

# pinpoint

for parents by parents



**Together we are stronger**

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SUPPORTING, INFORMING, INVOLVING AND  
EMPOWERING CAMBRIDGESHIRE PARENT CARERS

## FAY DUTTON

### Chair of Trustees' Report



This has been another challenging year as the Covid pandemic continued although the rapid development and roll out of vaccines offered hope of some sort of return to a new normal, adapting to live with Covid. The priority has shifted to keeping children in school to protect their mental health and wellbeing as well as their educational progress. But this hasn't been easy, especially for those with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities and their families. Pinpoint has continued to respond to the challenges, keeping information and support for parent carers on line with an improved website, virtual workshops, peer to peer support in virtual 'drop-in' sessions and working together with the Local Authority and health services to improve policies and practice for children with additional needs.

Our reach and engagement have continued to grow - being able to join in remotely works well for many of our busy parent carers and reduces travel across our predominantly rural county. The experience of operating virtually in a pandemic has stood us in good stead operationally going forward. For the first time Pinpoint's Annual Conference was held on line over two days and again provided an opportunity for more parent carers to attend. Pinpoint's work to train volunteer parent carers as Pinpoint Champions, started as a project the previous year, has continued to be very successful and is now a major focus of Pinpoint's work. Champions receive training and support from Pinpoint and through their networks and by attending Tii hubs (Together we can end isolation through information) they enabled much needed peer to peer support as well as signposting to services.

All of our online work also provides insights into the performance of services and concerns of families which Pinpoint feeds back to the commissioners and providers. We then work together with them to instigate improvements. This co-production work is essential to improve SEND policies and practice in Cambridgeshire.

This was the 4th year of our strategic plan 2017-2022 so this seems an appropriate time to review what has been achieved so far, in preparation for development of new 5 year plan 2023-2028. The strategic plan has been driving Pinpoint's work and has served us well with significant progress against our 4 goals – but there is always more to do.



## OBSERVATIONS ON THE YEAR

**It's been another challenging year for our families and for Pinpoint. Having moved everything we do into a virtual offer, we have continued to provide information and support to families throughout the pandemic. Many families were pleased to see their children return to school but not all had a smooth return: some families have children who have not been able to attend. There have been positives and negatives with almost all reporting they are exhausted by the roller-coaster 18 months of changes. We've had our own challenges as we managed 'business as usual', additional Covid demands on our services, more co-production activity than ever, and our own families' needs. But challenges also present opportunities and we've become stronger as a result of the turmoil.**

### **COVID-19 – Emergency Response and Recovery**

Managing with Covid has been a major part of most of lives but the system has moved from an emergency phase into a recovery phase. The emphasis has shifted to keeping children in school and ensuring that the harm caused by a disrupted education is not made worse. We know, and now the research confirms it, that SEND youngsters, and their families, were impacted more than most. We also know that the effects of the pandemic are still taking their toll and that not all our children are able to re-engage in education and the wider world in the way we would hope. We know that the mental health impacts are still present for some children, and families. We continue to make sure your voices and issues are being heard with those who commission and manage the services you need. We are continuing to act as a conduit for information to families, as well as ensuring schools know what we can offer too.

### **Changing how we deliver**

Delivering in new ways has been the one constant over the last eighteen months. We had always hoped to strengthen our social media presence in our delivery mix, but the pandemic meant a complete cessation of all face-to-face activity. We have worried about digital poverty (lack of computers and smart phones, cost of owning and using the technology, access to the Internet and the skills needed) and whether this limits some families from accessing our offer but the growth in numbers of people who are joining us online means we have vastly extended our reach. We remain committed to returning to face-to-face activity but will be keeping our virtual offer too.

### **Others are changing how they deliver too**

Some of the changes we experienced during Covid have been uncomfortable and highly undesirable but what it has done is prompt those who deliver SEND services to explore other opportunities and be a little more creative. Whilst we would not have wished for the pandemic, it has brought with it a growing realisation that business as usual may not be getting the best possible outcomes or be sustainable. We have seen a surge in requests for Education and Health Care Assessments and an astonishing forecast in the number of Education Health and Care Plans that might be issued. SEND youngsters have been hardest hit by the Pandemic and are likely to need additional support for some time to come. Services were already under significant financial pressures and specialist staff are in short supply - this is not just a Cambridgeshire issue. But now we have a growth in need, and we will need the system to act now to make sure our children have those needs met early and effectively. Cambridgeshire County Council, together with health colleagues, are seizing the opportunity to lead a SEND Transformation Programme. It focuses on improving outcomes for children and we will be working to make sure your voices are heard as they work to make positive changes.

## HELLOS & GOODBYES

We said goodbye to Laura Potter as she moved on to do new things. We had a number of Board changes with Richard Holland, Neville De Spretter, Owen Thorneycroft, and Liz Day stepping down. Fay Dutton once again stepped in to become our Chair. Hasan Amjad and Amanda Buckenham are new trustees and bring with them a wide range of professional expertise, IT and health whilst also being parent carers. Tina McEwan, an accountant with charity expertise, joined the Board as a trustee and subsequently took over as our Treasurer. We welcomed Karina Whittington, Viktorija Porter, Michelle Quail and Lisa Martin to the team, to deliver new projects. Lisa then became our new Deputy CEO.



