Adoption Agency Annual Report
2015/16

ADOPT BERKSHIRE

Working Together...
...Creating Families
Adopt Berkshire

Annual Repo

t 2015/16

This document should be read in conjunction with the Adopt Berkshire Statement of Purpose 2015/16 and the Adopt Berkshire Half Year Report – April / September 2015, which included Quality Assurance Information to enable the contributing local authorities to monitor the quality of their adoption agency services under NMS 25.

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1) Introduction

The Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead, Wokingham Borough Council, Bracknell Forest Council and West Berkshire Borough Council joined their Adoption services on 1st December 2014 to provide a dedicated service for adoption across the four local authorities. The shared adoption service is Adopt Berkshire. A service agreement, service specification and three year budget agreement are in place for the service.

The main priorities of Adopt Berkshire are:

- To achieve the placement of children in care for whom adoption is the Care Plan, with appropriate approved adopters, matched according to the children’s specific needs and circumstances and within appropriate timescales.
- To recruit, prepare and assess adoptive applicants who are likely to be able to meet the placement needs of the children waiting for families both locally and nationally.
- To manage a Notified Adoption Service on behalf of the four contributing authorities.

The needs of the children requiring placement are the agency’s paramount consideration.

2) Legislation, Regulations and Guidance

There is a range of Legislation, Regulations and Guidance, which influence the working of Adoption Agencies. These include:

- The Children Acts of 1989 and 2004 and supporting statutory guidance and regulations;
- The Care Standards Act 2000;
- The Adoption Act 2002;
- The Adoption Agency Regulations 2005 (amended 2011);
- The Children and Adoption Act 2006;
- The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review Regulations 2010 and accompanying statutory guidance;
- The National Minimum Standards for Adoption (2011);
- Adoption Statutory Guidance 2011;
3) **Key Requirements of Local Authority Adoption Services**

The key requirements of all Local Authority Adoption Services are that:

- The focus is firmly on the needs of the child, whose needs will be paramount in all decisions relating to adoption;
- Highly skilled professionals lead a quality service delivered to National Minimum Standards (revised in February 2011);
- A permanency plan is identified for all children in care within 4 months of them coming into Local Authority care. (This may be a return home, or any of a range of different placement options, one of which is adoption);
- Focused effort goes into finding permanent families for all children in care waiting to be adopted;
- A range of potential adopters are welcomed and assessed efficiently in an open and fair way;
- Children and their adoptive families have easy access to adoption support services.

4) **Adoption Support Services**

- At the current time support to the prospective adopters recruited by Adopt Berkshire is provided by social workers within the service up until the granting of the legal Adoption Order.
- The Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead, Wokingham Borough Council, Bracknell Forest Council and West Berkshire Borough Council all continue to provide post adoption services ‘in-house’; this includes provision of birth records counselling for adopted adults and support, where appropriate, to adopted children, adoptive parents, birth parents and others affected by adoption (Adoption and Children Act 2002). The provision of post adoption support services is not within the remit of Adopt Berkshire at the current time, however this will be addressed as part of the new Regional Adoption Agency (see section 9 below).

5) **The National Minimum Standards – Adoption**

- The Adoption National Minimum Standards came into force in April 2003 and were updated in April 2011. Local authority adoption agencies are expected to fully comply with the Minimum Standards which cover all areas of an agency’s responsibilities and function. (The Standards can be viewed on www.dh.gov.uk).
- **Adopt Berkshire**’s Statement of Purpose and procedures are fully compliant with both the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (revised February 2011) and the revised Adoption National Minimum Standards.
6) **Organisation**

- The ongoing work of the Service is monitored by a Management Board which includes:
  - The Head of Service from each of the four contributing local authorities;
  - The Service Leader;
  - An experienced Adoptive Parent (who was previously approved through one of the contributing local authorities and is independent of the Cornerstone Partnership).

- The Management Board meets quarterly, has agreed Terms of Reference and makes decisions about service direction.

- A Service Agreement, Service Specification and Three Year Budget Agreement are in place for the service.

- The Service has all the necessary key document in place including:
  - Statement of Purpose (2015/16),
  - Policy and Plan on the Recruitment of Prospective Adopters (currently being reviewed for 2016/17),
  - Customer Care Standards and Working Together Agreement,

- The Service has comprehensive written procedures.

