are stated at the lower of cost and net realisable value. In general, cost is determined on a first in first out basis and includes transport and handling costs. Net realisable value is the price at which stocks can be sold in the normal course of business after allowing for the costs of realisation. Provision is made where necessary for obsolete, slow moving and defective stocks.

o) Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

p) Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and cash in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

q) Creditors and provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

r) Financial instruments

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

s) Pensions

The Fostering Network operates a defined contribution pension scheme and the amount charged to the SOFA in respect of pension costs and other post-retirement benefits is the contributions payable in the year. Differences between contributions payable in the year and contributions actually paid are shown in either accruals or prepayments in the balance sheet.

t) Management estimates and judgements

In the process of applying its accounting policies the charity is required to make certain estimates, judgements and assumptions. Examples of these are: valuation of freehold property in light of the COVID-19 pandemic (see note 12); where goods and services have been provided but not invoiced to us, we estimate the value of the services; where stock is slow moving we apply a net realisable value if that is lower than cost. Where debtors are materially overdue we reduce their value to zero.

The Fostering Network

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2020

2 Income from donations and legacies

	2020 £	2019 £
Donations	130,610	201,800
Gifts in kind	-	3,720
Core grants		
Northern Ireland Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety	35,851	35,843
Scottish Government	88,768	88,768
	255,229	330,131

3 Projects income (current year)

Restricted Projects

	Balance at 1 April 2019 £	Income 2020 £	Expenditure 2020 £	Transfers £	Balance at 31 March 2020 £
England / Headquarters					
Foster Carer Retention	8,722	-	(3,511)	-	5,211
Mockingbird	-	503,893	(503,317)	-	576
Fostering Potential	20,383	26,577	(42,607)	-	4,353
Quilts for Children in Care	8,009	-	(522)	-	7,487
Jon and Kathy Broad Award	1,850	-	-	-	1,850
	38,964	530,470	(549,957)	-	19,477
Northern Ireland					
Kinship Care Support	16,330	41,566	(51,410)	-	6,486
Building Better Futures	9,683	-	(9,683)	-	-
Step Up Step Down	19,889	160,395	(163,752)	-	16,532
	45,902	201,961	(224,845)	-	23,018
Scotland					
Fosterline Scotland	-	56,232	(56,172)	-	60
Scottish Newsletter	13,304	-	(5,271)	-	8,033
Walking Tall	30,499	-	(30,499)	-	-
Young Advocates	-	87,978	(56,946)	-	31,032
Capturing the Voice	-	21,983	(9,830)	-	12,153
Foster Care Transforming Lives	-	7,836	(10,416)	2,580	-
	43,803	174,029	(169,134)	2,580	51,278
Wales					
Confidence in Care	608,394	355,117	(247,774)	-	715,737
Fostering Excellence	8,261	240,637	(235,951)	-	12,947
Other Welsh Government projects	-	59,241	(39,930)	-	19,311
Fostering Welbeing	-	119,059	(119,059)	-	-
Fosterline Wales	-	19,628	(19,628)	-	-
	616,655	793,682	(662,342)	-	747,995
Total projects	745,324	1,700,142	(1,606,278)	2,580	841,768

