

Between 1997—2010 PACT provided training courses for care sector staff seeking National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs). Large numbers of care staff based in the Thames Valley achieved their qualifications through PACT.

In 2010 this service was passed over to West Berkshire Training Consortium, in order that PACT might focus more on developing its community and adoption work.

PACT today

The focus of the charity—to support families and provide services not available locally—remains constant within the Oxford Diocese, .

The reputation and experience of the organisation has grown over the years. PACT's trustees and staff group, now numbering 140, have signed up to the business plan focusing on their work from 2010–2014. PACT recently rebranded itself and developed a new "building blocks" logo, ensuring it remains accessible and relevant. It has formulated an I-Shape framework to define its values and how it grows and develops as an organisation, a workplace and a provider of support for families, individuals and children.

The Oxford Diocese has continued to support PACT over the years through an annual grant. However this direct financial input was reduced in the mid-1990s.

The relationship between the organisation and the church is an important element of PACT. In keeping with other changes in society, PACT no longer requires its staff to be active church attendees, although the basic tenets of the Christian faith remain important within all its services.

PACT's trustees, staff and volunteers look forward with anticipation and excitement to celebrating its 100th year in 2011.

The vision from Bishop Francis Paget which formed the inspiration of PACT's origins is now positively carried forward by the present Bishop of Oxford, the Right Reverend John Pritchard.

Support PACT

PACT relies on the generous donations and support in kind from businesses, volunteers and individual donors. Even a small regular monthly donation can make a big difference to a child's life and prospects. To find out more about how you can support this charity contact PACT on 0118 938 7600 or visit www.pactcharity.org.

A history of PACT 1911-2011



PARENTS AND CHILDREN TOGETHER



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PARENTS AND CHILDREN TOGETHER

The Oxford Diocesan Council for Social Work Inc., is a Company limited by guarantee, registered in England (No. 1636098) and a Registered Charity (No. 285214), whose registered office is as above.

A century of building and strengthening families

PACT is now one of the UK's leading charities in its field, providing a helping hand to vulnerable families through community projects across the Thames Valley and creating new families through fostering and adoption in London and Southern England.

PACT began building and strengthening families 100 years ago. The then Bishop of Oxford, Bishop Francis Paget (pictured), held a passion to address the vulnerabilities of needy families living in the Oxford Diocesan area in 1910.

He shared his concerns with other like-minded people to establish an organisation that would provide guidance and protection for children in poverty or families in need of support.

He saw the need as "...an imperative and the evil so appalling" in the society of which he was part in 1910, that action was essential.

With the support of his Diocesan colleagues, Bishop Paget established the Diocesan Council for Prevention and Rescue Work in 1911.

Lord Stanmore, the son of Lord Aberdeen, Prime Minister at the time of the Crimean War, provided £100 to enable the Council to start its work.



Timeline

- 1911—Established as Diocesan Council for Prevention and Rescue Work
- 1953—Approved as an Adoption Society
- 1960—Becomes known as the Oxford Moral Welfare Association
- 1990s—Becomes known as Parents And Children Together
- 2005—PACT Parent House in Bracknell opens
- 2010—PACT merges with Childlink, London
- 2011—Centenary Year



The work begins

A rescue worker, Miss Sharpe, was immediately appointed by the Diocesan Council and she began visiting unmarried mothers to help them build a better life for their children.

Miss Sharpe's efforts quickly demonstrated how important and widespread family issues were and a second worker joined the team, thereby upgrading Miss Sharpe to a Diocesan Worker.

Her first report recorded visits to 52 parishes, many by bicycle, within the first six months. She helped 97 women and girls, placing some in maternity homes, houses of mercy and refuges.

Over 20 were visited in their own homes and 30 visited through links with the Mothers' Union.

The Council's remit identified the importance of education and community support to help families to escape poverty and uphold Christian family values.

Parents, teachers and youth leaders were all involved in ensuring that social well-being might be achieved. Even in those early years the organisation worked in partnership with other agencies, as it still does today.

In 1960, the 50 Year annual report acknowledged the immense input from the Council of pastoral and educational work through the counties of Oxfordshire, Berkshire and Buckinghamshire.

The report recognised that some members "needed personal help, other than in financial terms, if they are to achieve satisfying personal and family relationships". This is an example of how similar the understanding of family needs was then, to now, 50 years on.

Adoption and fostering

In the early 1960s Council members highlighted concern for the numbers of very young mothers, many under 17, and their need for support for themselves and their children.

The organisation established itself as an Adoption Society in 1953 and began placing babies directly with adoptive families. In 1954, 128 children were placed for adoption, which grew to 481 placements in 1969. Thereafter the numbers reduced as society's understanding of and provision for unsupported mothers improved and many more single parents found that caring for their babies was a viable choice.



The 1976 Adoption Act required local authorities to provide their own adoption services and by the mid 1980s the organisation had relinquished its placements of babies to the local authorities.

However, the requirement for placements for children with exceptional needs remained clear and the society re-organised itself to recruit families for particularly vulnerable children – those who were older, required placements with their siblings, had a disability or came from black and minority ethnic families.

In the late 1990s the society – by this time known as Parents And Children Together - was registered to approve adopters for children placed from overseas as well as domestic adoption.

In the early 21st century foster carers were recruited to provide homes for a range of children who could not be adopted but needed a permanent family.

Housing and communities

The Society house Clark's Row, Oxford, was founded by Miss Hatch in 1907, and later served as a Remand Home and Probation Hostel before being sold in 1947.

In 1960 the Oxford Moral Welfare Association (the new name of the Council) started to run a home where rooms and flatlets were available to unmarried mothers who had their children with them. Hostel accommodation for young women is presently offered at PACT Parents' house in Bracknell which supports to young women and their children.

PACT now runs 23 community projects such as Children's Centres, family support and drop-in sessions across Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire and Berkshire.