7) **Staffing**

**Current staffing levels**

![Staffing Diagram]
Following the formation of Adopt Berkshire the level of adoption work being undertaken within all four of the contributing authorities reduced (in line with the national picture). This has meant that it has not to date been necessary to appoint to all of the social work posts available to the Service. The current team consists of:

- Service Leader (Shared with the Berkshire Adoption Advisory Service)
- Team Manager – Full time
- Assistant Team Manager (newly appointed) – Full time
- Senior Social Work Practitioners – 3.9 f.t.e. (2 x full time workers and 3 x part time workers)
- Social Workers – 2 (full time)
- Placement Officer – Full time (Unqualified)
- Team Support Officer – 1 (full time)

At the current time the Management Structure within both Adopt Berkshire and the Berkshire Adoption Advisory Service are being reviewed in light of the fact that the current Service Leader has resigned from her post and the ongoing plans for Adopt Berkshire to become part of a larger Regionalised Adoption Agency (anticipated enactment date of 2017) – see section 9 below.

8) Collaboration with the Cornerstone Partnership

Adopt Berkshire is supported by the Cornerstone Partnership, in achieving its service aims in a number of key areas, including; the recruitment of adopters, the provision of mentor support and the provision of post-approval training.

Adopt Berkshire and the Cornerstone Partnership now work to a co-production model in terms of jointly planning and delivering training to potential, prospective and approved adopters at all stages of the adoption recruitment, preparation and approval process; this means that experienced adopters are involved in supporting and advising us on all aspects of the training provided to potential, prospective and approved adopters from the point of them first engaging with the Service. Preparation Training is in the process of being extended to include more information around specific ‘matching’ factors, in particular common health and developmental issues; the new training also includes more use of input by a range of health professionals and therapists.

Through our collaboration with the Cornerstone Partnership all potential adopters are able to access support from a Cornerstone Mentor during both Stage One and Stage Two of the adoption preparation and approval process and through the matching and placement
process, should they wish to do so. This is also now being extended to prospective adopters with children placed on a pre or post-adoption basis.

9) The Current Government Review of Adoption / Regionalisation Agenda

- The Department of Education published a paper in June 2015 titled ‘Regionalising Adoption’. This paper proposed the creation of Regional Adoption Agencies which would involve Voluntary Adoption Agencies. The aim is to:
  - Speed up matching of children with adopters;
  - Improve adopter recruitment to make sure that it is more effective and linked to the needs of children waiting;
  - Ensure that high quality adoption support services are available nationally;
  - Reduce costs;
  - Encourage specialisation;
  - Broaden strategic planning;
  - Encourage innovation and investment.

This paper can be accessed at:

Adopt Berkshire is highlighted in the document as being a model of good practice (see page 9).

- Given the above Adopt Berkshire is moving forward with plans to become part of a Regional Adoption Agency. At the current time it is likely that this will have launch date in mid 2017. It is currently anticipated that the other participating local authorities will include but may not be limited to:
  - Reading Borough Council
  - Slough Borough Council
  - Swindon Borough Council
  - Oxfordshire County Council
  - Milton Keynes Borough Council

- A Project Manager has been appointed to over-see the creation of the new Regional Agency.
• A part-time Project Leader has recently been appointed who is independent of all the contributing authorities and who will take up post in April 2016.

10) Consortium Arrangement

• Separate to the creation of Adopt Berkshire, the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead, Wokingham Borough Council, Bracknell Forest Council and West Berkshire Borough Council all continue to be part of a formal Adoption Consortium arrangement with each other and with Reading Borough Council and Slough Borough Council. This arrangement enables the six local authorities to provide a range of services in line with current requirements on local authorities that it would otherwise be difficult for any of the authorities to provide cost-effectively, due to the low level of demand.

• As part of the Consortium arrangement each of the Berkshire Unitary Authorities contribute to the funding of the Berkshire Adoption Advisory Service, which is hosted by the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead.

• The Service provides a number of joint resources for the six Berkshire Unitary Authorities, including:
  - Managing and servicing the Authorities’ Adoption Panel;
  - Managing the Berkshire Information Exchange and the Post Adoption Direct Contact Service between adoptive families and birth families;
  - Providing specialist advice and assistance to staff in the six Unitary Authorities on complex adoption matters;
  - Assistance with training of staff, adopters and panel members;
  - Administration and servicing for the closed children’s records and adoption records;
  - Hosting the Birth Relative Service (providing independent counselling for birth parents and relatives when children are to be placed for adoption).