Richard  
Holland



Owen  
Thorneycroft



Neville  
De Spretter



Laura  
Potter



Liz  
Day



Miria  
Robinson



Hasan  
Amjad



Amanda  
Buckenham



Tina  
McEwan



Lisa  
Martin



Viktorija  
Porter



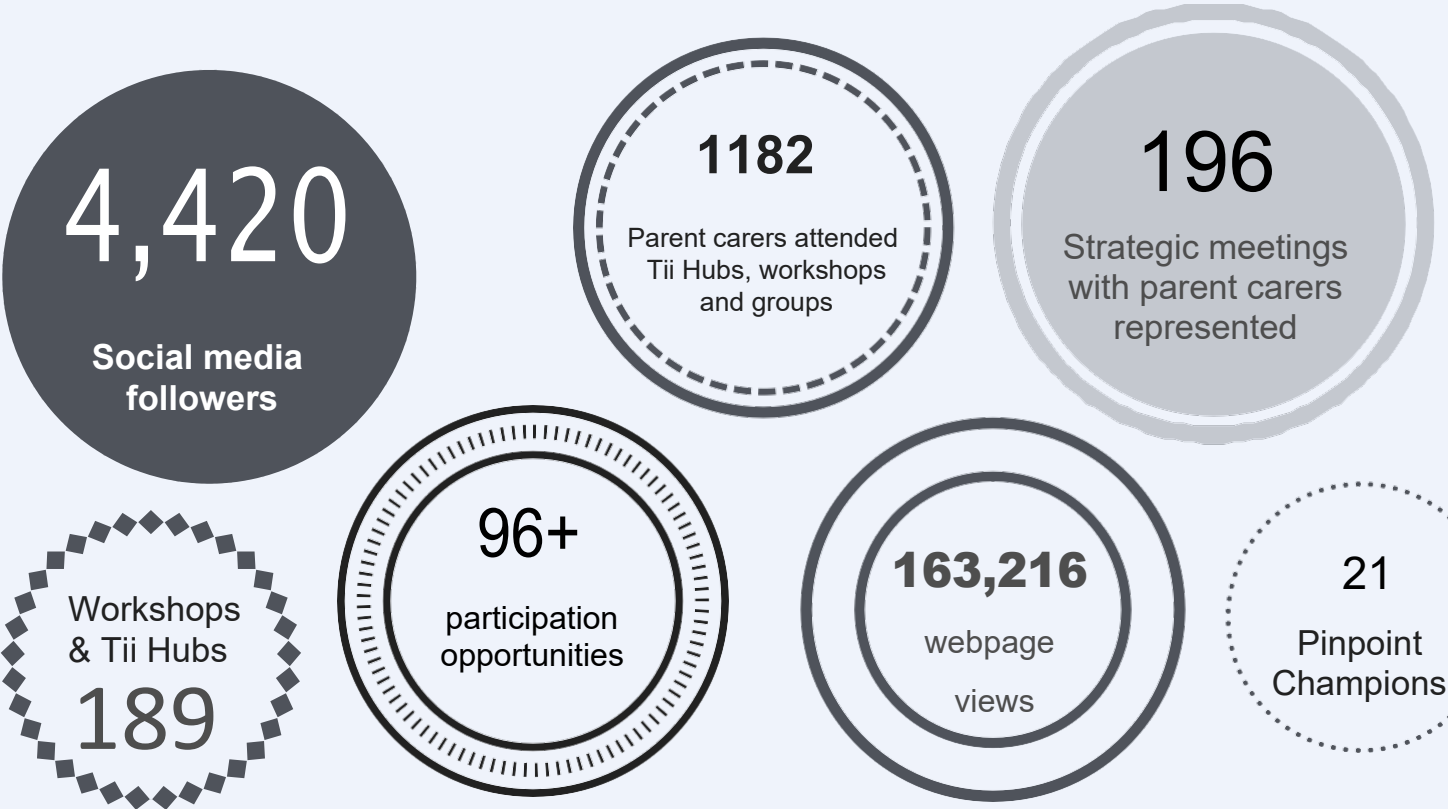
Karina  
Whittington



Michelle  
Quail

## Our year in numbers

Pinpoint has had another busy year working with parent carers on our participation work to help improve Cambridgeshire services for families with children and young people with SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities).



## OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

### Empowering Parent Carers

The education and health systems are complex and, for many, can be difficult or impossible to comprehend, let alone navigate. The added complexity of services which support children with additional needs, Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) makes it a bigger challenge. We work to give parent carers the information they need to help make sense of the system and to find what they need, when they need it.

We do this through the information we provide on our website and the feedback we provide to the Local Authority on the content of their Local Offer website. Our web page views have increased by more than fifty percent this year. We are developing the layout and accessibility so that the site works better on mobile devices and is easier to navigate. The Local Authority have been working on updating their Local Offer, content, and web navigation, for some time. Parent Carers have provided feedback on new navigation and design proposals and co-producing content. In response to ongoing feedback that the title 'Local Offer' often means little to those who it is there to help and makes it hard to find if you search for information using a search engine, the Local Authority have renamed it as 'The Cambridgeshire SEND Information Hub; Local Offer'. They will promote this to help reach more families with the information and support they need early in their journeys.

