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## *Adopt London West*

### *Annual Report*

*1st April 2021 – 31st March 2022*

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1. Introduction and Context.....	2
2. Purpose of Report .....	3
3. Operating Model .....	4
4. Financial Arrangements .....	5
5. Performance.....	7
6. Adopt London Collaboration.....	10
7. Adopt London Marketing strategy .....	11
8. Strategy .....	11
9. Adoption: National Strategy & RAA Leaders network .....	15
10. Challenges and priorities for 2022/23 .....	17
11. Feedback.....	19

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## 1. Introduction and Context

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The creation of Regional Adoption Agencies (RAAs) was part of a national agenda to improve the recruitment and assessment of prospective adopters and speed up the matching and placement of children for adoption.

The Education and Adoption Act 2016 required local authorities to combine their adoption services into Regional Adoption Agencies by April 2020 or they would be directed to do so.

The premise of regionalisation was to:

- *Increase the number of children adopted*
- *Reduce the length of time children wait to be adopted*
- *Improve post-adoption support services to families who have adopted children who were previously in the care of a Local Authority*
- *Reduce the number of agencies that provide adoption services and thereby improve efficiency and effectiveness*

A London project board made the decision to create 4 Regional Adoption Agencies for London, 24 London boroughs are part of this arrangement, and the collaboration has become “Adopt London”. The primary aim was that each RAA would work collaboratively with each other across London on areas that would contribute to an equitable standard of services to children and families, services are delivered through a hosted model.

The shared vision of the benefits of an Adopt London collaboration includes the belief that:

- *Stronger leadership focusing on Adoption is achievable*
- *There is the potential to achieve an improved offer to families through joint delivery of some services and ultimately joint commissioning*
- *Improved relationships with voluntary adopt agencies and other provider services will benefit the whole adoption sector*
- *Services across the partnerships can become more responsive, flexible, and resilient by sharing resources, knowledge and expertise*
- *A shared commitment to continually improving practice for adopted children, adopters and all those affected by adoption will drive forward change, encourage innovation and contribute to establishing a model for joint working in other areas of children’s services.*

Ealing is the host borough for Adopt London West (ALW), the service went “live” on 1st October 2019, along with the other 3 Adopt London regions. 3 Brent staff were transferred under TUPE legislation to Ealing on 3rd September 2019, 4 staff from Hounslow chose to transfer to Ealing terms and conditions, these decisions were made by individual staff based on their personal circumstances.

ALW’s LA partners delegated responsibility to ALW to carry out the following functions.

- *Recruit and assess new adopters*
- *Family finding for children and matching them with Adopters*
- *Post Adoption and Special Guardianship support services that offer.*
  - *Support to adopters and special guardians including arranging specialist therapeutic services funded by the Adoption Support Fund.*
  - *Letterbox services to facilitate indirect contact between birth families and children*
  - *Birth parent counselling*
  - *Services to adopted adults*

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## *2. Purpose of Report*

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This report provides a summary of activity and progress to date and of ALW's performance in 2021/22.

Prior to the implementation of the RAA a detailed partnership agreement was developed and approved by all partners. This included a range of legal clauses and schedules.

The partnership agreement also set out the governance arrangements to oversee and support the implementation and development of Adopt London West.

A Partnership Board made up of Directors from each borough meets regularly to receive updates on progress of key priorities, to discuss issues and risks and to provide strategic oversight and support. The working relationship between each of the partner authorities and the RAA has been fundamental to the success so far of the partnership working and will continue to be the focus as a developing service and partnership.

A Heads of Service Quality Assurance group comprising of Heads of Services from each participating borough meets monthly with the RAA Head of Service and are responsible for monitoring, tracking, and developing a delivery plan and ensuring partner engagement is effective at an operational level.

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### 3. Operating Model

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The RAA operates as a shared service, there are currently 30 members of staff, who work across 4 teams.

- a small recruitment and assessment team who are responsible for the recruitment, assessment preparation and training of adopters.
- a family finding team who are responsible for early identification of children, family finding and early permanence arrangements
- an adoption and special guardianship support team offer a comprehensive range of services to families, children and adopted adults and manage a large volume of applications to the Adoption Support Fund on behalf of families who require a therapeutic service.
- a business support team provides a range of services including, management of initial enquiries, data collection, reporting and analysis, financial systems and budget monitoring, co-ordination and administration of Adoption Panel, core administrative services, the business management of the adoption support fund process including a statutory annual assurance statement

In addition, a part time Clinical Psychologist provides support and clinical advice to social work colleagues using a consultation model. A part time marketing and communications lead is part of the Adopt London shared marketing & comms team.