• The Service Leader for the Adoption Advisory Service also holds the role of Service Leader for Adopt Berkshire, which ensures a dovetailed service for the local authorities which are part of both services. The role of the Advisory Service and the wider Consortium Arrangement has remained unchanged by the formation of Adopt Berkshire.

11) Statement of Purpose and Recruitment Plan

• Adopt Berkshire has a Statement of Purpose and a written plan relating to the recruitment of adoptive parents which is compliant with all current legislation, regulations, standards and best practice guidance. This is available to all four contributing authorities and their Members and to all Service Users who engage with the Service. The Statement of Purpose
will be reviewed two yearly while the Recruitment Plan will be reviewed annually (currently under review).

12) Adoption Leadership Board (ALB) Headline Measures released in March 2016


- The Adopt Berkshire contributing authorities’ individual Adoption Scorecard information can be accessed at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/adoption-scorecards

- Copies of each Authority’s individual scorecard is also attached as Appendix One. Each individual Authority’s individual Placement Information is attached as Appendix Two. These documents enable easy comparison to the national picture.

Numbers of children awaiting placement: (nationally):

- As of 30th September 2015 there were 2,060 children waiting placement for adoption – this was a 33% decrease from 31 March 2015 when there were 3,060 children waiting with a placement order not yet placed with an adoptive family.

- As of 30th September 38% of the children waiting placement had been waiting 18 months or more – this was a decrease from 53% as at 31 March 2015.

Timeliness of Placements (nationally):

- The time taken between a child entering care and being placed with a family (Adoption Scorecard Indicator A1) has decreased by 4 months since 2012-13, from 22 months to 18 months in 2014-15. The latest quarterly data suggests there has been a further improvement to 17 months during the first half of 2015-16. These improvements have been driven by an increase in the proportion of children placed within a year, from 19% in 2012-13 to 39% in the first half of 2015-16.

- At 8 months, the average number of days between placement order and match (Adoption Scorecard Indicator A2) in 2014-15 has increased from 7 months in 2013-14 but is similar to 2012-13. The latest quarterly data suggests that this has stayed the same at 8 months during the first half of 2015-16.

Timeliness of adopters’ assessments:

- The latest quarterly data suggests that adopter timeliness is beginning to improve following a period of decline. In quarter 2 2015-16, 33% of approvals to become an adoptive family made by local authorities were made within 6 months of registration, an improvement on the low of 25% in quarter 4 2014-15. However this is still below the peak of 50% of registrations in quarter 2 2013-14.
The Adopt Berkshire whole year figure for 2015/16 was 50%

- The timeliness of matches has declined. In quarter 4 2013-14, 80% of matches were made within 6 months of approval, compared to 53% in quarter 2 2015-16.

- New ADM decisions: Quarterly data suggests that the number of new decisions has continued to fall from 1,850 in quarter 2 2013-14 to 1,090 in quarter 2 2015-16, a decrease of 41%.

- Placement Orders: The number of new placement orders granted has continued to fall from 1,630 in quarter 2 2013-14 to 810 in quarter 2 2015-16, a decrease of 50%.

Number of new placement orders granted in each quarter since 2011-12

- Children adopted from care: 2014-15 saw the highest number of adoptions from care since the current data collection began in 1992, with 5,330 children adopted from care. Quarterly data suggests that the number of children adopted has been falling since quarter 2 2014-15 (from 1,370 to 960).

- Adoptive family approvals and registrations: There have been 1,810 registrations to become and adoptive family in the first half of 2015-16. This equates to an annualised figure of 3,620 which if it manifests, would represent a fall of 37% compared to 2014-15.

- There have been 1,960 adoptive families approved for adoption in the first half of 2015-16. This equates to an annualised figure of 3,920 which if it manifests, would represent a fall of 26% compared to 2014-15.
The Department of Education’s most recent estimate for the “adopter gap” suggests that the gap has closed, and we now have more adoptive families than children waiting. However, there are still 1,820 children with a placement order not yet matched and the

13) Adopt Berkshire Achievements during the last year (2015 – 16)

- The Adopt Berkshire Service has continued to develop with all Team Members continuing to progress within their professional roles.

- While one Senior Social Work Practitioner resigned from role in the autumn we have been successful in recruiting an experienced Adoption and Fostering practitioner to the post vacated and she joined the team at the start of February. To date this appears to have been a very positive appointment.

- We have successfully recruited to our full time Assistant Team Manager/Senior Practitioner role.