We offer a range of print-on-demand Handy Guides (easy-read one page 'getting started guides') to supplement the information on the web pages. We have added to these resources throughout the year in response to parental and professional requests - there are now 28 Handy Guides covering a wide range of topics from personal care, different types of special needs and benefits. We had 1,826 page visits over the year.

Our staff help guide parent carers towards the services they need through the many opportunities parent carers have to reach out to us: email, social media, by phone, online and in person. We signpost to services on request, as well as encouraging parent carers to attend our workshops, Tii hubs (drop-in signposting and peer support sessions - Together Information ends Isolation) and participation sessions.

Parent to parent peer support is invaluable for our families, with some making regular use of the sessions and others only coming along for the next step of signposting and going again. We offer a SENDads Group in the evening aimed at encouraging fathers and working parent carers to get the help and support they need. The Preparing for Adulthood (PfA) Connexions Group is a similar group but for those whose children are becoming young adults.

When we offer free workshops (funding dependent), we are using these to provide information, often from an expert on the topic, to signpost to services, to offer support and to listen to the issues being raised. We will commission according to parent carer need and use their feedback to commission future workshops. We specifically ask parent carers to rate how able they feel, as result of the session, to meet their children's needs and to take the next step. The 189 sessions, bookable online, had 3730 tickets booked with just over half of these session attended. It's not uncommon for parent carers to be too overwhelmed, called upon at short notice or simply needing to undertake childcare, that means the attendance rate is typically lower than those who had already committed to attend. However, of those attending and providing their feedback, we know: 90% rate session as beneficial or highly beneficial; 87% feel encouraged to do what they need to for their child; and 80% felt equipped to take the next step.



Our newsletter service is open to parent carers and professionals, with two slightly different sign-up services available: we've doubled the number of parent carers signed up to the service and have seen the professional subscriptions increase by three-fold. We use the newsletter to promote participation and to share relevant SEND updates - this enables increased access to services and support. It has become a trusted source of information and a useful signposting tool.

We are now to be found on Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook, reaching families through their preferred choice of platform. The number of people finding and accessing our offer this way continues to increase (from 4012 up to 4420). We use social media both to promote participation opportunities and signpost to services, but also as a means of reactive and proactive communications, not just for Pinpoint, but for our Local Authority and Health partners too.

The Pinpoint team is made up of parents and carers and we work hard to get the message to families that there is help out there, but we can't reach everyone this way. We created Pinpoint Champions – trained parent volunteers who can reach out into their communities to help families towards the information and services they need. We offer our Champions regular support, so they feel confident to represent and signpost for us. We arrange for them to meet other Pinpoint Champions online each month for a catch up. We provide Time Credits in recognition for the time they give us that they can spend on leisure facilities and opportunities, embedding co-production, and ensuring strong parent voices can influence the shape of services.

Pinpoint, as the Parent Carer Forum, is one way to get parent carer voices heard here, in Cambridgeshire, regionally in East Anglia and nationally. We work to ensure parent carers are heard by those who commission (buy) the services – we do this through our participation activity. We are proactive in seeking out participation opportunities and creating them wherever possible, but we also facilitate the work of others to get your voices heard by sharing their opportunities to take part. We offered more than 90 opportunities to take part in surveys and research covering a wide range of issues and interests. In addition, we ran five Pinpoint Surveys which we used to feedback to the Local Authority and health. We ask for feedback from anyone attending our sessions and use this to inform what we commission for future sessions. Our sessions rate 4 - 4.5 out of 5 on how they meet parent needs in terms information, help them to feel encouraged to meet their children's needs, to feel less isolated and to take the next step.

#### **PARENTS TELL US:**

*It has given me a good insight into how to deal with some of the issues.*

*Feeling like I'm not alone.*

*It was comforting to know that we are on the right tracks.*

*Feeling empowered to try again!*

*It was reassuring to hear that others are going through similar things.*

*It was a very good, practical and informative. Lots of advice, tips and strategies delivered by experts. Things that we can apply in our life as a family and in our daily activities.*

We work to create regular ways for parent carers to bring us their issues and concerns so that we can ensure they are taken back to those who making decisions about services. As we are committed to hearing all our parent carer voices, we also have a more detailed Seldom Heard Strategy as well as our Participation Strategy, to ensure that we take every opportunity to engage with all our parent carers.

We work with those who make local policies that affect Cambridgeshire's children and young people, in education, social care and health to represent parent carer concerns and to ensure that policy makers understand parent carer needs and the aspirations they have for their child / young person. The Local Authority and Health Service are committed to working with us and we have a seat on all the strategic boards that oversee and direct policies relating to Cambridgeshire's children and young people. We are round the table as equal partners on behalf of parent carers.

Co-production is the way we work with the Local Authority and Health staff. We promote co-production at every opportunity – it's where we work together as equals with professionals and services, all listening to each other, valuing each other's viewpoints, and doing the best for the child or young person. We have worked to ensure the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough SEND Strategy and Action Plan have been co-produced. Co-production should happen whenever policies are developed and services commissioned. Good co-production also means working together when implementation takes place, and this is happening in Cambridgeshire through formal structures (boards and working groups) and by working with officers.