The Fostering Network

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2020

3 Projects income (prior year)
Restricted Projects

	Balance at 1 April 2018 £	Income 2019 £	Expenditure 2019 £	Transfers £	Balance at 31 March 2019 £
England / Headquarters					
London Fostering Achievement	-	41,000	(32,278)	-	8,722
Mockingbird	9,330	354,624	(363,954)	-	-
Fostering Potential	47,914	18,066	(45,598)	-	20,382
Quilts for Children in Care	8,165	-	(156)	-	8,009
Jon and Kathy Broad Award	2,100	-	(250)	-	1,850
Big Potential	9,681	1,478	(11,159)	-	-
Muslim Fostering Project	28,930	-	(28,930)	-	-
England / Headquarters	106,120	415,168	(482,324)	-	38,964
Northern Ireland					
Fostering the Future	5,342	-	(6,474)	1,132	-
Kinship Care Support	2,940	42,115	(28,725)	-	16,330
Building Better Futures	(2,942)	35,123	(22,499)	-	9,683
Step Up Step Down	51,514	111,870	(143,495)	-	19,889
Northern Ireland	56,854	189,108	(201,193)	1,132	45,902
Scotland					
Fosterline Scotland	697	56,232	(56,929)	-	-
Fostering Community Champions	67,199	33,761	(100,960)	-	-
Scottish Newsletter	5,450	7,275	580	-	13,304
Walking Tall	32,257	72,606	(74,364)	-	30,499
Scotland	105,603	169,874	(231,674)	-	43,803
Wales					
Confidence in Care	75,217	808,894	(275,717)	-	608,394
Fostering Excellence	25,572	252,433	(269,744)	-	8,261
WG Education Phase 2	-	4,674	(4,674)	-	-
Fostering Welbeing	24,576	160,714	(185,290)	-	-
Fosterline Wales	-	19,221	(19,221)	-	-
Wales	125,365	1,245,936	(754,645)	-	616,655
Total projects	393,942	2,020,087	(1,669,837)	1,132	745,324

4 Unrestricted Projects (current year)

	Income 2020 £	Expenditure 2020 £
Fostering Achievement	1,394,446	(1,396,428)
Total projects	1,394,446	(1,396,428)

The Fostering Network

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2020

4 Unrestricted Projects (prior year)

	Income 2019	Expenditure 2019
	£	£
Fostering Achievement	1,331,942	(1,386,353)
Total projects	1,331,942	(1,386,353)

Purposes of restricted funds

The restricted funds relate to the following projects:

England

Mockingbird - An innovative programme, delivered in fostering services which looks at adapting and establishing the US Mockingbird Family Model. The model provides respite care, peer support and community, with the creation of a 'constellation' of six to 10 families supported by a central 'hub home'. The overall aim of the model is to facilitate stability and a normalised childhood for the young people within the constellation. The model now operates in 39 fostering services, either funded by the Department of Education or self-funded. The Fostering Network has been the conduit for funding from the Department for Education which has gone directly to our delivery partners.

Fostering Potential - Fostering Potential is funded by the British & Foreign School Society and Sir John Cass's Foundation. It builds on the learning from previous educational programmes across the UK and aims to improve the educational outcomes for looked after children, by focusing on foster carers as 'first educators' for the children and young people in their care. Working in partnership with seven fostering services across England, this project creates an educational peer support network in each local area, delivered by experienced foster carers in the role of Education Champions.

Quilts for Children in Foster Care - This is a long-running project that provides fostered children with their own hand-made quilt. A team of volunteers from Helping Hands Quilters create these bespoke quilts throughout the year and we then distribute these to children and young people across the UK. The quilts, matched carefully to each child, become treasured possessions and part of their life story. This has been supported by a grant from the Cotton Industry War Memorial Trust and The Harrison-Frank Family Foundation.

The Jon and Kathy Broad Award - In memory of Kathy Broad, this is an annual award for foster carers caring for children with special needs and presented as part of the charity's Fostering Excellence Awards.

Foster Carer Retention – We received funding from The Exilarch's Foundation to explore the development of an exit interview toolkit for fostering services to capture all the reasons why foster carers leave their services. This information can then be used by the service to improve practice and inform foster carer retention and recruitment strategies. The toolkit was launched in Spring 2019. The Exilarch's Foundation have generously agreed for the balance of these funds to be used to sponsor the 2020 Fostering Excellence Awards.

Northern Ireland

Kinship Care Support - funded by Children in Need and Ulster Garden Villages, this programme supports young people in kinship foster care and their carers to access support to help improve their well-being, build their skills and enable their engagement with the programme.

Step Up Step Down - this is a five year project, funded by The National Lottery Community Fund for Northern Ireland operating in partnership with the South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust works with families on the periphery of the care system from being taken into care and instead support them to stay within their own homes.

