Hythe House Support
Statement of Purpose



This statement was last revised in 27th October 2027 and has been formally agreed by the Registered Person

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COMPANY STATUS & CONSTITUTION ORGANISATION DETAILS

Legal Status: An Independent Fostering Provider
Hythe House Support Ltd –
A Company Limited by Guarantee Company Registration No: 4524983

Directors:	Gary Duffy	**Agency Head/Responsible Individual** **DMS PGDip, Dip Hyp CS, MHS,** **Ad Dip PC, MNCS**
	Margaret Duffy	**Managing Director/Co-Owner**
	Robert Duffy	**Cert Health & Social Care, PTTLS, BTEC Level 3 PIT Archiving, Marketing, GDPR & Social Media.**
	David Duffy	**Head of IT, Health & Safety, Archiving, Marketing & GDPR.**
Agency Manager:	Tanya Callaway	**Agency Manager** **Diploma in Social Work (registered with SW England)** **NVQ Level 4 in Management & Leadership** **NVQ Level 3 in Caring for Children and Young People** **Diploma in Counselling Children and Adolescents** **Diploma in Autism Awareness**

Regulations: Hythe House Support operates within the regulations made under sections 22 and 48 of the Care Standard Act (CSA) 2000 and the powers under the Children Act 1989 (s59) & 2004. The Disabilitity and Equality Act 2010. The Human Rights Act 1998, The Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000

Standards: Hythe House Support follows the National Minimum Standards laid down by the Department of Health under sections 23 and 49 of the CSA 2000. In terms of best practice Hythe House Support follows the UK National Minimum Standards for Foster Care (2011). Children Act Guidance and Regulations Volume 4: Fostering Services 2011.

Office Address: 59 Staplehurst Road
Sittingbourne
Kent
ME10 2NY

Telephone 01795 438634 Email enquiries@hythehousesupport.co.uk
Website www.hythehousesupport.co.uk

INTRODUCTION

When I founded Hythe House Support in 2003, I set out to establish an Agency that would offer children and young people a professional, high quality fostering service. However, I also wanted, and continue to want, more than that. My primary goal was to ensure that children are not only provided with care in a safe and homely environment but that this is given by carers who really care about the task of fostering and most importantly about the children who are placed in their homes.

I believe we have achieved this by remaining a relatively small agency that meets its aims and objectives by maintaining a focus on the identified needs of individual children. We aim for all our children to reach their full potential by providing them with quality foster care placements offering them stability, warmth and a safe caring environment with families that meet their individual needs.

I am pleased to introduce this revised Statement of Purpose and hope and trust you will find our services of interest.

Margaret Duffy
Managing Director

Gary Duffy	Tanya Callaway
Responsible Individual	Agency Manager

AIMS & OBJECTIVES

Our main objective is to provide children and young people with a range of services that take into account and strives to meet, their individual needs to provide good outcomes for children. Within this, we are committed to making a real difference to the quality of children's lives by supporting and encouraging them to develop the skills, competencies and knowledge needed to enable them to maximise their full potential that will best equip them for moving forward into their adult life. Children have the right to be looked after by adults who offer them respect, concern, affection, and experiences appropriate to their individual needs, which is achieved by actively hearing their voice and advocating for them if required to do so.

We expect high standards from our carers although one fundamental basic requirement is that they all have a genuine concern for the well-being and promote good outcomes for the children in their care. It is our aim to ensure that all carers and staff look to turn being fostered into a positive experience for all our children where they can feel equal among their peers and expect respect, their wishes and feelings listened to and consistent care from the adults in their lives.
Adults need to respect the significance for the child in regard to their birth family, their race, culture, religion and their area of origin and promote these to ensure that they are feeling supported to make good choices through to adult life.

To achieve effective and positive outcomes for the children in our care we believe that working together creates a 'team around the child' approach which is absolutely essential. To this end we maintain a small, close-knit, friendly yet wholly professional staff team and body of foster carers who are at one with the ethos of the Agency which is to:

- Protect children from all forms of abuse.
- Provide children with sensitive, nurturing, consistent care that sets boundaries and expectations of individual responsibility.
- Provide children with services as identified in their care plan.
- Provide children and young people with the preparation to enable them to make the transition into adulthood.
- Promote the rights of children and young people.
- Provide, where required, skilled therapy for children who have suffered trauma and emotional distress, providing children with a warm caring family environment to develop and thrive.
- Provide educational support to meet the individual needs of young people.
- Provide young people who have failed to develop secure attachments to do so through the building of trust from adults who provide them with safe, nurturing, and appropriate care.
- Equip our foster carers with the necessary practical knowledge, skills and understanding, through ongoing support, supervision, and training in order for them to provide a safe and nurturing environment in which children can achieve; thrive and reach their full potential.
- Recruit, train, and support committed foster carers who can provide high quality parenting, enabling the children in their care the opportunity for stability, security and warmth in a safe environment.