### CHAMPIONS SAY:

*I am excited to join the team and start trying to made a difference!!!*

*I am going to become a pinpoint champion to help try to spread the word to other families that haven't heard of the organisation and feel like they need help and support.*

**Participate  
with  
pinpoint**  
for parents by parents

## Meet our Team



Fay Dutton Chair of Trustees



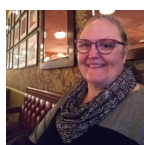
Christine Stocker - Gibson Vice-Chair of Trustees



Steve Wilson Treasurer



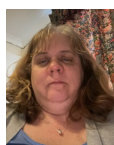
Margaret Sare Trustee



Amanda Buckingham Trustee



Hasan Amjad Trustee



Dawn Hall Trustee



Tina McEwan Trustee



Sarah Conboy CEO



Lisa Martin Deputy CEO



Linda Green Engagement and Participation Officer



Bianca Cotterill Finance Officer



Kate Atkinson Communications Officer



Michell Quail Administrative Officer



Karina Whittington Participation Officer



Viktorija Proctor Participation Officer

# CAMBRIDGESHIRE'S PARENT CARER FORUM



## We are the DfE Parent Carer Forum for Cambridgeshire and part of the regional and National Network of Parent Carer Forums

As Cambridgeshire's Forum, we are also a member of the Eastern Region Parent Carer Forum (ERPCF) and active members of the regional SEND Network. We attended two two-day national virtual National Network of Parent Carer Forum Conferences and have taken part in training throughout the year. Our contribution was recognised by both the Secretary of State and School Ministers

The ERPCF have commissioned Forums to undertake new Health work, such is the strength of our network. Sarah, our CEO, is a representative for the ERPCF working regionally and nationally on behalf of parent carers.

We continue to work in partnership with colleagues in Peterborough, looking at how we can support each other. This is increasingly important as Cambridgeshire and Peterborough share their policies, resources, and processes.



## Local Authority and Health Parent Participation and Co-production

The ongoing challenges of the pandemic have meant we have continued to be a vital communication channel to get information out to parent carers. We have provided materials for the Local Authority and Health to use. We have a dedicated part of our website where we provide information to support parent carers.

The pandemic delayed many of the commissioning and policy changes that had been anticipated but as this work has resumed, we have taken every opportunity to ensure parent carers are participating in service development and co-producing new services and SEND policies.

**We continue to deliver a range of workshops and training funded by Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG).** These include Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)/Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) groups, Expert Parent training and Challenging Behaviour workshops. The ASD/ADHD groups continue to run each month online. We have been able to provide a wide range of speakers offering advice and support on topics parents tell us they need. This year these have included mental health, anxiety, behaviour management and managing sleep.



Department  
for Education



Cambridgeshire and  
Peterborough  
Clinical Commissioning Group



## PROJECT UPDATES

In 2021-22 we actively sought additional funding, which led to several new projects.



### Pinpoint Champions

The donations we received from the Co-Op and Tesco enabled us to develop the programme. We have been reaching out to schools and had been in the process of developing more localised support, working with other providers such as children's centers as they have returned to an in-person offering. The ongoing pandemic issues has presented more challenges, but we have been creative, and our Champions have been using social media and their local networks to reach families. We've now grown this trained group of parent carers to number 21.



### Pinpoint Tii Hubs

The groups had been running as part of our ongoing Opportunities Area work. We received additional funding from The Co-op and Tesco which enabled us to offer them for all of Cambridgeshire. We made a virtue out of a pandemic and went online. We discovered that being able to drop in to a Tii Hub from your sofa, the car (safely parked) or the office has been something parent carers say they love! Being able to join a safe space where you can meet other parent carers, talk freely and get the signposting to information and services that you need has been much welcomed. We can meet in smaller 'rooms' by location or just in smaller numbers to give everyone space to talk. We've also found that working parent carers are dropping in on their breaks, meaning they are able to make use of the sessions as they don't need to take time off to travel to sessions.



### Pinpoint Opportunities Area

We have been part of the Year 5 Opportunities Area programme working in East Cambridgeshire and Fenland and have been pleased to be able to deliver more workshops and Tii Hubs. The pandemic saw us move these workshops and Tii Hubs online. Workshops have included a huge range of speakers covering everything from how to access services, supporting mental health, and wide-ranging topics including dyslexia and behaviour. We have worked with our colleagues to publicise Pinpoint's offer through their networks – extending our reach to parent carers, professionals, schools and settings. We've reached out to schools via the SENCo networks and have mailed information to a variety local organisations so they can pass on our offer of support and signposting. Our evening SENDads (and Mums) session has helped us reach those not available in the day who are keen to join in. The sessions are similar to Tii Hubs, but we have also managed to share some of our workshop recordings as a twilight offer too.

With you at every  
step



### More Outreach in East Cambridgeshire

The funding from East Cambridgeshire District Council enabled us to reach out to schools, family centres, community groups, food banks and doctors' surgeries. We made contact to tell them about Pinpoint and provided promotional materials for them to share with families.

## Reaching out to hear everyone's voices

Each year we worry about whether we are doing all we can to encourage everyone's voices to be heard and to help everyone to participate in shaping services. We focus on what we are doing to reach out and then reflect on what we hear back. We are always looking to adjust the work we do to extend that reach. This year was no exception. Our data showed our reach, by ethnicity, matched that of our wider population and that we are reaching many families across the age groups 0-25 years and across the whole of Cambridgeshire. But there was more we wanted to do.