- Our Placement Officer who took up post in May has proved to be a positive addition to the Service with his role reducing the demands on our qualified social work practitioners in terms of supporting approved applicants during the post approval/pre-placement period and in terms of achieving matches.

- We have created a new Social Work Assistant post to assist with the completion of Life Books for children placed for adoption; this is currently being appointed to. This has been achieved within the previously agreed staffing budget.

- Despite the difficult climate in terms of achieving placements for approved and waiting adopters we have succeeded in achieving four interagency placements with Adopt Berkshire approved adopters (three with Reading Borough Council and one with Devon County Council).

- While five placements have been purchased externally (for two sibling pairs and three single children with additional needs), all five placements met the criteria for the inter-agency fee to be reclaimed from the Adoption Support Fund; given this none of our four contributing authorities have needed to meet any inter-agency fees during the last 12 months for children placed for adoption.

- While the number of applicants being prepared/assessed/approved to adopt has reduced, in line with the national picture we have to date been able to place all children referred who have not been identified as having significant additional needs within our own resources whilst also maintaining a reasonable pool of approved and waiting adopters available for consideration for children needing placement ‘in house’.

- We have achieved four Fostering for Adoption placements – these have served to significantly reduce the average timescales from Placement Order to formal ‘match’ for
the associated Placing Authorities, with one of our contributing Authorities achieving an average time of minus two days over the year [Target timescale 121 days]. A second of our contributing authorities recently achieved the placement of a very young infant on the day that she was made subject to an I.C.O. [In time, once a Placement Order is granted, this will again significantly reduce the average timescale from Placement Order to Matching for that authority].

- Of the 20 children referred to Adopt Berkshire as of 1st December 2014, all but one has been successfully placed with prospective adoptive families, the one child not placed being a child whose Care Plan changed when it was identified that her placement needs were higher than previously identified. The majority of the children referred over into the new Service were deemed ‘hard to place’ being older children, often with additional, complex placement needs.

- As of 31st March only three children from the four contributing authorities who were subject to Placement Orders were awaiting formal matching and of these:
  - One had had a match recommended at Panel which was awaiting ADM Approval.
  - One had been formally linked, with the proposed ‘match’ being due to be considered by an April Panel.

- The Service’s partnership arrangements with The Cornerstone Partnership has continued to develop throughout the year with:
  - All prospective and approved adopters pre-order now having the option to have a Cornerstone Mentor.
  - All newly approved adopters being able to access post approval training around PACE Parenting, specifically targeted at parenting adopted children and run by trained therapists.

- The Service has continued to develop its Pre-Approval Training, working in partnership with the Cornerstone Partnership who now co-lead all Preparation Groups.

- The Service is mindful of the benefits of engaging with prospective and approved adopters around Service Development at all levels and seeks to do this through:
  - Engagement with the Cornerstone Partnership;
  - Discussions around development issues at the Monthly Support Group for approved and waiting adopters;
  - Seeking written feedback about their experiences of working with Adopt Berkshire from adoptive applicants, approved and waiting adopters and legal adopters, at key stages of the adoption process;
- Having an experienced adoptive parent as a member of the Adopt Berkshire Steering Group.

- Life Appreciation Days are now routinely considered for all children aged 12 months and over who are placed for adoption as well as for younger children if they have experienced changes of foster-carer. Life Appreciation Days are all run by the Adopt Berkshire Service.

- The Monthly Adopters’ Support Group is now well established providing an additional avenue of support for approved and waiting adopters and further relieving the amount of social work time required in supporting these families prior to linking.

- Plans to move forward with becoming part of a larger Regional Adoption Agency have continued to progress – see section 9 – and the DoE’s Paper on ‘Regionalising Adoption’ published in June 2015 highlighted Adopt Berkshire as being a model of good practice.

- Adopt Berkshire staff have at different levels continued to support adoption workers and managers in Reading Borough Council and Slough Borough Council around practice and development issues as there is less adoption expertise within these teams at the current time.

- The Adopt Berkshire Service achieved a judgement of ‘Good’ in Wokingham’s OFSTED Inspection in October 2015.

- Adopt Berkshire has been successful in negotiating with The Inter-country Adoption Centre (http://www.icacentre.org.uk/) to take over the day to day provision of Inter-country Adoption Services as of 1st April 2016, following PACT Adoption Agency (Reading) giving notice of their previous contract which expired on 31st March 2016. There were five ‘legacy’ cases in process as of the 31st March which have transferred into the Adopt Berkshire Service and will be managed ‘in house’.

