

Foster Newport Communication Plan

Overview/objective

To boost the numbers of in-house foster carers and point out the advantages of being a foster carer for the council rather than an independent agency

Strategy

Consistent and regular messages based around the “Newport offer” mainly through social media but also in Newport Matters and, where appropriate, in press releases/special events.

Key messages

- **Council can offer a range of benefits including financial support; learning and development; supervision and support; respite care; out-of-office advice and support; Care First; an education coordinator; paid membership of the Fostering Network; opportunities to meet other foster carers, officers and senior councillor at twice-yearly forum; Newport support groups**
- **Newport City Council is “working together hand in hand” with foster carers**
- **Foster carers do receive a payment but becoming a foster parent is so much more than a job – and the rewards of giving a child a safe, secure and happy environment at a time when they most need it is immeasurable**
- **The advantage of fostering for the council, rather than a private agency, is that it has an excellent reputation and offers professionalism, training and support to both foster carers and children**
- **Newport is unique in that it offers additional support via a specialist team**
- **Not-for-profit**

Key Communication Channels

- South Wales Argus
- Western Mail/Wales Online
- BBC Wales
- Council website
- Facebook
- Twitter
- YouTube

Key dates and actions

Date	Activity	Core message	Actions/considerations
Continuing 2019/20	Social media messaging	Advantages of being a council foster carer	Weekly social media messages with appropriate imagery.
19 October	Stall at 50+ information day	Find out more about becoming a council foster carer	Marketing give-aways
Autumn tbc	Animated film completed		Put on council's YouTube channel/social media using clips and directing people to film
Autumn tbc	Cabinet member report recommending increase in foster care payment	Payments being brought in line with neighbouring councils	Press release/social media making clear this is just part of the Newport offer
Autumn tbc	Decision on increasing pay	As above	As above with quote from CM
January 2020	Month long recruitment campaign across Gwent	20 good reasons to foster	Press release launching campaign followed by regular social media messages culminating in drop-in sessions for would-be foster carers
Towards ends of Jan	Reminder about drop-in sessions		Press release/social media

February 2020	LGTB history month	Awareness raising for LGTB	Specific social media messages aimed at this community and how they can be great foster parents
Summer 2020	Pride Cymru	As above	Council's equalities team takes part in event – potential opportunity?
August 2020	National Play Day	Newport Foster team presence on day	Excellent opportunity to get message to parents
October 2020	Food festival	Opportunity to have a stall/hand out leaflets	Need to speak to food festival team early to arrange

General media messages for use throughout the year:

Our foster carers work for a not-for-profit organisation that offers 24-hour support as they provide a loving and caring home for our children. Find out more here

Could you provide a loving and stable home for a child? In return, we can offer you fantastic support – both financial and practical. Lots more info here

We value our foster carers and make sure we care for them. Our unique Newport offer includes respite; access to Care First; out-of-hours advice and support; social activities and much more...

Our foster carers, their own children and their foster children can enjoy leisure and sporting activities thanks to their special council leisure card. One of the many advantages for being a council carer...

Have your children flown the nest? Do you have room in your home and your heart for a child who needs someone to care for them? Find out more about how you can help us – and we can help you

We need special people to foster our children and to say thank you we offer more than just financial support

...

Foster carers tell us how much better it is to work for us. Find out what we can offer our carers over and above the support given by agencies including regular treats for the whole family and continuing training.

Become a Newport council foster carer and discover that we're not just there to sign you up – we're there for as long as you need us...

We're proud that our fantastic foster carers look after our children. Become part of our great network and make a difference to a child's life

From small beginnings...help give a child a home when they most need one by become one of our foster carers.

**PLUS: personal messages from foster carers about why they foster for the council (with pix/videos)
Clips from animated film**

Time specific

October:

Interested in becoming one of the special people who look after our children? Pop along to the 50+ information day in Newport Centre on 19 October and chat to our fostering team

Our fostering team will be at the 50+ info day tomorrow and can explain the advantages of becoming a council foster carer. Look out for their stall in Newport Centre between 10am and 3pm.

Christmas:

Oh yes they are! Our foster families are off to enjoy the pantomime at The Riverfront this month. It's one of the treats we arrange for these very special people during the year

Before summer holidays:

The sun has got its hat on and we're getting ready for our summer fun day for foster carers, the children they look after and their own children. Find out more about the benefits of being one of our foster carers