We have looked again at the routes we are using to raise our profile and to share our offer with parent carers. We have supported the Local Authority in their communications and every family of a child with an EHCP in Cambridgeshire has received at least one Pinpoint and Local Authority letter / email and at least one co-produced / co-badged survey. In addition, there have been co-badged communications provided to schools to share with all parent carers including those whose children have SEND.

We have made contact with food banks, doctors' surgeries, community groups, children and family centres and other SEND groups providing copies of our fliers and leaflets for them to distribute and telling them about our services so that they can signpost people to us. We also use other organisations publications to reach out: for example, we have a regular advert in the Caring Together publication.



Our newsletter:  
<http://bit.ly/2ynjKpq>



Facebook:  
[www.facebook.com/pinpointcamb](http://www.facebook.com/pinpointcamb)

### Tii HUB ATTENDEES SAY:

*Everyone is just so lovely and helpful and understanding, it is a very much needed resource for all parents with children with additional needs*

*Always wonderful to feel the support of other parent /carers and listen to their advice.*

### TRUSTEES SAY:

*I went to listen, loved what I heard and ended up being its secretary!*

*Pinpoint gives overwhelmed carers the support they desperately need to navigate the complex and often byzantine SEND services landscape. As a SEND parent myself, I identify strongly with this mission.*



Instagram: [pinpointcamb](https://www.instagram.com/pinpointcamb)



Twitter: [@pinpointcamb](https://twitter.com/pinpointcamb)

We work with other professionals to enable them to let the people they work with know about Pinpoint. This year we have worked with health - occupational therapists, speech and language therapists, mental health key workers and service leads. In addition, we have reached out through the Early Helps teams in social care and the teams that support foster carers. We have worked with colleagues in palliative care networks and those who are supporting in different locations across the voluntary sector. We've worked with the regional voluntary sector organisations reaching out into their networks too. We've reached out to all schools and their special needs coordinators. Each of these groups of professionals will each see different families and so can help us to reach new families. We continue to work in partnership with SENDIASS directing people between the organisations to ensure they have the right help when its needed. We also work with Healthwatch to reach out through their networks, including presenting to their audiences.

We have looked at how we reach people through our communications channels and have flexed our social media use, as well as looking at other press opportunities. We've followed other groups that might help us to reach new audiences and we have 'popped up' in other groups that may include SEND parent carers. We've explored twilight sessions as we've had funding to add this to our offer this year and we've had sessions branded to attract dads.

We've considered how we attract people towards Pinpoint, including those who might be looking for help but who might not yet recognise there are additional needs. With the additional funding we have secured this year, we have offered free workshops on a wide range of topics - this has attracted new parent carers to us. We have provided advice on welfare support and benefits as well as supportive additional information on Covid. We also offered a free two-day conference with a range of speakers not usually and easily available, to attract a wider audience.

We have worked with a neighbouring forum, Family Voice Peterborough, to learn from their experiences. We have added information to our website to enable translation of materials to other languages and we have commissioned new work to the website to make it even more accessible.

### WORKSHOP ATTENDEES SAY:

The session has been remarkably phenomenal, I am grateful to the organisers.

The practical activities were beneficial for myself and will also be for my child. First opportunity I have had to explore this topic and get a better understanding.

I now have awareness of books, Facebook pages and other resources which can help me to support my son appropriately and to work to ensuring that he needs are met.

Huge amount of helpful information. Gave me confidence that parenting to suit my child's needs is OK.

Was so informative and amazing amount of information to help.

I am a family worker and this session was brilliant, I will be able to use the information given to help and support the families I am working with.



## Creating opportunities to promote co-production and participation

We work to ensure parent carers are heard by those who commission (buy) services for Cambridgeshire children and young people – we do this through our Participation Toolkit (see below). We are proactive in seeking out participation opportunities and creating them where possible, but we also facilitate the work of others to get your voices heard by sharing their ways to take part. We work to create opportunities for parent carers to bring us their issues and concerns so that we can ensure they are taken back to those who making decisions about services. As we are committed to hearing all our parent carer voices, we also have a more detailed Seldom Heard Strategy to ensure that we take every opportunity to engage with all our parent carers.

### Tools we use for participation:

- **Pinpoint's website** has a section entitled 'Join In' which sets out how parent carers can participate.
- **Social Media:** Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram to promote Pinpoint's participation opportunities and offers (surveys, polls, virtual and face to face events) to participate in other organisations activities including the LA and Health.
- **Pinpoint Reference Forum** to participate in the formation of documentation including policies and strategies.
- **Pinpoint Partners in Commissioning** to participate through direct interaction with service commissioners from education, social care and health.
- **Working Groups** to participate as a task and finish group on specific topics or to support specific projects.
- **Pinpoint Focus Groups** are a regular part of the participation offer and pop up as needed by policy makers and service commissioners.
- **'Meet the Assistant Director' Network Sessions** are termly opportunities for a small self-selecting virtual or face to face participation with the LA senior SEND officer.
- **Pinpoint Surveys**, including the Annual Survey offered as online surveys where we can collate feedback and share it with policy makers and service commissioners. The Annual Survey follows a consistent format, but ad hoc surveys allow us to focus on live issues.
- **Tii Hubs** are offered on-line, weekly in term-time and, whilst they are for peer support and signposting, they also provide a participation aspect.
- **The Pinpoint Champions Network** provide feedback and help us to test ideas and identify opportunities.
- **Workshops** are fundamentally information and signposting sessions but feature polls, and surveys and a participation session to enable us to hear issues and provide feedback.
- **Commissioning specific task and finish groups** support those who are seeking to develop services and can support in the procurement process.
- **Pinpoint's Annual Conference** also provides opportunities for participation and features opportunities to hear from and meet policy makers and service commissioners.
- **Pinpoint's monthly newsletters** are both parent carer facing and professionals facing.
- **New Forum Participation Group for SEND** parent carer groups operating across Cambridgeshire.
- **You Said, We Did** is our way of letting parent carers know their voices have been heard and acted upon. You can find a copy of this later in this report.