Building Better Futures – A HSCB initiative to develop a model of assessment for parenting and associated manual across all five Health and Social care trusts with Professor Stan Houston of Trinity College, Dublin and Drs Lorna Montgomery and Mandi MacDonald of Queen's University Belfast.

Scotland

Fosterline Scotland - An independent and confidential service providing advice, information, mediation and support to foster carers across Scotland on all aspects of fostering, funded by the Scottish Government.

Scottish Newsletter - This is distributed to all our members in Scotland, including 97% of fostering households across Scotland. This is funded by a variety of grants and donations.

Walking Tall - A two-year lottery funded project working with primary school aged children living in fostering households (both sons and daughters of foster carers and children in foster care). It aims to enhance their self-esteem and resilience, while exploring their views and experiences of fostering using drama, play, movement and arts.

Young Advocates - This project, funded by Life Changes Trust and Young Start Fund (delivered by the National Lottery Community Fund), will see young people with care experience create learning opportunities for teachers and trainee teachers around what the day-to-day reality of school or college can be like for them. The young advocates will also train foster carers to help build their awareness of how they can best support the children and young people in their care.

Capturing the Voice - This project, funded by The Robertson Trust, Awards for All and Hugh Fraser Foundation, aims to ensure the views of disabled children and young people are heard at decision making meetings and panels and is an extension of the work we carried out as part of our previous Walking Tall project.

Foster Care Transforming Lives - This was a conference hosted by The Fostering Network and APFEL. Acting for the Promotion of Fostering at European Level (APFEL) is a network association working together and exchanging information relating to foster care between countries in Europe. The network utilises the diversity of approaches to foster care through international exchanges and collaboration, through experience, expertise, research and best practice to improve the lives of children in foster care. APFEL hold annual conferences across Europe and the eighth conference took place in Edinburgh, Scotland hosted in partnership with The Fostering Network on 20 November 2019.

Wales

Confidence in Care - The aim of the project is to improve the life chances of looked after children and young people in Wales by improving placement stability through better interaction and attachment levels, developing a more positive outlook towards education and future career goals, increasing resilience and life skills, and using robust learning and evaluation evidence to influence future policy development in Wales. The Fostering Network is working with Action for Children, Barnardo's, Cardiff University and TACT to deliver this programme. The charity has acted as an agency for our partners, receiving £533k conduit funding from the Big Lottery Fund. £416k was paid in the year to our partners.

Fostering Excellence (including Fosterline Wales) 2016-2019 - This three-year programme of interventions that will improve the experience of looked after children in Wales, support foster carers to provide permanent, stable and aspiring homes, and ensure that looked after children in Wales are able to make a positive and valued contributions to future generations. Funded by the Welsh Government.

Fostering Wellbeing - This pilot programme is funded by the Welsh Government and delivered by The Fostering Network in Wales. The programme aims to test and evaluate social pedagogy principles (focused on education and the upbringing of children) in a foster care environment. This project operates at regional level across Wales, delivering learning, bringing people together and sharing best practice across service boundaries with an aim to embed a shared approach that will support improved outcomes for children and young people.

Other Welsh Government projects - A number of Welsh Government funded projects including work to: develop the recruitment of new local authority foster carers and provide training to existing foster carers in respect of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children; develop a resource for foster carers around the five basic needs (social, physical, emotional, cultural and learning) of children who are looked after in foster care; revise and refresh *Aimee's Diary - a fostered child's journey through secondary school*, where Aimee, the fictional character of a young person in foster care, records her account of events as she journeys through secondary school.