The staff group is stable, all permanent social work posts are occupied, there are a small number of fixed term posts that are yet to be agreed on a permanent basis.

The teams, led by a Head of Service, deliver the core adoption functions as outlined below, ALW has its office base in Perceval House, Ealing Council's main office building.

The partner authorities delegated the following responsibilities to Ealing to deliver on their behalf:

- *The recruitment of prospective adopters*
- *The assessment of prospective adopter's suitability to adopt a child*
- *An Adoption panel to consider recommendations on applicants' suitability to adopt and the suitability of adopters to meet the needs of children with a plan of adoption, "matches" of children*
- *The provision of adoption and special guardianship support services to families living in the region, including.*
- *Independent support to birth parents*
- *Access to adoption records*
- *Letterbox exchange service and support with contact arrangements*

The legal responsibilities for Looked After Children remains with their local authority, the following summarises the key responsibilities that are retained.

- *Corporate Parenting*
- *Agency Decision maker responsibilities and all legal responsibilities for looked after children*
- *Early permanence planning*
- *The provision of and review of financial allowances to adopters and special guardians*

In partnership with the RAA, each partner contributes to.

- Quality assurance and performance tracking
- Ensuring that accurate and timely data is held, collated, and reported to the DfE, ASGLB and any other body as necessary

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#### *4. Financial Arrangements*

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The Partnership agreement set out the agreed financial contributions for the first 2/3 years of operation. The resources that transferred, both staff costs and non-staff budgets, were based on the existing resources that each Borough had allocated to deliver its adoption functions. Inevitably, individual spend varied between each Boroughs as did levels of demand.

Several workshops have taken place during 2021/22 attended by finance leads and directors for each ALW partner to consider options for moving to a demand based budget. Finance modelling was completed based on several options to seek a solution that was fair and equitable for all. A recommended model was agreed in principle and is awaiting final agreement of all partners.

<i>Partner</i>	<i>2021/22 Financial Contribution</i>	<i>2021/22 percentage contribution</i>
<i>Brent</i>	<i>392,912</i>	<i>23%</i>
<i>Ealing</i>	<i>681,713</i>	<i>40%</i>
<i>Hammersmith &amp; Fulham</i>	<i>206,243</i>	<i>12%</i>
<i>Hounslow</i>	<i>413,680</i>	<i>25%</i>
<b><i>Total</i></b>	<b><i>1,694,548</i></b>	<b><i>100%</i></b>

The following paragraphs describe the key areas of financial activity.

## Adoption Support Fund

Adopt London West manages all applications from families living in each partner LA to the Adoption Support Fund (ASF) a Department for Education fund for the direct provision of therapeutic support to families. Applications to the fund are made following a Social Work assessment and identification of a therapeutic provider

01 April – 31 March 2022					
	Brent	Ealing	H&F	Hounslow	Combined
<b>Special Guardianship Applications</b>	5	19	23	15	62
<b>Funding</b>	£14,000	£49,000	£63,000	£46,000	£172,000
<b>Adoption Applications</b>	57	70	35	60	222
<b>Funding</b>	£146,000	£181,000	£86,000	£204,000	£617,000
<b>Total Applications</b>	<b>62</b> (+51%)	<b>89</b> (-16%)	<b>58</b> (+29%)	<b>75</b> (+10%)	<b>284</b> (+10.5%)
<b>Total Funds</b>	<b>£160,000</b> (+33%)	<b>£230,000</b> (-10%)	<b>£149,000</b> (+22%)	<b>£250,000</b> (+29.5%)	<b>£789,000</b> (+19.6%)

## Interagency placements

Inter-agency placements are purchased when no adopters approved by Adopt London West are available or are not considered to be the most suitable match for a child. 31% of the children placed in 2021/22 were placed with ALW approved adopters, increasing this percentage is a target for improvement in 2022/23. The cost of Inter Agency placements was **£673,856**. Inter-agency income from ALW families matched with children from other regions was **£263k**. Currently each partner local authority is responsible for the payment of inter-agency fees, a finance workshop is planned to explore funding models with the aim of reaching agreement on an approach that is mutually beneficial and equitable to all partners.

Increasing the number of children placed with our partner Adopt London regions is also a priority for 2022/23, a funding bid has been submitted to create a matching manager for London, this post will add additional management capacity and provide robust oversight to the matching process. There is a shared commitment to place London children with London families, maximising the use of all potential families within the partnership provides the best outcome for children and adopters, placing children locally means that, when necessary, high quality, timely support can be arranged.