In achieving this, Hythe House Support expects its foster carers to:

- Keep their foster children safe from harm.
- Maintain a commitment to the fostering task, ongoing professional development through training.
- Attend training courses, support groups and all meetings for their children.
- Keep a daily written record of each child in placement submitted online weekly.
- Keep an up-to-date health record for each child in their care.
- Respect confidentiality always regarding information about the child; their family and the agency by following General Data Protection Regulatory expectations.
- Promote birth family time, respect their race, culture, and religious beliefs.

Foster carers can expect from Hythe House Support:

- Regular support groups provided by Hythe House.
- Individual supervision at regular intervals 4-6 weekly, and fortnightly for less experienced carers or those caring for children with complex needs.
- An 'Open door' policy for all carers, birth families and the young people in our care is available to them all.
- Comprehensive packages of ongoing training with external and internal trainers. Online training packages available for all foster carers and their buck up support.
- Around the clock guidance and support for all carers.
- Support and preparation before taking on a new placement if time allows.
- A generous 28 days' respite package (pro rata) for all our full-time foster carers.
- Practical rewards for a demanding but rewarding job.
- Activity days for the young people, carers and their families.
- Young Persons Forums to enable the young people to share their views, have their voice heard which aid us in the growth and development of the company.

The following sections give a synopsis of Hythe House Support's aims and objectives in the particular areas that are listed. Separate policy and procedure exist for these and are contained in both the Staff Manual and Foster Carer's Handbook. Copies of these are available upon request to view.

CHILD PROTECTION/SAFEGUARDING

Hythe House Support recognises its responsibility to treat every child as an individual and will promote and safeguard each young person's welfare in every way. Hythe House Support believes it is vital that all staff and carers involved with the provision of care for children placed with Hythe House Support are alert to the possibility of abuse. In this respect both policy and managerial procedures support the creation of a culture of openness in which the risks are addressed and minimised. There is clear guidance and a written format for reporting/recording any Child Protection or Safeguarding matter to the Child Protection Co-Ordinator in line with national and organisational procedures.
Hythe House Support offers ongoing training in child protection/safeguarding to staff and foster carers.

BULLYING

Bullying in any form is taken very seriously and any situation where it is suspected bullying may be occurring will be dealt with as a matter of urgency. Foster carers are proactive in alerting schools if they suspect a child is subjected to bullying and request the bullying policy of each school. All carers are aware of and look out for cyber bullying and create an open dialogue with young people to report this immediately so this can be dealt with.

Foster carers and staff are made aware that Looked After children can be particularly vulnerable to bullying and are issued with both policy and procedure to assist them in this matter. Children are provided with guidance written in their age-appropriate Children's Guide, staff are also aware of their rights within their contract and the whistle blowing policy.

COMPLAINTS

Whilst Hythe House Support aims to achieve a high standard in all that it does it also recognises that sometimes those who use our service may be dissatisfied. We have a comprehensive complaints procedure in place, and this is shared with the staff, foster carers and the young people in placement.

If any person using our service considers they have been treated unfairly or inappropriately then we have a procedure to enable them to tell us their concerns and if necessary, they will be investigated by an independent person. The procedure is in two parts, 'Informal' and 'Formal'. We hope wherever possible to be able to satisfy any concerns during the informal part of the process.

There has been one letter from Ofsted raising Concerns about your provision on 12th December 2025. In January 2026 we received a reply stating we consider this investigation now complete and at this time are satisfied that there is no further information required. There were no statutory requirements given.

WHISTLEBLOWING

As with complaints, Hythe House Support recognises that despite its efforts to provide a quality service it may, like all organisations, on occasion, fall short in specific areas of practice. Whilst we strongly encourage all workers, carers, customers, and clients to address any issues they may have through our in-house procedures we recognise there may be circumstances when this is not always possible. Where this is the case, any person should be aware they have the right to approach the relevant external body Ofsted (Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester, M1 2WD) without being penalised for so doing.

STAFF RECRUITMENT & SELECTION

All employees, paid or unpaid, recruited and selected by Hythe House Support are subject to the checks and requirements of Fostering Service Regulations 2011. Before any member of staff commences employment, they will:

- Provide a full employment history.
- Be subject to an enhanced DBS check.
- Have the authenticity of qualifications and references checked by writing to the awarding body for verification, and the SW England register being checked.
- Provide at least two references, one of which will be the last employer.
- Have these references checked, both in writing and by telephone.
- Be subject to a probationary period and a full induction.

PROTECTING & PROMOTING THE HEALTH NEEDS OF YOUNG PEOPLE

Each child is an individual with differing needs. Carers are committed to meeting and promoting the health and welfare of children and young people in their care and are encouraged to play an active role in educating a young person about alcohol, and other substance misuse, sexual and emotional health, risks of sexual exploitation, county lines, gangs and the importance of healthy eating and lifestyle. This is achieved through encouraging self-care skills and by attending all health appointments routine and specialist. Carers are also supported in drawing up a health care plan, in which the involvement of the young person is sought wherever possible and appropriate.