## **Participation in, and the co-production of, the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough SEND Strategy Action Plan**

The Local Authority's Action Plan was pushed sideways by the real need to address the emerging covid challenges. The report draft, due to be published in April 22, does show progress against the three key priorities Pinpoint and parent carers identified: compliance - where the system does what it should, earlier intervention at SEN Support and improvements at all the transitions including Preparing for Adulthood. There will be more to do going forward.

## **Pinpoint's Annual Conference**

This year we delivered our first two-day conference and made it our first online offering. We had 545 tickets booked over the event. We were pleased and delighted so many parent carers, and professionals, joined us. 90% of those providing feedback reported they had benefited from the sessions, with 93% saying they now had the information they needed to move forward.

## **Partners in Commissioning meetings**

Our termly meetings bring together commissioners, parent carers and policy makers from across education, health and social care. These are frank and open conversations where we can share what's working well, what would be better if and what needs changed. We plan together to ensure co-production and participation always looking ahead to identify new opportunities. We publish the minutes of these meetings on our website.

## **Social Care eligibility and access to services**

There is confusion - it's hard for families to know what the offer is and how they can access it. We have been working with social care to better define and communicate the offer.

## **Regular Network Meetings**

Covid has meant we have moved meetings online, but we have offered the termly sessions where parent carers can meet with Cambridgeshire County Council's Assistant Director for SEND to give direct feedback - what's working well, what would be 'better if' and what is broken or missing. We publish reports of these sessions on our website and ask the Local Authority for follow up reports as part of our regular engagement.

### **FEEDBACK FROM WORKSHOPS AND THE CONFERENCE:**

*The keynote speaker was insightful and brought new energy and new ideas for improving the life chances of children and young people. Exhilarating!*

*Good to see the engagement of Cambs County Council and to hear about ACE and the real desire for co-production with Pinpoint.*

*Really positive information, presented really well.*

*I am a professional and it was a massive intake of information which will be helpful within my role.*

*Encouraging to know that work put in on the draft SEND policy has been taken on board and is influencing the forward drive in SEND provision.*

### **Improving school attendance post-covid**

A worrying increase in children not in back school was noted as we returned to normal school opening. We worked with the Local Authority to find out why children had not returned and to urge for more support to assist with returns. We were asked to assist with signposting parent carers who were choosing elective home education to ensure they had the right advice and support in making their decisions.

### **Improving Education Health Care Plans through co-production**

The Local Authority are now in year two of their Quality Assurance programme looking at how Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP) are written and seeking to improve the quality of content, with the aim on improving children's outcomes. We have participated in some of these reviews and are now waiting for the Local Authority to report back on its findings and the improvements made. They will now be looking to review how better documentation relates to improved outcomes. We have been urging for the inclusion of training and support for parent carers so that they, too, understand what a good EHCP looks like.

### **Timeliness of Statutory processes**

The Statutory Assessment Team have been painfully aware that keeping up with the paperwork is of huge concern to parent carers and have taken steps towards identifying how they can meet the increasing demand to ensure paperwork is timely and of a suitable quality. Our termly meetings with the team leader and SENDIASS have meant we have been able to share concerns and understand measures taken to address issues. We are pleased that the Team has new staff members and increased staff capacity. A new computer system should also make day to day working more efficient and mean that paperwork is issued in a timely manner. There has been a real will to engage with the Forum over these challenges and to seek improvement in communications with families. We will be co-producing updated letters for parent carers, which is most welcome.

### **Compliance and expectations**

Together we have been co-producing advice to schools and settings on compliance and good practice throughout the pandemic. We co-produced and co-badged letters to families and to schools and settings with the Local Authority setting out legal requirements and expectations. In addition, we have triangulated feedback to reflect back to the Local Authority where there are shortcomings. Working with SENDIASS, we have also challenged the Local Authority to more proactively use its data to identify where system improvements are needed and to look for lessons learning, including where there have been recourse to use the tribunal and complaints systems. Where there has been significant concerns, we have asked the Local Authority to reach out to schools and settings.

### **Co-producing a new All-Age Autism Strategy**

The newly co-produced Strategy is agreed, and we have started work to co-produce the action plan that will see it delivered. It's an ambitious piece of work that this much welcomed and there will be much to do in the year to come.

### **Quality Assurance of Education, Health, and Care Plans (EHCPs)**

The Local Authority and Health have continued their quality assurance process to ensure that EHCPs are of a consistently high quality. We have been part of the review processes and are keen to understand how they are using this work to improve outcomes for children and young people.