Children placed – ALW/ Interagency Placements 01 April – 31 March 2022			
	ALW	Interagency	Total
<b>Brent</b>	3	3	<b>6</b>
<b>Ealing</b>	3 <i>(*1 disrupted)</i>	2	<b>5</b>
<b>H&amp;F</b>	2	4 <i>(*1 disrupted)</i>	<b>6</b>
<b>Hounslow</b>	3	14	<b>17</b>
<b>Total</b>	11 <b>*(10)</b>	23 <b>(*22)</b>	34 <b>(*32)</b>

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### 5. Performance

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#### Children

The number of children being placed for Adoption nationally continues to be low, in London there has been a further slight decrease from 191 children in 2019/20 to 180 in 2021/22.

Placement Order, (Court authority to place a child for Adoption) numbers also continue to fall suggesting that the decrease in orders will continue. Placement Orders have fallen from 234 in 2019/20 to 171 in 2021/22.

An exception to this trend is Hounslow who placed the highest number of children in London in 21/22.

32 children were placed by ALW in their new families in 2021/22, 17 of whom were from Hounslow - 53%, the remaining 3 partners placed significantly fewer children.

Adoption performance targets set 2 main performance indicators; one directly relates to ALW performance.

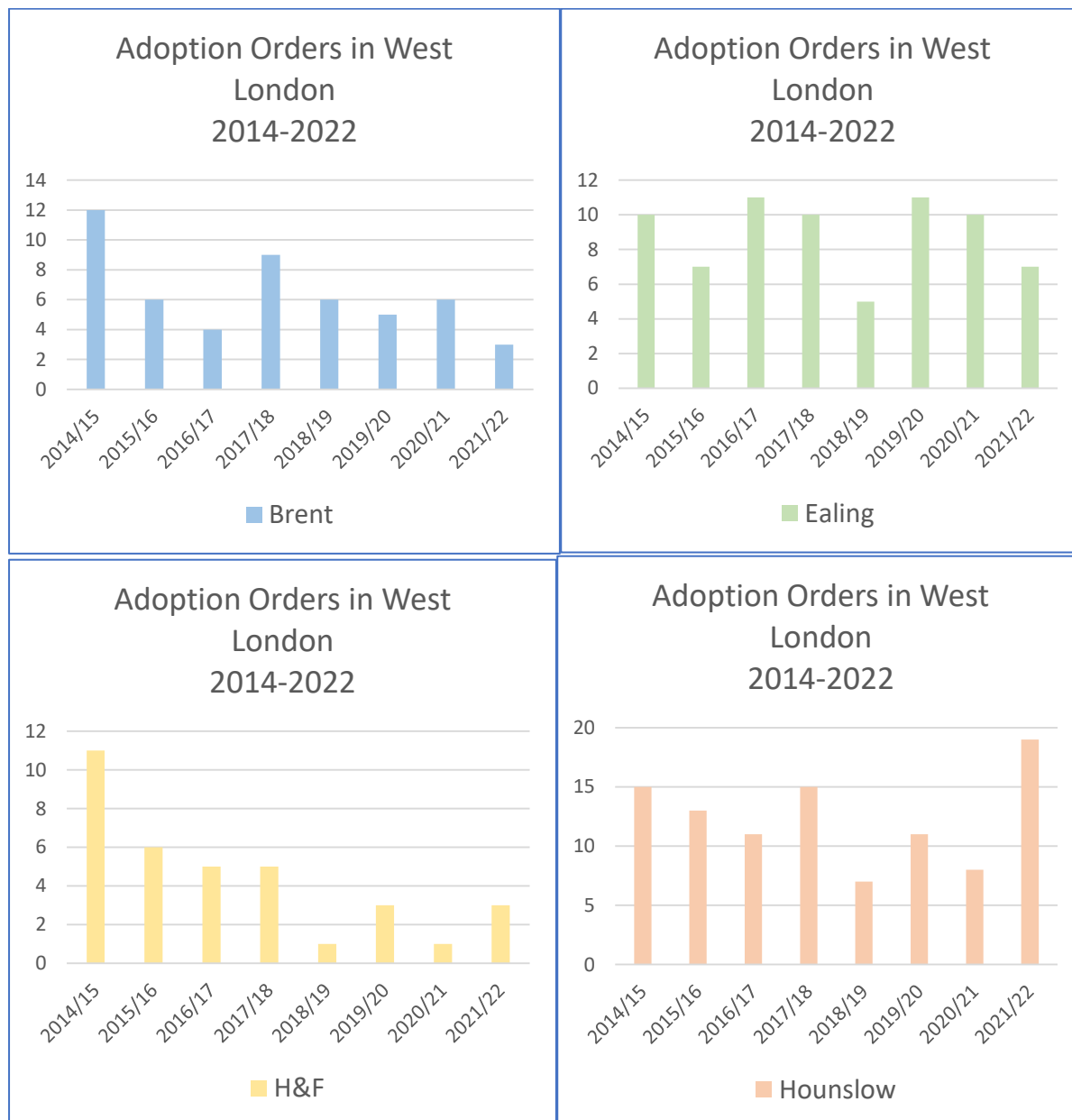
- **A2** length of time between a Placement Order and match with an adoptive family, the expected timescale is 121 days.
- The average for ALW was 201 days, outside the target but stronger than our Adopt London partners and well inside the London average of 270 days

Black children and children with additional needs wait considerably longer than other children to be placed, on average 7 months longer, children with a disability wait an additional 359 days compared to other children.