The Fostering Network

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2020

5 Analysis of expenditure

	Raising funds £	Membership services £	Project costs £	Publishing £	Training and events £	Advice services £	Consultancy £	2020 Total £
Staff costs (Note 8)	88,603	1,978,455	859,701	-	112,820	238,992	70,231	3,348,802
Support costs	20,199	561,939	276,382	11,183	33,342	25,936	33,450	962,431
Other costs	17,506	107,030	1,866,623	75,797	139,355	20,364	164,320	2,390,995
Total expenditure 2020	126,308	2,647,424	3,002,706	86,980	285,517	285,292	268,001	6,702,228

5 Analysis of expenditure (prior year)

	Raising funds £	Membership services £	Project costs £	Publishing £	Training and events £	Advice services £	Consultancy £	2019 Total £
Staff costs (Note 8)	86,607	1,882,188	934,681	-	127,226	241,634	95,177	3,367,513
Support costs	24,411	679,626	280,125	19,555	32,842	33,911	12,803	1,083,272
Other costs	31,592	59,197	1,841,384	56,576	106,755	12,867	91,745	2,200,117
Total expenditure 2019	142,610	2,621,011	3,056,190	76,131	266,823	288,412	199,725	6,650,902

The Fostering Network

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2020

6 Support costs

	Raising funds £	Membership services £	Project costs £	Publishing £	Training and events £	Advice services £	Consultancy £	2020 Total £
Facilities	10,140	107,489	24,843	3,996	9,434	1,348	11,213	168,463
Finance	3,264	147,463	81,621	2,332	7,758	7,978	7,215	257,631
HR	1,691	76,388	42,281	1,208	4,019	4,133	3,738	133,458
IT	2,950	133,284	73,773	2,108	7,012	7,211	6,522	232,860
Management	1,736	78,413	43,402	1,240	4,125	4,243	3,837	136,996
Governance	418	18,902	10,462	299	994	1,023	925	33,023
Total expenditure 2020	20,199	561,939	276,382	11,183	33,342	25,936	33,450	962,431

6 Support costs (prior year)

	Raising funds £	Membership services £	Project costs £	Publishing £	Training and events £	Advice services £	Consultancy £	2019 Total £
Facilities	14,731	201,050	33,888	14,346	9,003	2,690	1,015	276,723
Finance	3,075	152,028	78,221	1,655	7,573	9,918	3,744	256,214
HR	1,920	94,953	48,855	1,033	4,730	6,194	2,339	160,026
IT	2,424	119,862	61,672	1,305	5,971	7,820	2,952	202,005
Management	1,797	88,835	45,707	967	4,425	5,795	2,188	149,715
Governance	463	22,898	11,781	249	1,141	1,494	564	38,589
Total expenditure 2019	24,411	679,626	280,125	19,555	32,842	33,911	12,803	1,083,272

The Fostering Network

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2020

7 Net income / (expenditure) for the year

This is stated after charging / (crediting):

	2020	2019
	£	£
Depreciation	48,403	61,382
Operating lease rentals:		
Property	50,701	49,403
Other	406	1,218
Rent receivable as lessor		
Property	53,235	-
Auditor's remuneration (excluding VAT):		
Audit	13,000	12,800
Other services	650	350
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

8 Analysis of staff costs, trustee remuneration and expenses, and the cost of key management personnel

Staff costs were as follows:

	2020	2019
	£	£
Salaries and wages	2,932,651	2,913,541
Redundancy and termination costs	-	37,057
Social security costs	279,277	278,553
Employer's contribution to defined contribution pension schemes	136,874	138,386
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	<u>3,348,802</u>	<u>3,367,537</u>

The following number of employees received employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs and employer's national insurance) during the year between:

	2020	2019
	No.	No.
£60,000 - £69,999	2	2
£90,000 - £99,999	1	1
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

The total employee benefits (including pension contributions and employer's national insurance) of the key management personnel were £526,323 (2019: £565,788).

The charity trustees were neither paid nor received any other benefits from employment with the charity in the year (2019: £nil). No charity trustee received payment for professional or other services supplied to the charity (2019: £nil).

Indemnity insurance is provided for trustees at a premium of £1,355 (2019: £1,355).

Trustees' expenses represents the payment or reimbursement of travel costs totalling £4,355 (2019: £6,387) incurred by 7 (2019: 9) members relating to attendance at meetings of the trustees.

The Fostering Network

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2020

9 Staff numbers

The average number of employees (head count based on number of staff employed) during the year was 95, 80 FTE (2019: 98, 78 FTE).