Hythe House Support foster carers will request a health assessment by the previous GP to take place within 7–10 working days of a child being placed. Following this carer will facilitate the attending of appointments to the dentist, opticians, new GP appointment, also assist the allocated Social Worker in the arrangement of the annual health check, with the consent of the young person.

PROMOTING EDUCATION

For many young people in care, attending mainstream education may not be the best option, or in some cases, even possible. If a child placed has missed a great deal of school, we can provide the support to the local authority social worker and virtual schools to ensure that all young people can access an appropriate education provision to meet their needs on occasions through Zoom/Teams and other social media tools to access home tuition. Our foster carers promote and encourage all young people to maintain education or tuition including college as well as apprenticeships by being proactive in supporting them with homework, attending parent evenings as well as PEP's and any other meetings held. The promotion of education via alternative routes including home schooling is also encouraged to ensure the young person accesses education. Carers keep up to date with the education provisions anti bullying and all other policies to ensure the safety of their young people.

LEAVING CARE

Those young people who are beyond the statutory school age are supported in finding and attending further education, training courses, apprenticeships, or employment. We work in partnership with local authorities to ensure that individual Pathway and EHC Plans and Leaving Care strategies are developed and implemented. The desired outcome is for the young person to learn and develop the skills required for everyday life, to successfully manage the transition to adulthood and to lead a healthy lifestyle. Many carers continue supporting the young people after they have left their care as some do not have anyone else, they can call upon to support them through tough times, as this continues to be a priority for all carers in their support of young people moving onto adult life. Life Skills are taught throughout their time in care, stepping up to budgeting, washing and keeping a clean home.

CHILDREN'S COMMISSIONER FOR ENGLAND

The Children's Commissioner for England is Dame Rachel de Souza.

As Children's Commissioner I take on a crucial role, sitting at the heart of Government, delivering for children, and championing their voices and needs. As a former teacher, headteacher and school trust leader for over 30 years, I have seen first-hand how passionate and compassionate children are. This is an ambitious generation that wants to succeed in life, but that also wants to play its part in improving the world around them. They need us, as adults, to listen to them and ensure they get the right help to fulfil their true potential.

I wanted to know how children felt about the issues most affecting them, to amplify their voices outside their communities, and to deliver improved life chances for this generation and beyond.

To do this, my office conducted 'The Big Ask' survey. This was answered by half a million children across England, making it the biggest survey of its kind.

The Big Ask told us what children want and need urgently and longer term. A striking aspect of the data collected was that across age, gender, ethnicity, family income levels, location, and vulnerable groups, what children want is remarkably consistent. They want a good home life, a good education, a job, enough money, friends, to feel well, to be treated fairly and to look after the environment.

My priority has always been to listen to children across the country, to hear about their lives and the impact of lockdown, to help shape my time as Children's Commissioner. That's why in 2021, I launched The Big Ask, a survey of children in England. I'm incredibly proud and awed by the response that I received from children. With over a half-a-million responses it was the largest-ever survey of children. Children up and down the country told us about their experiences of the pandemic, their lives today, their dreams for the future and their ideas for how we can help children in this country achieve their ambitions. I am particularly proud that, through the survey, our visits and focus groups we heard about the experiences of children of all ages, including babies and toddlers; children from all local authorities, and children from hard-to-reach groups, including children in care.

My advocacy service Help at Hand will continue to assist children in care and IMO will continue to provide a unique offering for care experienced children to make their voices heard. This past year, Help at Hand has seen a significant growth in number of children coming to the service but our aim is that every child in need of help is aware of service so we will continue to reach as many children and young people as possible, making our services as accessible as possible for every child.

IMO, our digital platform for teenagers in care and care leavers, has a great community of care experienced contributors and followers, both of which have increased over the past year including downloads of our award-winning podcast, sharing open and honest conversations with care leavers, as well as the wide range of blog posts and resources which have been shared. We will continue to attract and promote new peer-led content to the site and social media channels, ensuring we are offering relevant and useful content for the young care experienced community.

If you are a child or young person who lives away from home or who receives social care, and you need advice or assistance, you can call us on 02077838330 or on the free phone

number 0800 528 0731 or email to info.request@childrenscommissioner.gsi.gov.uk. Our line is open Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm. Our address is Sanctuary Buildings, 20 Great Smith Street, London, SW1P 3BT.

WORKING WITH DIVERSITY

Hythe House Support aims to ensure the ethnic, cultural, and religious needs of all of its young people are identified and promoted both as individuals and within the larger community. Our objective is to enable and empower young people to celebrate their own identity and thus increase their self-esteem. Whilst some young people may choose not to practise the beliefs of their community of origin, we nevertheless regard it as important that they are provided with the means to connect, or re-connect, with members of their own ethnic, cultural or religious community and are enabled to make informed choices. The agency recognises that individuals and groups can be unfairly discriminated against, and it is our aim to tackle discrimination whilst working in a framework of fairness and openness to extend our commitment to quality of opportunity and take responsibility in relation to this for all staff and young people at Hythe House. All carers are provided with ongoing training courses to cover subjects including, Attachment, Every Disabled Child Matters, Black Lives Matter; Discrimination-Racism, Incel and Misogyny and Intolerance, Enduring Relationships, training alongside numerous other subjects to enhance their level of understanding.

