

Social Work

Argyll and Bute

Health and Social Care Partnership



Community Services ~ Children and Families

Family Placement Team ~ Adoption Services



# Argyll and Bute Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) Adoption Services

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addition, training will be offered along with invitations to support groups for adoptive parents across Argyll and Bute.

Please read this information pack and, if you are interested in finding out more about adoption, please contact the Family Placement Team. A family placement social worker will then arrange to visit you for an initial discussion.

Contact us:

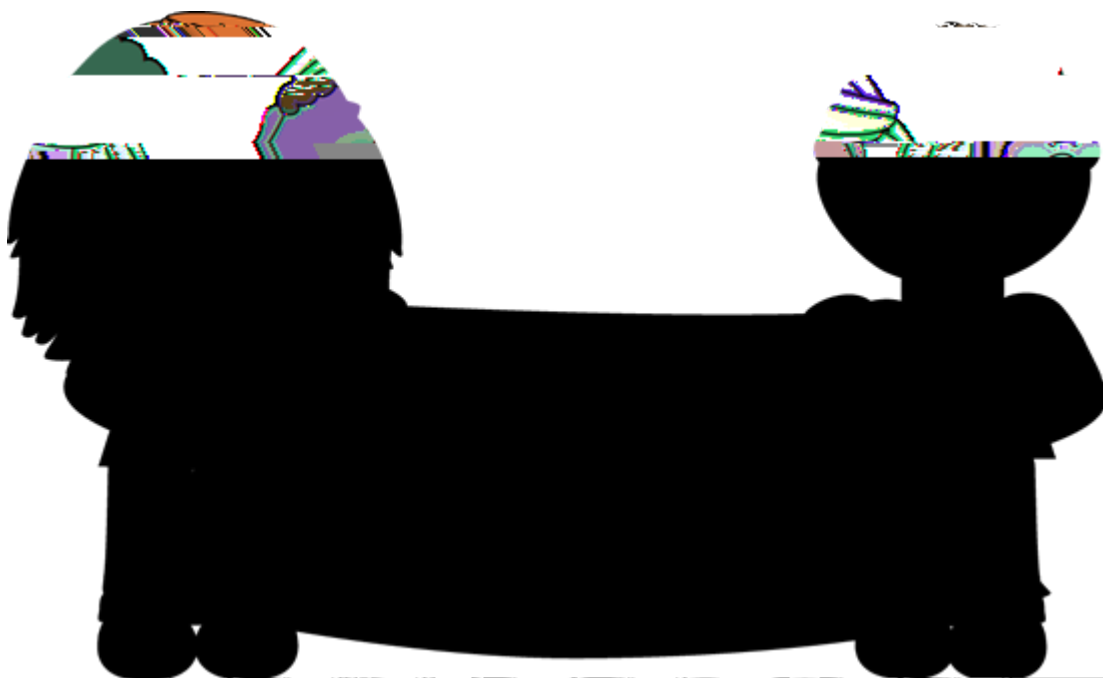
Argyll and Bute HSCP, Family Placement Team, Dolphin Hall Annex,  
Manse Avenue, Dunoon, PA23 8DQ

Phone: 01546 605-517

Email: at [fpduty@argyll-bute.gov.uk](mailto:fpduty@argyll-bute.gov.uk)

There is information about our adoption service on our website:

<https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/adoption>







Adoption is not right for everyone and there are some who feel they could not parent a child who has not been born to them.

In recognition that adoption has become more complex as the children seeking adoptive families may be older, part of a sibling group or have additional support needs, post adoption support services may be available.

The above is general information only. Further details will be given to you throughout the process.

## Who can adopt?

Whether you are single or married, male or female, a homeowner or renting, straight, lesbian, gay, trans or bisexual - you can adopt.

To ensure that every child gets the support and stability they deserve, there are a few criteria you need to be approved as an adoptive parent.

### Criteria

#### Age

*f* All applicants must be over 21 years old.

Applicants should be able to meet the lifelong commitment of parenthood. There is no upper age limit. However, the age difference between the child and the adoptive parent must be within the normal range for children who stay with their birth family, unless the child has exceptional needs, which makes age a less relevant factor.

#### Status

Applications will be accepted from:

*f* Single applicants.

*f* Married couples.

*f* Unmarried couples, including those of the same gender, who are in an enduring relationship.

#### Health

*f* Applicant's health should be such that there is every expectation that they will be around until the child reaches adulthood and beyond.

*f* Smoking will not prevent an application being accepted but applicants should be aware that smoking will be addressed throughout the assessment. Those who smoke will be strongly encouraged to stop. Children under the age of 5 would not normally be matched with approved adoptive parents. Applicants who smoke and become approved adoptive parents need to be aware that there are certain children for whom they will not be considered such as those with respiratory problems. In addition, smoking may be a





## Resource

- f* Applications will generally only be accepted from enquirers who are willing to consider children from a range of backgrounds. These are likely to include neglect and abuse attributable to the impact of alcohol and drug addiction.

## Ethnic Origin, Cultural Background and Religion

- f* Applications are welcome from all sections of the community.