Staff are split across the activities of the charitable company as follows (full time equivalent basis):

	2020	2019
	No.	No.
Cost of raising funds	2	2
Membership services	41	38
Project costs	27	28
Training & events	3	2
Advice services	6	6
Consultancy	1	1
	<hr/> 80 <hr/>	<hr/> 78 <hr/>

10 Related party transactions

There are no donations from related parties which are outside the normal course of business and no restricted donations from related parties.

The Fostering Network received donations totalling £300 (2019: £nil) from 1 trustee (2019: nil trustees). The trustees receive no benefit from the donations made to the charity.

During the year, the Charity received Consultancy services from GGT Associates in the amount of £25,671 (2019: £111,697). Colin Turner, the Director of the Wales Office of the charity is also a director of the company. £16,035 (2019:£66,455) of this amount has been paid during the year.

11 Taxation

The charitable company is exempt from corporation tax as all its income is charitable and is applied for charitable purposes.

The Fostering Network

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2020

12 Tangible fixed assets

	Freehold property £	Furniture £	Computer equipment £	Total £
Cost or valuation				
At the start of the year	3,550,000	59,715	229,483	3,839,198
Additions in year	-	2,950	90,883	93,833
Disposals in year	-	-	(58,782)	(58,782)
Revaluation	(443,750)	-	-	(443,750)
At the end of the year	<u>3,106,250</u>	<u>62,665</u>	<u>261,584</u>	<u>3,430,499</u>
Depreciation				
At the start of the year	-	-	160,071	160,071
Charge for the year	-	15,042	33,361	48,403
Eliminated on disposal	-	-	(58,782)	(58,782)
Revaluation	-	-	-	-
At the end of the year	<u>-</u>	<u>15,042</u>	<u>134,650</u>	<u>149,692</u>
Net book value				
At the end of the year	<u>3,106,250</u>	<u>47,623</u>	<u>126,934</u>	<u>3,280,807</u>
At the start of the year	<u>3,550,000</u>	<u>59,715</u>	<u>69,412</u>	<u>3,679,127</u>

Land with a value of £896,875 (2019: £1,025,000) is included within freehold property and not depreciated. The carrying amount on the cost model would be £1,322,221, (2019: £1,322,221).

In order to reduce the long term cost to the company of the London office, 23% of the total space is leased to tenants. The property is shown in the accounts at Market Valuation.

The Charity follows the revaluation model for freehold premises. Land and Buildings were revalued at 18th December 2018 by Lamberts, Chartered Surveyors, on an existing use open market basis in accordance with Guidance Notes of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors. Lamberts are not connected with the charity. The trustees have reviewed this valuation in light of the COVID-19 pandemic and sought professional advice from Lamerts Chartered Surveyors about the pandemic's effect on commercial property values. Accordingly, the trustees consider it prudent to reduce the 2018 valuation by 12.5% or £443,750 to take into account material uncertainty about the central London office market and this is reflected in these accounts.

13 Investments

The Fostering Network owns the whole of the issued ordinary share capital of National Foster Care Association Services Ltd, a company registered in England. The subsidiary was dormant in the year.

	2020 £	2019 £
Trading subsidiary (cost)	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>

14 Stock

	2020 £	2019 £
Work in progress	-	25,250
Finished goods	36,385	20,969
	<u>36,385</u>	<u>46,219</u>

The Fostering Network

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2020

15 Debtors

	2020 £	2019 £
Trade debtors	947,947	1,243,912
Other debtors	147,859	236,506
Prepayments	156,048	67,573
	<u>1,251,854</u>	<u>1,547,991</u>

All of the charity's financial instruments, both assets and liabilities, are measured at amortised cost. The carrying values of these are shown above and in note 16.

16 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2020 £	2019 £
Trade creditors	500,699	406,812
Taxation and social security	248,262	141,450
Other creditors and accruals	154,590	204,569
Deferred income	430,809	422,025
Bank loan	109,348	108,477
	<u>1,443,708</u>	<u>1,283,333</u>

17 Creditors: amounts falling after one year

	2020 £	2019 £
Repayable in 1-5 years	<u>251,000</u>	<u>346,572</u>

The loan is secured over the freehold property and interest is charged on floating rate basis.