14) Comparative Data for the Adopt Berkshire Unitary Authorities – 1st April 2015 / 31st March 2016:

Children for Placement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Bracknell</th>
<th>RBWM</th>
<th>West Berkshire</th>
<th>Wokingham</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of new Placement Orders 2015/2016</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of new ADM (Child for Placement) decisions since 1st April 2015</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Children matched in 2015/16 - average no of days between Placement Order and formal match  
Target – 121 days

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Quarter 1</th>
<th>Quarter 2</th>
<th>Quarter 3</th>
<th>Quarter 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>435 days</td>
<td>8 children</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-2 days</td>
<td>2 children</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>235 days</td>
<td>13 children</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>106 days</td>
<td>1 child</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Average no of days between entering care and placement 2015/2016  
(using FfA placement date if applicable)  
Target – 487 days

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Quarter 1</th>
<th>Quarter 2</th>
<th>Quarter 3</th>
<th>Quarter 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>606 days</td>
<td>9 children</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>134 days</td>
<td>2 children</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>448 days</td>
<td>12 children</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>411 days</td>
<td>1 child</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Children with a Placement Order waiting matching (31st March 2016)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Quarter 1</th>
<th>Quarter 2</th>
<th>Quarter 3</th>
<th>Quarter 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Both match identified awaiting Panel or ADM decision)

No of children adopted since 1st April 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Quarter 1</th>
<th>Quarter 2</th>
<th>Quarter 3</th>
<th>Quarter 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>6</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

15) Adopt Berkshire – Statistical Information

Adopter recruitment and matching/support

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2015/16</th>
<th>Quarter 1</th>
<th>Quarter 2</th>
<th>Quarter 3</th>
<th>Quarter 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New enquiries</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of new RoI received (units)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of new adopters approved (units)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Average length of time between application and approval (weeks)  
(Target 26 weeks) | 38.0      | 24.0      | 22.1      | 24.4      |

Half Year average weeks: 29.1  
Nine month average weeks: 28.0  
Twelve month average weeks: 26.4
Total number of Families in the Adoption Process as of 31st March 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage One Preparation</th>
<th>Stage Two Assessment</th>
<th>Approved and waiting 'matching'</th>
<th>Matched but pre-placement</th>
<th>Child/ren placed pre-adoption</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>31 (4 provisionally linked 6 ‘on hold’)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note this attributes all approved adopters approved prior to the 31st March to the Authority who started the application with them

16) The Inspection of Local Authority Adoption Agencies:

- Adoption Services are now inspected as part of OFSTED’s new Single Inspection Framework for Child Protection and Looked After Children which was introduced in September 2013 and which also includes inspection of local authorities’ fostering and adoption functions. Adoption Agency work is given a separate judgment within the wider inspection framework.

- The Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead and West Berkshire Councils’ Children’s Services were both subject to OFSTED Inspections in March 2015. Both authorities achieved a judgment of ‘Requires Improvement’ regarding their provision of Adoption Services.

- Wokingham Borough Council’s Children’s Services was subject to an OFSTED Inspections in October 2015 and achieved a Judgment of ‘Good’ regarding its provision of adoption services.

- Bracknell Forest Borough Council is due an OFSTED Inspection.

17) Complaints:

- <Adopt Berkshire> has a number of systems in place to actively seek feedback from Service Users (these are detailed in the Adopt Berkshire Statement of Purpose). In the last twelve months only one formal complaint has been received (from a foster-carer regarding the planning of introductions for a child moving into an adoptive placement). This was resolved at Stage One and learning points drawn up and shared across the team.

18) Challenges and priorities for the year ahead:

- To continue to support the development of a Regional Adoption Agency in line with government expectations ensuring that Adopt Berkshire takes a key role in contributing to the design of the new service and the development of future practice in all areas.
• To continue to work with the Cornerstone Partnership on a co-production model of training for prospective and approved adopters which will in time be rolled out across all Local Authorities who are part of the new Regional Adoption Agency.

• To continue to develop the Adopt Berkshire Team Culture.

• To support Bracknell Forest with their forthcoming OFSTED Inspection (Targeted Inspection of the Authority’s Services to Children in Need of help and protection) with the intention of achieving a rating of ‘Good’ or ‘Outstanding’ for the Authority’s Adoption Service.

• To continue to achieve a steady improvement regarding:
  - Timelines of Adoption Placements;
  - Timelines of prospective adopters’ assessment.