Our carers will respect a child's need for privacy and will be sensitive to a child's wish to observe any special religious observances such as prayer times, days of fasting and dietary requirements.

Our carers can offer placements for children with moderate learning or physical disabilities.

FAMILY TIME WITH FAMILY & SIGNIFICANT OTHERS

It is important that young people are helped to maintain and develop links with family members, and other significant people who are, or have been, important in their lives, whilst sustaining enduring relationships with those that matter.

People with whom the child needs to maintain contact with may include parents, siblings, grandparents and other family members, previous foster carers and friends. Hythe House Support, its staff and carers are committed to ensuring that these family times are facilitated, maintained and promoted wherever this is planned for and identified in the Care Plan, also bearing in mind safeguarding for all concerned. We promote family time via social media routes via Zoom, Facetime, Teams, WhatsApp to ensure that all young people are still able to see and speak with their family members. When young people leave post 18 we also ensure that they have the opportunity to maintain relationships with carers and the wider family.

PROMOTING YOUNG PEOPLE'S PARTICIPATION AND CONSULTATION IN THE OPERATION OF HYTHE HOUSE SUPPORT

In order to evaluate the quality of our service we recognise that listening to children and young people is vital and we will constantly and regularly seek their views regarding all aspects of care that they receive.
We seek formal feedback from children and young people through confidential forms completed by them at the time of their CIC Reviews and again at the Foster Carer Annual Home Reviews when they are spoken to by an independent social worker. We also provide them with information about organisations such as Corum Voice, Child Line and Ofsted, as well as their social worker's telephone number and emails, so that they have a range of options if they have any worries or the need to make a complaint.
The young people are also given opportunities to have virtual meetings with their LASW, IRO's to ensure that their voices are heard prior to CIC reviews and also if and when they were not happy with decisions being made for them by their foster carers.

They are also given the number of Hythe House and informed about the open-door policy; this is also provided in the Children's Guide within the welcome pack which is provided to them on coming into placement at Hythe House. Social workers from Hythe House regularly speak with the young people when they attend their placement on an unannounced visit, as well as on a regular basis when they see their carers for home supervision.
We also hold Informal Young Persons Forums within an activity day to enable young people to share their views on how to help the organisation grow and perform at its best. Our foster carers actively promote discussion and feedback on the child's routine, activities, and other areas of their lives, these are also shared with the local authority and the independent reviewing officer monthly. Carers keep a daily record on the young people which is emailed to Hythe House on a weekly basis and contributes to the discussion within carers supervision on a 4-6 weekly basis.

BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT, DISCIPLINE AND DE-ESCALATION TECHNIQUES

Behaviour Management

Hythe House Support has a philosophy of expressing approval and rewarding children for positive behaviour.

The relationship between Hythe House Support, its carers and children are based upon mutual respect and a clear understanding of professional and personal boundaries, which are effective for both the individual and the family.

Carers incorporate methods of managing complex and challenging behaviours into their daily care planning, according to the age and developmental stage of the young person, in consultation with Hythe House Support, LA Social Workers, schools and the team around the child to ensure that everyone is working with the child to create positive change.

Hythe House Support also recognises that unacceptable behaviour is likely to be because of a child's trauma, their emotional and developmental needs and not just an act of wilful defiance to authority but a way of acting out their inner turmoil.

Behaviours that cannot go unchallenged are abusive language, violence, damage to property and issues of personal safety and these are dealt with appropriately with de-escalation techniques.

Discipline

Discipline is a set of rules and boundaries that help people to live together giving respect to all individuals within the family. All our foster carers have a Family and an Individual Safer Caring policy which is both specific to their home and drawn up on an individual basis for each child to meet their individual need and explained at a level in line with their capacity and level of understanding.

Sanctions

Sanctions are only used when all other approaches have failed and should not be a form of punishment but as a vehicle to address a child's behaviour. Where possible they relate as a naturally occurring consequence that is more likely to promote genuine change and understanding. The aim is to enable the child to understand the results of their actions, reflecting on how they could have managed situations differently and being creative in ways of attempting to put things right.

De-Escalation Techniques

Hythe House Support ensures all its carers receive appropriate strategies for the de-escalation of inappropriate behaviour. Techniques such as de-fusing and distracting for the safety of the child, others and property is used.

De-escalation refers to any activity that is meant to diffuse a conflict or intense situation. When foster children have blow-ups or outbursts, foster carers must respond in a way that diffuses the situation to ensure safety and help calms the young person.

RECORD KEEPING

Hythe House Support recognises the importance of clear and accurate recording, both in order to preserve accurate records of the young person's history, and as a potential source of evidence for investigations and inquiries, that may need to be disclosed in court proceedings. Each carer keeps accurate daily records which are emailed to a secure email at Hythe House weekly whilst adhering to GDPR.