### **Participation as part of the Preparing for Adulthood (PfA) Local Authority work**

A key part of the Local Authority's SEND Strategy, the PfA strand was prioritised on the basis of our feedback. We have been working with the Local Authority to push for a new PfA Strategy. We've been working as part of the steering Group and helped recruit to the new post of PfA lead officer. We have helped to update the co-badged Parent Carer PfA Guide which pulls lots of PfA information into a single easy to access format. In addition, we run monthly online PfA groups to help signpost families to the help they need. These sessions enable participation and ensure parent representation at the PfA regional, steering and network events are taking parents' voices to those who can make changes. We have ensured participation in regional virtual PfA events and the new PfA Steering Group.

### **Participation in Children's Mental health and Well-Being Services**

We are the voice of parent carers on a number of strategic board that brings together Health, Education and Social Care in Cambridgeshire (and Peterborough). Mental health has been significantly worsened by the pandemic and we are seeing increasing demand for children and young people's services, as well as noticing more parent carers are reporting their own issues. We have worked with health and education to push for earlier intervention and to communicate better the help and support which is available. We have used our website to provide greater sign posting for families, and professionals. We worked with commissioners on the new YoUnited Service to reflect parent carer aspirations for a service that would triage needs and respond quickly.

### **Participation in the new Mental Health Strategy for Children and Young People in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough**

The emerging new Strategy has the potential to make a long-lasting positive impact on children and young people's mental health. We have ensured parent carers have had the opportunity to participate at every stage of the strategy's development - through the steering group, working group and through focus groups and surveys.

### **Participation in the new Integrated Care System through the Maternity and Children's Mental Health Collaborative and The Hunts Forum.**

We will have a seat on the new Collaborative ensuring that parent carer voices are being heard at the highest levels of decision making about the services provided for children and young people. Working in partnership with Hunts Forum and the CEO Network, we will also be speaking up for the wider voluntary sector that support our SEND families.

### **Participation in the National Health Service Key Worker Programme local pilot**

We have been working alongside the delivery partners who are piloting a programme to look at how we might better support young people who are at risk of needing inpatient hospital mental health care. The pilot seeks to understand how different models of support, co-ordinated by a single key worker, can help young people to remain at home or in the community, and avoid hospital admissions.

## Why Participation matters to parent carers:

*Seeing parent questions actually being addressed, chat being included.*

*Opportunity for feedback on Local Offer.*

*I would say it was great how thoughts and responses reflected each other and how the discussion enabled issues to be identified and resolved.*

*Particularly good that it was understood the support is often sought by those without diagnosis/ clearly identified needs and any knowledge of jargon.*

*It was good to be asked about the website in its development phase as it feels like we get to have a say in what help we actually need and want from the website. I also learned a lot about what is/will be on the website.*

*Good to see the engagement of Cambs County Council and the real desire for coproduction with Pinpoint and parent carers*

*It's good to know Toni is interested in parent's concerns and views. Hopefully he will take actions to help parents solve our problems with school SENCos, EHCP, annual review, transition processes, and various therapy issues.*

*Thank you for the opportunity to meet Toni Bailey. I believe meetings like this are so important. Very interesting to see some of the common themes arising.*

## Some of the opportunities facilitated this year:

Integrated Care System Maternity and Health Collaborative	SEND Comms Group	Mental Health Collaborative
NHS Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Key Worker Programme	Local Offer Commissioning Group	
CCC Quality Assurance Framework Review Group	SEN Support Focus Groups	East of England Regional SEND Group
Ordinarily Available Focus Group	Cambridgeshire and Peterborough SEND Executive Board	
Carers Programme Board	Local Offer Focus Group	Mental Health Strategy Groups
National Network of Parent Carer Forums	Learning Disability Partnership Board	Eastern Region Autism Collaborative
Cambridgeshire and Peterborough All-Age Autism Board	Connect 2 Work	East of England Regional NHS Co-production Group
CANEF	Children and Young People's Palliative Care Board	SEND Personal Budgets Group
	East of England Learning Disabilities and Autism Board	East of England Regional PfA Group
Cambridgeshire SEND Partnership Board	PfA Steering Group	Hunts Voluntary Sector Forum
Carers Partnership Board	Children and Young People's Mental Health and Well-Being Board	Partners In Commissioning
POET Working Group	Covid Safeguarding Group	Eastern Region Parent Carer Group
	Eastern Region Neurodiversity Forum	Mental Health Collaborative



## Influencing policy and practice to make a difference to children and young people with SEND

### Cambridgeshire

Influencing policy and practice, making sure that it reflects parent carer's, and their children's, needs and aspirations is crucial in making the biggest difference for Cambridgeshire families: if the policy is right then the practice that comes from it should be right too. This is only possible where policy makers are committed to co-production and where there are robust professional relationships underpinned by trust: some of the conversations we have are difficult and sensitive, but they are also fiercely open and honest. Without this we would not be able to affect change on behalf of our parent carers. We celebrate the positives, look for the 'better if's and are clear about the gaps, and what simply doesn't work.