18 Deferred income

Deferred income comprises of income relating to services to be provided in 2020/21, but have been invoiced prior to 31 March 2020

	2020 £	2019 £
Training and events	3,283	1,050
Advice services	76,489	36,668
Membership services	273,684	275,328
Consultancy	77,353	108,979
Balance at the end of the year	<u>430,809</u>	<u>422,025</u>

The Fostering Network

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2020

19 Analysis of net assets between funds (current year)

	General unrestricted £	Designated £	Restricted £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets	3,280,807	-	-	3,280,807
Investments	2	-	-	2
Net current (liabilities)/ assets	(221,047)	261,000	841,768	881,721
Long term liabilities	(251,000)	-	-	(251,000)
Net assets at 31 March 2020	2,808,762	261,000	841,768	3,911,530

19 Analysis of net assets between funds (prior year)

	General unrestricted £	Designated £	Restricted £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets	3,679,127	-	-	3,679,127
Investments	2	-	-	2
Net current (liabilities)/ assets	(21,995)	100,000	745,324	823,329
Long term liabilities	(346,572)	-	-	(346,572)
Net assets at 1 April 2019	3,310,562	100,000	745,324	4,155,886

20 Movements in funds (current year)

	At 1 April 2019 £	Income & gains £	Expenditure & losses £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2020 £
General reserve	1,263,053	5,201,480	(5,095,950)	(163,580)	1,205,003
Revaluation reserve	2,047,509	-	(443,750)	-	1,603,759
Designated reserve	100,000	-	-	161,000	261,000
Total unrestricted funds	3,410,562	5,201,480	(5,539,700)	(2,580)	3,069,762

The narrative to explain the purpose of each fund is given at the foot of the note below.

Movements in funds (prior year)

	At 1 April 2018 £	Income & gains £	Expenditure & losses £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2019 £
General reserve	287,461	5,178,228	(5,307,556)	1,104,920	1,263,053
Revaluation reserve	2,733,561	-	-	(686,052)	2,047,509
Designated reserve	520,000	-	-	(420,000)	100,000
Total unrestricted funds	3,541,022	5,178,228	(5,307,556)	(1,132)	3,410,562

The designated funds are held for the IT development project.

The Fostering Network

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2020

21 Operating lease commitments

The charity's total future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases is as follows for each of the following periods.

	Property		Other	
	2020	2019	2020	2019
	£	£	£	£
Less than one year	33,154	28,039	406	812
One to five years	43,706	-	-	406
	76,860	28,039	406	1,218

22 Operating lease commitments receivable as a lessor

Amounts receivable under non-cancellable operating leases are as follows for each of the following periods

	Property	
	2020	2019
	£	£
Less than one year	53,235	-
One to five years	53,235	-
	106,470	-

23 Legal status of the charity

The charity is a company limited by guarantee and has no share capital. The liability of each member in the event of winding up is limited to £1.

The Fostering Network
Trustees Management and Advisors

**The following served as members of the board of directors and trustees
and as the senior leadership team in 2019-2020.**

Chair

Nigel McCartney

Treasurer

Mervyn Erskine

Trustees

Greg De Smidt

Mervyn Erskine

Daisy James (until July 2020)

Stuart Lewis

Martin Leworthy

Sophie Masey

Nigel McCartney

Gary Pickles

Christopher Pope

Janet Smith

Jonathan Walsh

Ishara Tewary (from December 2019)

Jeanette Towning (from December 2019)

Susanna Daus (until December 2019)

Senior Leadership Team

Kevin Williams

(Chief Executive)

Sara Lurie

(Director, Scotland)

Kathleen Toner

(Director, Northern Ireland)

Colin Turner

(Director, Wales)

Floretta West

(Director of Human Resources)

Geoff Wilson

Jackie Sanders (until February 2020)

(Director of External Relations)

Company Secretary

Erica Wilkinson (until January 2020)

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