This is reviewed and signed off by the supervising social worker on a weekly basis. All records kept by foster carers are stored in a lockable cabinet, password protected laptop or in the carers locked bedroom when not in use to ensure confidentiality and general data protection regulations procedures are always adhered to.

THE SERVICES WE PROVIDE

We are fortunate to have very experienced, knowledgeable carers that enables Hythe House Support to offer a wide range of services to meet the individual needs identified in children's care plans aged from birth to 18 years and beyond.

All of our families have an allocated Supervising Social Worker, and it is this agency's objective to ensure each family is provided with high quality supervision and support which, together with their annual review ensures their continued suitability to foster children for the Agency and the children in their care. We also provide 4-6 weekly group support meetings at Hythe House, alongside an open-door policy for our carers: their families and the young people in our care. Some sessions are also offered virtually as a catch up in the interim, to ensure we have a vehicle in place to offer support to the foster carers and the young people when face to face meetings are not possible.

These include:

- Short-term and emergency placements.
- Medium-term placements
- Long-term and permanent placements
- Parent and child placements
- Bridging placements in preparation for permanency
- Solo placements
- Sibling groups

Within these placements our Basic Services include:

- Home finding of suitably trained carers
- The promoting of all healthcare and educational needs
- Working to the Care Plan for each child
- Independence and after-care training
- Daily travel requirements local to the placement
- Individual educational support
- Life Story work in the way of photos and memorabilia whilst the child is in our care

Our Additional Services can include:

- Therapy and Counselling

These additional services are not included in the basic fee but can be built into a regular costing as agreed between Hythe House and the Social Worker/placement team either prior to placement commencing or during the placement. Hythe House feels a flexible approach and attitude promotes confidence and ensures ongoing commitment to each child's emotional development and creates good outcomes for all the young people.

Where is Hythe House Support?

The main day-to-day running of the business is managed from Hythe House which is located in the North Kent town of Sittingbourne. This allows us to offer a room to facilitate meeting for reviews and other meetings.

Foster Carers and Placements (All figures are as of the revised date of this statement)

Hythe House Support has foster carers in both urban and rural environments in the North Kent area.

Numbers as of 27th October 2026

Foster Carer Families	**10**
Children Placed	**15**

Ethnic Origin	Female	Male
African/Caribbean		
Asian		
UK/European	8	4
Other European	2	
Dual Heritage	1	
Other		

The number of approved foster carer households is 10 households as of 27th October 2026

The following local authorities have made placements with Hythe House Support:

Medway, Kent, Bridgend, Hampshire, Trowbridge, Peterborough, Coventry, Wiltshire, Bournemouth, Wokingham, Richmond, Oxfordshire, Southwark, Westminster, Enfield Hillingdon, Bromley, Havering, Ealing, Greenwich, Barnet, Haringey, Lambeth, Hammersmith & Fulham, Barking & Dagenham, Newham, Southampton and Bristol.

Staffing:

Currently the team consists of:

The Management Team

Managing Director

Margaret Duffy

Maggie was a foster carer for over 25 years, firstly with the local authority for 3 years and over 20 years for two Independent Fostering Agencies. Maggie has fostered children with a variety of behavioural and emotional difficulties over the years and eventually adopted one of these children with a FAS diagnosis. Maggie set out to establish an agency that would offer children and young people a professional, high quality fostering service.

IT Manager

David Duffy

David has been involved with fostering for over 30 years as a birth child of foster carers. He has over 20 years' experience working within the private independent fostering sector. David left to help set up Hythe House Support in 2003 where his main responsibilities are to source and maintain the IT infrastructure alongside GDPR, Health & Safety, Archiving and other office duties.

Social Media & Marketing Manager

Robert Duffy

Robert has been involved with fostering for over 30 years as a birth child of foster carers. He worked in the private independent fostering sector, working in an education capacity for over 20 years where he worked with numerous young people with varying degrees of neurodiversity and special educational needs. Robert left to help set up the education provision at Hythe House Support where he had been in the position of Head of Education since its inception in 2003 to closure in 2018. Robert's main responsibilities are GDPR, Archiving, social media and Marketing within the organisation.

Responsible Individual

Gary Duffy - **DMS PGDip, Dip Hyp CS, MHS, Dip PC, MNCS**

Gary's career has also been in the financial sector. Having worked for a large pension fund provider for 7 years, Gary then qualified as an SFA Securities Representative and Futures & Options Representative while working for a stockbroker in Tunbridge Wells. During his time, he progressed to Senior Dealer to a team of 8. In March 2003, he left to help set up Hythe House Support Ltd and has been registered with Ofsted as the responsible Individual since that date. Gary has over 35 years' management experience, a BTEC National Certificate in Public Administration and a Postgraduate Diploma in Management Studies. Gary has completed a Diploma in Hypnotherapy and an Advanced Diploma in Counselling. He has grown up with fostering as his parents were carers for over 25 years.