Of the 32 children placed, 39% are of Black, Asian or Mixed Ethnicity - 12.5% are Black or black/mixed ethnicity



Of the 32 children placed, 7 were placed under Early Permanence arrangements, this means children were placed with adopters who are also approved as foster carers and often before Court proceedings have concluded, enabling the child to move in with their new family, sometimes months earlier than is usually possible.



### Adopters

21 new adoptive families were approved, slightly more than the previous year but still not yet at the target number of 30 families, another improvement target for 2022/23.

48% of adopters approved are Black, Asian, or mixed ethnicity and 29% are from the LGBT+ community.

Performance indicators for the approval of adopters set the expected length of the assessment process,

- **Stage 1** – should be completed in 60 days, the average time in ALW was 105 days, lower than the London average of 125 days
- **Stage 2** – should be completed in 121 days, the average time in ALW was 154 days, also inside the London average of 165 days.

Assessments take longer than expected for a variety of reasons, in Stage 1 delays are usually due to the completion of statutory checks, medicals and DBS (criminal records) are most likely to be subject to delay. The detailed assessment at Stage 2 can be affected due to the applicant's personal circumstances. National data confirms that no region is meeting the expected timescales for either stage.

## **Examples of Practice development in 2021/22**

### **Early permanence**

All ALW adopters in assessment are encouraged to consider Early Permanence, additional training and support is offered to those who wish to proceed. Increasing the numbers of children placed in Early Permanence arrangements is a development priority regionally and nationally. London has the lowest rate of Early Permanence placements in the country, just under 5% compared to 33% in some areas of the country. A development project for the whole London region, funded by the DfE has just begun to enhance training and support in this area of practice.

ALW have facilitated 4 Early Permanence workshops for social workers across the 4 partner LA's, 43 social workers have attended, feedback has been positive and social workers and managers are considering Early Permanence more often

### **University of East Anglia Moving to Adoption practice model**

ALW has fully embraced the messages and learning following training on this model, it has changed the way introductions for children moving to their new family. Emphasis is placed on taking time to build relationships between the adults before formal introductions start. The process slows down introductions but allows meaningful relationships to be established that are more likely to endure for the benefit of the child. Feedback on the model helps the process to be adapted and overall, the outcomes for children have been positive.

### **Special Guardianship Support**

Peer support services have developed further this year, a special guardian co-facilitates a monthly support group, in addition, a peer support initiative of informal meetings and "chill & chat" sessions are also coordinated and facilitated by the same special guardian. A special guardianship forum has met for the first time, this was attended by various guest speakers including a director of one of the partner LA's. The forum will meet quarterly and is co-chaired by the special guardian and head of service, the purpose is to enable direct dialogue between special guardians and representatives of the service and to influence policy and practice.

The special guardian who gives her time so generously, also sits on a national steering group looking at services and support for special guardians.

## Kinship

ALW has commissioned a service from Kinship, a national charity (formerly known as Grandparents Plus) the service offers membership to all families living in any of the 4 ALW partner authorities who are caring for a child in a “kinship” arrangement regardless of the legal status of the arrangement. In addition, a more specialist level of service is also included in the contract that offers direct more intense support to 40 families a year.

Team Managers from each partner LA meet regularly with ALW managers to ensure that the service is supporting the most vulnerable families.

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### *6. Adopt London Collaboration*

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[Adopt London website link](#)

A key strength of the Adopt London partnership is the scale of opportunity that 24 boroughs forming the 4 RAAs can bring to developing practice across London and the ability to contribute to influencing and shaping the national agenda.

The 4 Heads of Service form a strong leadership team who all are part of the national RAA leaders network whose focus is to implement the National Adoption Strategy and work together to raise standards nationally.

An Executive Advisory Board comprising of the 4 RAA host directors provides governance and strategic support to the Adopt London agenda and delivery plan, this group meet quarterly and is chaired by one of the partner local authority’s DCS. A Partnership document is being drafted to formalise the partnership arrangements and ensure the appropriate governance of Adopt London projects and the shared website, [AdoptLondon.org.uk](http://AdoptLondon.org.uk), social media and other projects.