• To continue to seek feedback from the adopters with whom we work regarding future developments within the Service and to set up a process for seeking feedback from older children being placed for adoption about their experience of the adoption process, in order to inform both Adopt Berkshire and its four contributing authorities about potential areas for further development.

• To support the Service in adapting to a further change of management and of office location in the coming quarter.

  **Note:** The Service will relocate to new premises in Woodley as of week beginning 20th May 2016 – further details to follow.

19) **Conclusions**

It must be acknowledged that the landscape of adoption has continued to change during the past twelve months; the number of children with a Placement Order has continued to fall nationally and for the second year running there are more approved adopters seeking placements than children waiting for adoption.

Adopt Berkshire has as a new service achieved a considerable amount, despite having been operational for a relatively short period of time. In terms of practice the service has endeavoured to introduce innovative practice aimed at ensuring that:

• Children are placed for adoption as early as possible;

• Adopters are well supported and engaged;

• New ways of co-production working are embedded within the service.
Sound working relationships with the partner agencies has meant that children in need of placement have been identified at an early stage and many children with complex needs have been securely placed for adoption.

The coming year will see a number of further changes with the move to a Regional Adoption Agency; but on the evidence to date it is clear that shared adoption services, with a focussed approach and a culture of continuous improvement and innovation, can be a highly successful form of service delivery.

Hilary Loades, 
Team Manager, 
Adopt Berkshire

Alyson Graham 
Service Leader, 
Adopt Berkshire

31st March 2016
## APPENDIX 1

### Bracknell Forest Adoption Scorecard Information 2015

### Children

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>LA’s 3 year average (2012-15)</th>
<th>Distance from 2012-15 performance threshold (487 and 121 days)</th>
<th>1 year trend – Improvement from 2014 to 2015</th>
<th>3 year trend – Improvement from 2011-14 to 2012-15</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A1: Average time between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family (days)</td>
<td>593</td>
<td>106 days</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A2: Average time between a local authority receiving court authority to place a child and the local authority deciding on a match to an adoptive family (days)</td>
<td>274</td>
<td>153 days</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A3: Children who wait less than 16 months between entering care and moving in with their adoptive family (number and %)</td>
<td>15 (41%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

LA's 3 year average (2012-15): 593 days

A1 Indicator where times for children who are adopted by their foster family are stopped at the date the child moved in with the foster family (days) (2012-15)

### Adopters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LA</th>
<th>Number of approved adoptive families as at 31 March 2015</th>
<th>Number of applicants to become an adoptive family still being assessed (not yet approved or rejected) as at 31 March 2015</th>
<th>Proportion of adoptive families who were matched to a child during 2014-15 who waited more than 3 months from approval to being matched to a child</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>2,780</td>
<td>2,600</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of Approved Adoptive Families as at 31 March 2015

Number of Applications to Become an Adoptive Family Still Being Assessed (Not Yet Approved or Rejected) as at 31 March 2015

Proportion of Adoptive Families Who Were Matched to a Child During 2014-15 Who Waited More than 3 Months from Approval to Being Matched to a Child

### Average time indicators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Average number of days (LA)</th>
<th>Average number of days (England)</th>
<th>% change (LA)</th>
<th>% change (England)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2008-11</td>
<td>569</td>
<td>593</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-12</td>
<td>567</td>
<td>593</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-13</td>
<td>569</td>
<td>593</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-14</td>
<td>569</td>
<td>593</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-15</td>
<td>567</td>
<td>593</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Average number of days

% change

### Related Information

<table>
<thead>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adoptions from care during 2012-15 (% leaving care who are adopted)</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of children waiting to be placed for adoption (as at 31 March)</td>
<td>20 (14%)</td>
<td>15 (29%)</td>
<td>10 (29%)</td>
<td>5 (10%)</td>
<td>471 (x %)</td>
<td>x (x %)</td>
<td>x (x %)</td>
<td>36</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>New placements granted</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>471</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>36</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>LA</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>471</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>36</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>2,780</td>
<td>2,600</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td></td>
<td>14390 (16%)</td>
<td>3780 (14%)</td>
<td>4,800</td>
<td>3,000</td>
<td>460</td>
<td>2230 (9%)</td>
<td>3010 (9%)</td>
<td>39</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adoptions from care during 2012-15 (% leaving care who are adopted)

Number of Children Waiting to Be Placed for Adoption (As at 31 March)

New Placements Granted

New ADO Decisions

Adoptions from care during 2012-15 (% leaving care who are adopted)