Agency Manager

Tanya Callaway - **Diploma in Social Work.**
NVQ Level 4 in Management & Leadership.
NVQ Level 3 in Caring for Children and Young People.
Diploma in Counselling Children and Adolescents.
Diploma in Autism Awareness.

Tanya has over 35 years' experience in a social care setting. She worked as a Residential Social Worker for a Local Authority for approximately 6 years, and during this time she completed her NVQ Level 3 'Caring for Children and Young People'. It was at this stage that she commenced training to become a qualified social worker. Tanya then transferred to the Looked After Children's Team for the following 4 years, over that time Tanya also gained experience of working in the Child Protection Team and within the Family Centre child in need setting.

Once qualified in 2005 she moved to the Local Authority Fostering Team for the following 2 years. Tanya has been at Hythe House since November 2007 initially as supervising social worker then progressed onto Agency Manager in January 2014 Tanya is also a registered practitioner with Social Work England.

Professional Staff

Senior Supervising Social Worker

Ronda Jones – **Social Work Degree 2:2**

Ronda qualified with a 2:2 grading in her social worker degree in 2008 and a registered practitioner with Social Work England.
Her placements included working at a secure training centre with young offenders, looked after children's mental health team and also worked with adults with learning disabilities. Ronda has undertaken voluntary work in the community with older people. She has a wealth of experience in working in a variety of settings with the public. Ronda has been supervising social worker at Hythe House since qualifying as a social worker in September 2008.

Supervising Social Worker

Jabeen Sethi – Diploma in Social Work, MA in Social Work, BSc (Hons) Human Biology.

Jabeen qualified in 1990 and has been a Local Authority Supervising Social Worker from 1989 to 2025 when she retired from the Fostering Team. Jabeen has provided long-term support to foster carers, ensuring placement stability and high-quality care for children and young people. Whilst in her role as SSW she has completed comprehensive assessments including Form F, annual reviews, matching reports, and safeguarding assessments.
Jabeen supports many charities locally including the Soup kitchen held in Medway for the homeless. Jabeen has commenced a part time role with Hythe House since 16th March 2026.

Administration Staff

Nicola Duffy

Nicola has over 35 years' administration experience, having worked in the West End for 15 years in a Chartered Surveyors as PA to the Senior Partner, as well as providing admin support to a busy team. Nicola joined Hythe House in 2007 and is an important member of the team in both the Social Work and Finance Departments. She is also the Panel co-ordinator and Administrator.

Consultants

Lynn Stout

Lynn qualified as a social worker in 1983 and practiced in the London Borough of Redbridge for the following 5 years. Lynn then moved onto Kent County Council as a senior social worker from 1989 through to 1998. Lynn then decided to have a couple of years as an Independent Social Worker. In 2000 Lynn then

started to work as a project manager for Futures for Children and completed a variety of tasks with the same company including a director of Children Services until 2015 when Lynn decided to move over to her current role as an Independent Social Worker and Foster Care Consultant.

Independent Social Workers

Gabrielle Jordan

DipSW, BSc (Hons) Interprofessional Health & Social Care (Child Care), Practice Teaching Award

Gabrielle qualified a social worker in 2002. She has over 20 years post qualification experience in Children & Families Social Work. This includes working as a Team Manager and having the direct responsibility of supervising a number of Social Workers/Senior Practitioners. I have initiated Child Protection and Care Proceedings and am highly skilled in writing a wealth of reports for the Court and quality assuring the work of others. I have excellent communication and assessment skills and have completed a wide variety of assessments, including very comprehensive Form F's which is now an area I specialise in. Gabrielle is registered with Social Work England.

Joanne Liveston

Jo qualified as Social Worker in 1996 and undertaken many SW skills in multiagency teams. Since 2013, Jo has been an independent self-employed social worker specialising in fostering and adoption, human rights work, education issues and specialist practice in deprivation of liberty issues.
In her personal life, Jo has experience with neurodivergence, LGBTQIA+ issues, adoption and health issues/disability. She believes in fairness and is particularly good at managing complex amounts of detail and drawing out the key area.

Jane Baker-Davies

Jane qualified as Home Economics teacher in 1981. I taught for 2 years before entering into social services. In 1988 I fully qualified as a social worker and held many positions within Kent and then Medway Council in Adult and Children Services. In 1992 I worked within Adult Services, however in 1997 I decided to remain in Children's services as a Fostering Social Worker until 2015. I have also been a Kent registered foster carer since 2005 alongside working part time as a fostering social worker up until I decided to retire from full time work and move onto offering independent services alongside my fostering children full time.
I am a registered Social Worker with Social Work England with over 35 years' experience, with more than 20 of these in specialist fostering services.

Therapists (access services as and when required)

NB A chart detailing the Organisational Structure can be found at Appendix 1.

CRITERIA FOR PLACEMENT

Planned Placements

Planned admissions into our foster carers' homes are the best way for a child or young person to be introduced to Hythe House Support. The management team has shared responsibility to consider all referrals, prioritise cases, and plan placements that meet the young person's needs as closely as possible. Serious consideration is given, during the process of exchanging information, to our ability to meet the needs of a young person. This includes our ability to be able to support young people in maintaining and enhancing their racial, cultural, social, and religious links.