**At the heart of Adopt London is the premise that a pooled and dedicated service will deliver better outcomes through:**

- Stronger leadership focusing on adoption
- Pooled resources and joint commissioning
- Collaboration with the voluntary adoptions agencies (VAAs) and other provider services
- Developing resilient and flexible services
- A dedicated focus on best practice and implementing the learning of what works best for adopted children, adopters and those affected by adoption

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## 7. Adopt London Marketing strategy

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The development of the Adopt London website, as well as coordination and collaboration between the marketing leads in each RAA to establish a recognised and consistent Adopt London brand across the 24 LAs has been a key benefit of the partnership and demonstrates the value of what can be achieved in the future.

A shared marketing & communications team continue to develop the Adopt London website, this is currently transferring to another website provider. The team are growing their knowledge, experience, and expertise in the use of social media as the primary recruitment medium.

Additional functionality is planned for the website, an online readiness tool is about to launch which will provide adopters with a range of resources and guidance to help them decide if it is the right time for them to pursue their interest in adoption.

The team commissioned a short, animated film “Our Children” to deliver a strong and positive message about London children needing an adoption placement.



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## 8. Strategy

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Our aims outline the vision and direction for Adopt London. They are:

- To become the Regional Adoption Agencies of **choice in London (with a special emphasis on the agency of choice for Black families)**
- Be child focussed in all we do: meet the individual needs of our children through focussed recruitment.
- Continue to develop the brand recognition, the strapline '**the heart of adoption in London**' sums up the essence of Adopt London and encapsulates what we stand for as a partnership. The strapline communicates our desire to be the regional adoption agencies of choice for London residents, putting London children at the heart of everything we do.
- the key messages 'Children are at the heart of what we do' and 'Celebrating London's diverse adoption community' are embedded in the content produced, use of

appropriate hashtags that target specific groups and by using diverse images that reflect the target groups ensure the content and messages are relevant and relatable

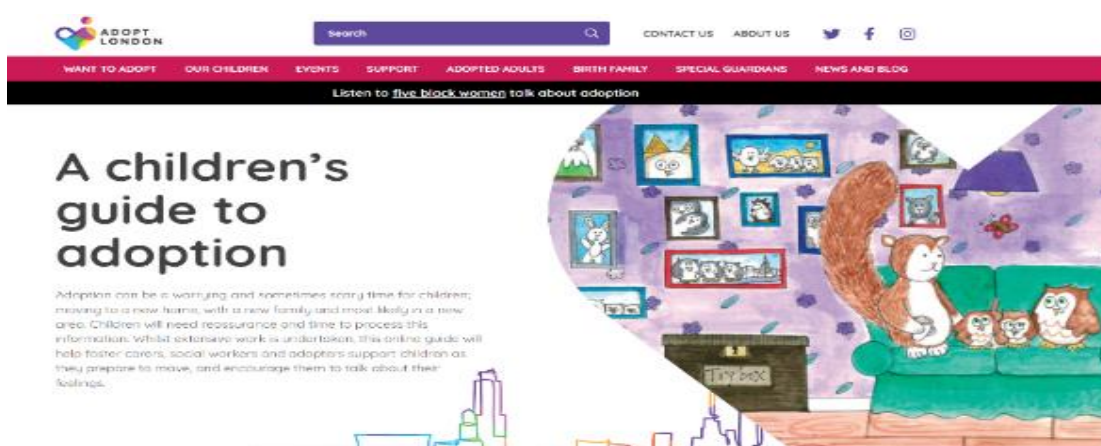
The target audience of the strategy are residents living in the Greater London region and the bordering Home Counties who are able to adopt a London child. There is a particular need to focus on targeting prospective adopters who can meet the racial, religious, and cultural needs of Black African and Black Caribbean children including those with a mixed heritage and children from all backgrounds with additional needs. All our children are unique and our work in placing our children reflects all aspects of each child's heritage.

It is very important to us that we find the right adopters who are prepared for our children. We want to grow our pool of approved adopters that we can place black children, sibling groups, and children with additional needs. In addition, we aim to increase the numbers of children placed in Early Permanence placements.

Examples of website and social media images are shown below

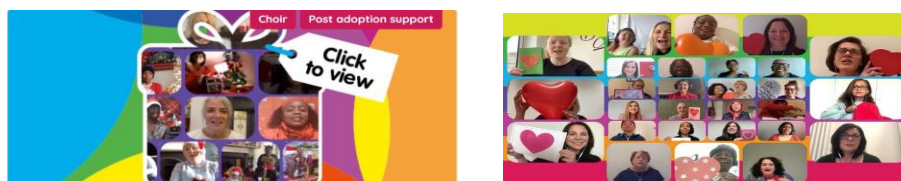






### Adopt London Choir

Adopt London continues to support and facilitate a choir, the choir started in the Covid lockdown period but has continued supported by a small grant as it is now a valuable resource and source of fun and support for its members.