## Birth Family Contact

- f* Applicants must demonstrate their commitment to sharing information about the child's birth family and the circumstances of the adoption with the child in an age appropriate way throughout the child's growing up.
- f* Applicants should be prepared to meet with birth family members for a single meeting, if requested to do so.



## How does the assessment process work?

### The Assessment

- f* This will be completed by a qualified social worker from the family placement team.
- f* It will be completed no longer than six months after the application has been accepted by Argyll and Bute HSCP, unless unforeseen matters arise during the process. The quality and thoroughness of the assessment will be the priority.
- f* The assessment will be undertaken within the applicant's home at times agreed between the applicants and the assessing social worker.
- f* The manager for the adoption service will undertake a minimum of one visit during the assessment.
- f* Prior to going to the Approval and Matching Panel, you will be given the opportunity to read the assessment report and, if you wish, to make comment. The only information we shall not be able to share with you is that from referees unless they inform us we may do so.

### Local Authority, Health and Police Checks

- f* All applicants and other members of their household aged 16 years or above, will be subject to local authority, and Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) checks.
- f* If you have been convicted of any offence involving or against children, you will NOT be assessed as an adoptive carer. Other offences will be considered on a case by case basis.
- f* If you have a child who is under the age of five years we will ask for a report from your health visitor.
- f* All applicants will require to be medically examined by their GP and a confidential report will be submitted to the Agency's medical advisor.
- f* All applicants will require to give written consent to the Agency's medical advisor seeking information and reports from any health professionals who have had contact with the applicants.



## The Adoption Panel

- f* All applications are considered by Argyll and Bute HSCP's Approval and Matching Panel, which is comprised of a range of people who have knowledge and experience of children and adoption.
- f* The application will be presented by the assessing social worker.
- f* Applicants will be invited to attend the panel considering their application.
- f* Applicants may be accompanied by a family member or a friend.
- f* The Approval and Matching Panel will make a recommendation to a senior social work manager, called the Agency Decision Maker.
- f* Applicants will be informed of the recommendation verbally at the panel.
- f* Applicants will receive written notification of the decision of the Agency Decision Maker within 21 days from the panel.
- f* In the event of an application being refused, applicants may ask for the decision to be reviewed. The assessing social worker, along with the manager of the adoption service, will provide details of this process.

Throughout the assessment, you should expect to be kept informed of your progress. Should any issue arise, this will be discussed with you.

The manager of the adoption service will visit at least once during the assessment but if a matter arises within the assessment, which you feel requires discussion with the manager you should feel confident in asking for a meeting.



is usual for the child to take the adopters' family name. Once the child has been placed, it is the responsibility of the adopters to petition the court for an adoption order, usually employing the services of a solicitor with experience of adoption law. The timing of this will be discussed with you by your social worker but may be determined by the legal processes.



## What about finance?

It is usual for adopters to assume full financial responsibility for their adopted child. Therefore, it is important, for prospective adopters to consider their financial arrangements for after a child has been placed, taking into account the additional financial commitment a child involves. This may include a period when one parent remains at home. Adoptive families are eligible for Child Benefit and may be eligible for other state benefits.

In certain circumstances, the criteria for Adoption Allowances may be met. An Adoption Allowance is to assist the placement of older children, children with additional support needs, learning or physical disabilities or to enable brothers and sisters to be placed together. There are certain criteria for eligibility.

Adoption Allowances are subject to a financial assessment of the adoptive parents.

Allowances are paid quarterly. They are reviewed at least once per year or when an adoptive family's financial circumstances have changed. Allowances may be terminated if the criteria for the allowance no longer pertains or if a family's circumstances change.

When the family placement social worker visits he or she will give you more information about Allowances.



## Intercountry Adoption

Argyll and Bute HSCP accepts enquiries from those wishing to adopt a child from outwith the United Kingdom.

## Suggested websites and reading

### Adoption and Fostering Alliance Scotland

AFA Scotland  
Foxglove offices/GF2  
14 Links Place  
Edinburgh, EH6 7EZ

[www.afascotland.com](http://www.afascotland.com)

Phone: 0131 322 8490

Email: [info@afascotland.com](mailto:info@afascotland.com)

## Barnardo's Scotland Adoption Support Service

Building 10000  
Academy Park  
Gower Park  
Glasgow  
G5 11PR

[www.barnardos.org.uk](http://www.barnardos.org.uk)

Phone: 0141 419 4796

Email: [sass@barnardos.org.uk](mailto:sass@barnardos.org.uk)

### Books

Adopting a Child in Scotland

By Robert Swift, BAAF

The Adoption Experience: Families Who Give Children a Second  
Chance

By Ann Morris, Adoption UK

An Adoption Diary

By Moira James, BAAF

Loving and Living with Traumatized Children: Reflections by  
Adoptive Parents

By Megan Hirst, BAAF

Adopters on Adoption: Reflections on Parenthood and Children

By David Howe, BAAF

## Suggestions, comments or complaints

If you would like to make a suggestion, comment or complaint about Social Work Services please do so in writing to:

Argyll and Bute HSCP

Kilmory

Lochgilphead

PA31 8RT

Phone: 01546 605 -517