We believe that carefully planned moves are good practice, are less traumatic for the young person, and contribute substantially to the likelihood of a successful placement. With this in mind, we endeavour to support careful introductions, even where the young person is currently living far away. This may include our carers travelling to meet the young person in their current placement if appropriate to do so, recognising that in familiar surroundings they are likely to feel most at ease.

Emergencies

There are times when circumstances are such that a child or young person may be at risk of significant harm or where a placement has irretrievably disrupted, and thus may require a move to a new and appropriate placement as a matter of urgency. We are willing to look at each case on its own merit, and subject to availability can accept same- day placements as long as there is sufficient information shared for matching purposes. We will not want to move young people into placements late at night as this can cause undue stress and trauma for young people to be moved in this way and does not enable Hythe House to risk manage these types of placements appropriately.

Documentation

In order for us as an organisation to make an informed decision about placement it is vital that we have the following information.

- Chronology
- Fully completed Risk Assessment.
- Full background/historical information
- Current Care Plan and last CIC review minutes.
- Any previous assessments, e.g. psychological/psychiatric, educational, medical, reviews, current school reports, reports from current carers.
- Up to date and a full referral inclusive of previous placements, education, health and family information.
- Signed Delegated Consent.
- Birth family details.

Once a placement has been agreed we will also need: -

If a Placement Planning Meeting was not able to take place before placement commenced, this must be arranged within the first 5 days of placement with the LASW.

- Copy of the child's/children's birth certificate, passport and medical registration card and signed delegated consent.
- Copy of any court orders (e.g. Care Orders, No Contact Orders)
- Copies of all court statements and judgement in legal proceedings (permission of the court will usually need to be obtained)
- Details of existing contact arrangements and care plans.
- Copy of the placing authority's Complaints and Child Protection procedures
- Signed contract, with financial details for invoicing
- A statement, drawn up at the planning meeting of the work that the Local Authority and Hythe House Support have agreed should be undertaken, and the projected length of the placement.

Following admission

Within 7 days the LASW to visit the young person in placement. Within four weeks of the placement a planning meeting and the child's statutory review to be held, and thereafter at 3 months and 6 monthly intervals.

Admission criteria

The age range for admission is from birth to 18 years (with the exception of a parent and child placement where the mother's age has no upper limit but is considered for each referral.) Following a referral by the local authority, we will make an assessment of our ability to meet the child's needs (or parent and child's needs) taking into consideration the children in placement and the information from the Local authority.

We are committed to not excluding a young person from Hythe House Support because they exhibit difficult behaviour. We encourage our carers to actively promote change through behavioural and social programmes and have a thorough understanding "the needs behind the behaviour" for each child by providing ongoing training to our carers.

We do however consider that young people who display the following characteristics are not appropriately placed in a family until they have begun to understand their own responsibility for this behaviour and are committed to change, with our support.

Any behaviour that puts others in the family or community at serious and unacceptable risk: e.g.

- Serious or repeated physical violence towards others in family or community
- Arson/fire setting where lives are potentially put at risk.
- Serious / compulsive sexual assaults
- A young person who is frequently out of touch with reality through reliance on alcohol or drugs or as a manifestation of a psychiatric condition that in adults might be diagnosed as psychosis or schizophrenia.
- A child who requires regular restraint as a form of control would not be suitable for a foster family at Hythe House.
- At significant risk of self-harm, where 24-hour monitoring is required to safeguard the young person's and others' welfare.

FOSTER CARER RECRUITMENT, TRAINING & SUPPORT

Recruitment

Before undertaking any assessment of a potential foster carer there is a process which allows both the applicant and the Agency to decide if fostering is the right path for them to follow. Following an enquiry or response to an advertisement a member of the social work team will:
*Flow Chart- Telephone enquiry- Information pack - Home visit -DBS, LA and health checks undertaken- Skills to Foster Training undertaken – Form F Assessment Commences- Personal and employment references completed – Completed Form F presented to panel- Approval Decision sent to Decision Maker- Outcome of approval to foster.

- Contact the prospective applicant(s) and obtain basic information from them to see whether they meet the minimum criteria we set e.g. room available for fostering etc and it is also an opportunity for staff to address any queries and questions about fostering or the organisation that they may have.

- An Information Pack is then sent out which contains our brochure detailing information about the Agency, its services, the assessment process and fees and allowances.

- Upon receipt of a completed Application Form a phone call will be made to set up a home visit to the applicant(s) where they can learn more about the fostering task and be introduced to the aims and objectives of Hythe House Support.

- A home visit will take place with the Agency Head and Agency Manager, where the assessment process is discussed. The applicant(s) will then be given a couple of weeks to consider whether they wish to continue with their application.

- Following this meeting, should the applicant(s) and Hythe House wish to proceed further, then an invitation to the next available "Skills to Foster"

course will be sent. This is a training course designed by Fostering Network and aimed at providing further information on the fostering task, the children, their families and other professionals involved in their care. The course is led by social workers and the agency manager and provides applicants with the opportunity to find out what fostering is "really like".