Choir videos highlight the strength and diversity of Adopt London working together for London children and families and is in itself a supportive community singing for wellbeing for its members. Other RAA's are following Adopt London's example.

### Black Adoption Project



There has been a long standing and persistent gap in London between the number of black adopters and the number of black children who have a plan of adoption. This gap has a significant impact on black children, who will wait longer to be placed or may have their care plan changed because adopters cannot be found for them, data analysis shows this is 12 times more likely in London.

It is recognised that black people face more barriers to overcome than others and the disparities that exist within black adoption are stark, a coordinated and organisational focus is needed on this issue to bring about change.

A long term commitment has been made to work in partnership with Laurelle Brown Training & Consultancy on the Black Adoption Project in an attempt to look beyond short term solutions to this issue.

The first phase of the project started in the early part of 2022, understanding the issue and establishing a baseline of data and community participation was the focus for the early work, an online survey was completed by over 380 people, a number of focus groups were held. A steering group has been established, chaired by a Director of Children’s Service, membership includes, black adoptive parents, adopted adults and staff representatives.

Three staff training sessions for Adopt London staff have been delivered with over 100 people attending each session, staff development and understanding of the issues affecting black children and black adopters is recognised as a fundamental part of the project.

A summary report of the first phase has been drafted and recommendations will inform the next stage of planning and delivery.

### **We are Family peer support community and Adopter Voice**



A strong partnership has developed with We are Family, an adoption peer support community with increasing membership across London (currently 800+). The Trustees of We are Family and Adopt London heads, meet

quarterly to plan and prioritise developments, Adopt London awards an annual grant to WAF, this provides funding towards core activities; a members hub, webinar and podcast content. The webinars have proved very popular with adopters and enables fortnightly training sessions, adopters have found this online content far more accessible than face to face training and provides timely relevant support. A podcast series was launched in 2021/22 and the third season of this series will be broadcast in the Autumn.

The strength of this partnership is valued by all, adopters are able to share issues and concerns that are directly relevant, Adopt London heads of service benefit from hearing the voice of adopters and together an opportunity to respond in a timely way by planning training via the webinar series.

### **Partnerships with Voluntary adoption agencies and Adoption Support Agencies**



ALW commissions a service from PAC UK which includes.

- An advice line, supporting adopted adults and birth parents’
  - Counselling services for anyone affected by Adoption

or Special Guardianship arrangements living in any of the 4 partner boroughs.



ALW commissions international assessment work from the Inter Country Adoption Centre, (IAC) this is mainly used by people wishing to adopt a child from their own country of origin or another overseas country

Partnerships between Adopt London and the Voluntary Adoption Agencies (VAA's) operating across London are positive and productive, a quarterly meeting takes place to share practice and service developments.



A feature of this collaboration was a new Lunch and Learn project started in 2021/22, by a subgroup of the Adopt London RAA VA group, funded by the ASGLB and delivered by PACT, a Voluntary Adoption agency operating in London. Up to 100 adoption social workers have attended each event on a range of adoption related subjects, this provides an opportunity for all adoption social workers from across the sector to come together, build networks and enhance their learning and development.

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### *9. Adoption: National Strategy & RAA Leaders network*

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There are now 32 live Regional Adoption Agencies nationally, there is only 1 remaining County Council that is not part of a regional arrangement.

Government published the first National Adoption Strategy in July 2021, the key priorities set out included a vision that:

- Adoption is considered a positive opportunity for children of all backgrounds, and they are found loving families speedily
- Adopters are given support to understand the impact of abuse, neglect and trauma have on children and are given the support to provide sensitive and reflective parenting their children need
- The voice of Adopters and their children is at the heart of local policy decision making and delivery of services and their views demonstrably used in shaping and co-production of local services.

National funds were allocated and the first National Adopter Recruitment campaign #YouCanAdopt began in Autumn 2021 with a budget of £1 million.

Funding was also provided to formally establish the network of RAA leaders into an effective working group, a Strategic lead and a small project team were appointed to co-ordinate and drive the system improvement work to deliver the ambitions set out within the strategy.



The RAA Leaders group meet monthly to work collaboratively to provide high quality standard services across the country. A governance group and a number of working groups are responsible for coordinating activity.

The 3 strategic priorities are.

- Recruitment of Adopters
- The Journey of the Child (Care Planning)
- Adoption Support

Within each of these priority areas are working groups:

- Racial disparity - for both children waiting with a plan of adoption and also for adopters within the recruitment process
- Early Permanence – improving the number of children placed in EP arrangements and the quality of support to carers
- Opportunities to improve matching of children regionally and nationally
- Adoption support – defining a core offer of support that adopters can expect
- Adoption support dataset – work to design a common dataset that be used for to establish a benchmark of activity across all aspects of support
- Design of agreed outcome measures for evaluating therapeutic services provided using ASF funding

### **Funding opportunities**

In March 2022, Government announced a 3 year funding allocation of £19.5 million for improving Adoption services. RAA's are invited to bid for funding for the development of regional initiatives that will further the progress of change.

**Early Permanence** -work has started to develop Early Permanence practice across the country, which includes a London project involving all 5 RAA's

**Matching** – bids are to be submitted in early July for improving matching practice, an Adopt London bid will seek funding for a matching coordinator post across London who will coordinate shared profiling events, activity days and other activities.

**Adoption Support** – expressions of interest in the Autumn and formal bids in the New Year are invited for 2 year funding to pilot multi-disciplinary teams.

The RAA leaders network provides

- *Mutual Peer Support*
- *Collective problem solving*
- *Leadership development*
- *Practice leadership*
- *System leadership*
- *System influencing*

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## 10. Challenges and priorities for 2022/23

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There are a number of operational challenges that will be monitored and reviewed throughout the year, these include

- Increased demand in adoption support services, 2021/22 saw a 52% increase in requests for access to records, impacting the business support team and social work teams who provide specialist counselling and support to people who wish to access their adoption records
- Increased demand and process change to managing applications to the Adoption Support Fund (ASF), each application now requires significant additional steps to comply with new system and audit requirements
- Fixed term posts need to become permanent; they are business critical to manage demand, progress on implementing an agreed funding formula with partners needs to be resolved.
- Increasing adopter approvals is essential to make the progress needed to increase the number of children placed with ALW approved adopters, reducing the reliance on inter-agency placements which will achieve a cost saving for partner LA's

### **There are also a number of opportunities**

#### Development of Clinical Psychology

A decision was taken recently to increase the Clinical Psychology capacity as a pilot for 2022/23, funded through claims from the Adoption Support Fund. The two part time psychologists offer consultation to social workers, advice on transition plans for children, provide specialist training, develop resources, and also undertake some direct work with families. This resource has proved invaluable, a brief assessment and intervention model pilot is about to start that will offer an opportunity for families to have a coordinated, time limited intervention by a psychologist and social worker. Funding for this intervention can be claimed from the ASF and used to offset the additional cost of psychology hours,

It is anticipated that the pilot will prove to be financially sustainable and provide evidence that the service could be expanded further.

#### **National funding**

As set out earlier in the report, funding bids have been submitted for additional projects and posts to improve practice in.

- Early Permanence
- Matching

A bid will be submitted in the Autumn for funding to progress establishment of multi-disciplinary teams. All bids are collaborative joint bids with our Adopt London partners

In addition, an Adopt London work plan endorsed by the Executive advisory board covers

#### **Service coordination and development**

- Governance and commissioning arrangements – a new Adopt London Partnership agreement
- Strategic development including opportunities for National funding
- Operational and practice development
- The voice of adopters, adopted children, adult adoptees, and birth family members
- Marketing and communications including social media and the shared website

In order to support this work a part time project manager has been appointed. The project manager has responsibility for maintenance of the project plan as well as leading on development areas as directed by the Head of Service group.

Operational development is led by five team manager or service manager led practice groups. Currently these groups comprise:

- Recruitment and Assessment. With a focus on development of shared training and tools including Adopter Family and Friends preparation training and an improved Prospective Adopter Report format.
- Family finding Managers. With a focus on coordination of family finding in order to improve the number of placements made in Adopt London, implementing a shared Link maker group, enabling instant access across all 4 RAAS.
- Family finding practitioners. With a focus on practice improvement, developing of shared tools such as child friendly information booklets.
- Adoption Support Managers. With a focus on practice improvement., sharing ideas including on triage and prioritisation and have also begun to pilot a targeted pan London training offer funded through the Adoption Support Fund.
- Panel Advisors. With a focus on panel improvement and quality assurance., improving panel processes, exploration of complex challenges.