- Running alongside the 'Skills to Foster' course those applicants are provided with AH Medical Forms and are asked to complete Consent Forms for all statutory checks, including Enhanced DBS checks, Ofsted, local authority and references. Any potential difficulties in the assessment are also discussed at this meeting.

- The application will then be allocated by the Manager for a Form F Assessment to be completed by a qualified independent social worker.

Assessment

We believe that the rigorous selection of carers is our foundation to robust placements. All of our approved carers will have undertaken a thorough assessment. This includes:

- Once the prospective carer is allocated to the worker, they visit the applicant at their home for a series of meetings. This is a minimum of six visits of at least two hours each. The purpose of these meetings is to talk with them and other members of their family about their household and lifestyle.

- This information is recorded on the Form F together with "evidence" of their ability and suitability to foster.

- At the same time as the Form F assessment is progressing, a Health & Safety assessment is carried out along with the completion of statutory checks and at least three personal references plus an employment reference. The applicant(s) will also be asked to undergo a medical with their GP and the completed AH Form will have been forwarded to the Agency's Medical Advisor for a health assessment and any recommendations recorded.

- On completion of the Form F, all satisfactory statutory checks and medical reports the assessment is presented to Hythe House Support's Independent Fostering Panel.

- Hythe House Support holds a Fostering Panel at least four times per year. These are chaired by an independent person who is assisted by a number of professionals from a variety of disciplines. We also have independent people who have experience of caring for children in a number of situations including a current foster carer from another organisation; a former looked after child.

- The applicants then attend our Fostering Panel and in keeping with our belief that fostering involves the whole family, the children of applicants are invited to attend part of the panel meeting if appropriate to do so.

The Fostering Panel will determine the suitability of applicants and the circumstances of their approval as Foster Carers and will then make their recommendation to the Agency Decision Maker, who is an independent senior social worker, with at least 3 years post-qualifying experience in child care social work, and has knowledge of child care law and practice (standard 23.12).

Foster Carer Home Annual Reviews

All foster carers are reviewed, in line with Fostering Services Regulations 2011, (Regulation 29), and the Home Review Policy of the Agency, on an annual basis, unless there is a change of circumstances that necessitate earlier. As well as consulting with the foster carers, enquiries are made with local authorities, any young people in placement, their families and the foster family, as to their suitability to continue as foster carers or for any changes to their approval as considered necessary.

All annual reviews are referred to the Fostering Panel for consideration. ISW's and SSW to ensure that all information was correctly recorded, and this was then ratified by the ADM.

Health & Safety audits and risk assessments are carried out annually with all statutory checks renewed on a three-yearly basis to include Local Authority Checks.

Support

Hythe House Support is committed, in line with its Philosophy of Care, to providing its foster carers with a high level of support. The following services are offered to our foster carers:

- Regular Support Visits – Foster carers receive regular support visits at a level agreed with them according to the needs and demands of the child(ren) placed.
- Support Groups - Foster carers attend 4-6 weekly group meetings, which offer peer support, as well as support from the workers present.
- Male Support Groups are also offered in the evenings to enable the hard-to-reach carers an opportunity to attend.
- Out of Hours Support – a telephone support service is available to foster carers outside of office hour seven days a week including Bank Holidays.
- Annual Leave/Respite Care - Carers are entitled to up to 28 days paid annual leave/respite per year (pro rata).

Supervision

Hythe House Support recognises the effective supervision of foster carers is important to promoting good standards of practice. Each foster carer is allocated a named, qualified, Supervising Social Worker and this worker will visit carers every four-six week. Additional visits are arranged as and when the need is identified or required as well as an open-door policy for support and guidance is in place for all foster carers.

Training

Hythe House Support believes the needs of children are better met and their welfare protected where carers are provided with appropriate training. To this end Hythe House Support is committed to the development of its foster carers through the provision of a comprehensive training programme that includes courses provided by both internal and external trainers. All of our carers have completed the TSDS, portfolio. Anyone to join Hythe House who would be in the process of completing it are supported with this, by offering them workshops. Hythe House have also offered all carers evening support groups and on-line training programmes to enable all carers to full fill their obligation as carers to progress their development and skills in caring for young people. Carers are also encouraged to seek bespoke courses to meet the changing needs of the children in their care to enhance their care of the children through a greater level of understanding of the child's individual needs.

Appendix 1

Organisational Structure

MANAGING DIRECTOR
Margaret Duffy

DIRECTORS

Agency Head Responsible Individual	**Head of IT Health & Safety Marketing & GDPR**	**Head of Marketing, GDPR & social media**
Gary Duffy	David Duffy	Robert Duffy

Agency Manager Senior Social Worker
Tanya Callaway

Senior Supervising Social Worker
Ronda Jones

Part Time Supervising Social Worker
Jabeen Sethi

Senior Administration Support	
Social Work/ Business Development/Finance	
Nicola Duffy	