<b>Feedback from families regarding ALW</b>		
Dec 21	Firstly, I just wanted to say that I was so inspired by you and your colleagues for the work that you do to help children. Secondly, I thought the session was really well run and insightful and a good foundation for understanding the adoption process and the presentation looked great!	<b>Email received following Info Session</b>
March 22	<i><b>Email following notification of Panel approval as an adopter:</b> Thank you so much. This is wonderful news to have come on my Birthday. I am so delighted by this decision. I appreciate all the hard work and support from your team. It has been such a positive experience, and I can't thank everyone enough for that. I am so looking forward to being matched with my child. Have a great day.</i>	Adopter
Mar 22	Fantastic presentation - really helpful and loved Sharon sharing her story too. THANK YOU.	<b>Email received following Info Session</b>
Mar 22	Wanted to say thank you for organising and for sharing all your experiences. It's so encouraging to be in a room of lgbt adoptive parents and also see so many other lgbt+ prospective parents too. Thank you!	<b>Feedback following Meet The Adopter LGBT event</b>
March 2022	Many thanks for organising the funding for continued support. We're very grateful	Support
March 2022	ALW has been incredibly supportive.	Support
March 2022	ALW have always provided superb support to us as a family even through the pandemic.	Support
Feb 22	<p>This was my first event and it was so helpful and informative, thank you!" -<b>PACT</b></p> <p>Thank you very much Margaret and colleagues- this was my first session- Excellent Event! Well organised and good opportunities to network!" -<b>IAC</b></p> <p>Just to say that the <b>profiling event</b> today went off really very well It would have been impossible to do so without the help from Margaret and Vanessa . Jackie Power from ALE and Kirsty from ALN commented after the session that it was the best one we have had so far ..... We have had 4 last year.</p>	<b>Feedback from Adoption Agencies following a Family Finding event organised and hosted by ALW</b>

	<p>Margaret facilitated the session effortlessly with her usual pleasant self and the other RAA representatives said that they are amazed at the Vanessa's commitment and contribution in running this and expressed that they do not have such level of support from their support staff so feel very fortunate to have this.</p>	
Feb 2022	<p>We are very grateful for the assistance we have received from ALW so far. It has been a great source of support to us, especially through the recent transition from primary to secondary school. I think we would have really struggled over the last 12 months without the help and support provided.</p>	Support
Jan 21	<p>We just wanted to say a huge thank you for a very informative session. It was really useful and honest</p>	<b>Email received following Info Session</b>
January 2022	<p>We have really appreciated the ALW's support which has been invaluable in helping us provide therapy for our family.</p>	Support
Jan 2022	<p>Sarah Rayner has also been a pillar of support to the whole family. Without her intervention, things would not have progressed the way it has, so we are very much indebted to Sarah too.</p>	Support
Jan 2022	<p>We have found ALW to be available and quick to respond to any help. ALW have continued to be supportive and help us access funding to help support our adopted child and us as a family.</p>	Support
Jan 2022	<p>We have been very pleased with the support and care given to us. Without it, I doubt if we would have been able to continue family life in the way are doing.</p>	Support
Nov 2021	<p>"We chose ALW as we attended Information Sessions earlier this year with Action for Children, Coram and First for Adoption and felt most comfortable with ALW, who were the most helpful, friendly, knowledgeable and approachable.</p> <p>In the other information sessions the social workers didn't seem as enthusiastic or knowledgeable. ALW's was definitely the best session – it was well organised, the presenters came across well, and they even went to the effort of having a previous adopter join the call, which none of the other agencies did at their information sessions. We missed the ALS information session and so had a one to one conversation with ALS which was reasonable, but we still prefer ALW"</p>	Adoptive Enquiry

<p>Oct 2021</p>	<p>Sarah, thank you SO MUCH! You have been AMAZING!!!</p> <p>We really appreciate the help and support that you have given to our family.</p> <p>It is so incredible that, years after the adoptions, we have the continued to receive the same level of care that we had during both adoptions.</p>	<p>Support</p>
<p>July 2021</p>	<p>I just spoke to a parent who Vanessa took a call from on the helpline on Friday and she commented on how lovely Vanessa was. She said that she expected to be passed around and that it would be difficult to get help, but actually she was overwhelmed by how welcoming and supportive Vanessa was on that initial call.</p>	<p>Birth Parent</p>
<p>May 2021</p>	<p>S, an adopted adult phoned on Friday having received a call from someone stating she was relative of her birth mother and that her birth mother was dying and desperately wanted “forgiveness” for having had a child adopted. Munaza immediately advised S what she needed to do and the person at the GRO also pulled out the stops to get the paperwork send and delivered to Ealing yesterday. S has been in contact yesterday with S and will be meeting virtually with her today as this is a legal requirement and help her to think through this unexpected situation</p> <p>Subject: Re: Note for the social worker</p> <p>Thank you so much Munaza</p> <p>I am so impressed with your service and more importantly I am incredibly grateful with the speed, professionalism and kindness with which you helped me today.</p> <p>Thank you for going the extra mile for me today.</p>	<p>Adopted Adult</p>

**Debbie Gabriel**  
**Head of Service**  
**July 2022**