We do this by having a seat on each of the strategic policy boards, presenting updates and raising issues, contributing to each and every discussion on emerging work in social care, education and health. The expectation is that the information we provide is considered in the round and, wherever possible, is acted upon - to change policy, to influence further investigation or even to disagree with so we can co-produce alternative options.

We work hard to ensure that as many individual parent carers as possible have the opportunity to work directly with policy makers through the participation work we do: hearing directly for those who the policy impacts upon is incredibly powerful and policy makers regularly refer to the conversations we've facilitated.

### Across the region

We routinely participate in the Regional SEND Network meetings, the Preparing for Adulthood Network, the Autism Network, and the Palliative Care Network. We speak up and aim to not only shape policy, but ensure that our parent carers' families and children in Cambridgeshire benefit from any new and emerging work.

### Nationally

It is important that parent carer voices are heard at the highest levels of decision making and we take every opportunity to make those views heard nationally. We have taken part in discussions around the emerging new Participation Tool that will be used to benchmark local areas in terms of how they engage, co-produce and can show that they listen to parent carers, and young people. We take every opportunity to feedback through the National Network of Parent Carer Forums, as well as using our own contacts in the Department for Education.

## Securing our financial future so we are here for you in the future

We have been working hard over the last four years to secure Pinpoint's financial future: this ensures we can continue to be here for our parent carers. We have restructured our finances to give us a better chance of weathering the challenges for a charity that relies on public funding for its core business. This proved invaluable as we dealt with the challenges presented by increasingly complex funding streams.

We are in year two of a three-year grant from the Local Authority to continue to deliver parent participation and engagement services. The Local Authority have confirmed their ongoing commitment with the offer a further three years of funding. We continue to have a contract with Cambridgeshire Clinical Commissioning Group for the ASD/ADHD workshops which are a lifeline to so many parent carers and expect this to continue as we transfer to the new Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Integrated Care System.

The Opportunities Area extended the work they commissioned from us for another six months, which will see us complete year three supporting families in East Cambridgeshire and Fenland.

We are incredibly grateful for the donations and grants we received from our other funders. This year we have had grants from the Co-op, East Cambridgeshire District Council, Comic Relief, Tesco, Huntingdon Freeman, and support from St Ives' Town Council. And we know many supporters are helping through private donations and through the donations they make every time you shop online.

*Thank you.*



Huntingdon Freeman's  
Trust



## OUR FIGURES

### INCOME

#### Donations and Legacies

##### Government Grant Income

Department for Education	£17,498
East Cambridgeshire District Council	£1,000
Cambridgeshire County Council	£78,000

<u>General Donations</u>	£2,126
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<u>Other Grants</u>	£1,300
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<b><u>£99,924</u></b>
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#### Charitable activities

Cambridgeshire Clinical Commissioning Group	£20,000
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Fenland and East Cambridgeshire Opportunities Area	£30,195
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Other	£700
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<b><u>£50,895</u></b>
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<b>TOTAL MONEY IN:</b>	<b>£150,819</b>
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**EXPENDITURE:**

Activity Costs	£7,061
Staff and associated costs	£100,178
IT and communications costs	£11,387
Property and office costs	£10,709
Governance	£18,604

**TOTAL MONEY OUT****£147,939**



## In 2021 - 2022 You said... we did



### ***You said...***

***The process of getting your children's needs met remained difficult / very difficult.***

### ***We...***

- shared our Annual Survey, and Covid Surveys, with the Local Authority and asked them to review how they help and support this process.
  - reported regularly at the Local Authority's strategic meetings to ensure that senior officers were aware of your concerns and able to consider opportunities to address them. As a result of this we now have your top priorities as key work that the Local Authority are leading this year: Ensuring that the system does what it should (compliance), Making early help work better at the SEN Support stage and addressing Preparing for Adulthood issues.
  - updated our website information and produced new Handy Guides to help you find the information you need to feel well-informed about the process and have signposting towards services and organisations that can support you and offer you advice.
  - invited the Local Authority to lead sessions at our Annual Pinpoint Conference to ensure you could get the information needed first-hand from the professionals from the Statutory Assessment Team. The Local Authority is investing in their Statutory Assessment team to enable it to meet and exceed its statutory timescales.
  - co-produced the emerging Cambridgeshire Autism Strategy to ensure it reflects parent carers, and their children's, needs and aspirations.
  - are pleased to continue to raise your voices / views with the Local Authority and health on a twice- monthly basis to report that demand for services and assessments are taking too long. we pleased the Statutory Assessment Team has now recruited more staff and is introducing new software to improve response times.
  - supported the LA in hearing parents' thoughts about their new 'ordinarily available provision' advice for schools to make sure that SEN Support is of a consistent quality in all mainstream schools.
  - enabled parents' voices to be heard as the Local Authority develop their new offers for SENDIASS, and school transport services.
- ***You said...you felt the only way to get help and support for your child was to take legal action. We...***
- asked the Local Authority to review all the disputes it deals with to identify issues about which it might be able to act, where processes had not worked as they should.
  - asked the Local Authority to look again at how we ensure the systems work properly. They have undertaken a review and are launching a Transformation Programme to make the improvements you asked for.
  - encouraged the Local Authority to do more so that you have greater confidence that your child's needs are being met in school and that good assessment is in place. The Local Authority are investing in making SEN Support more effective, providing more support for schools so that they are better able to meet children's needs early and effectively.

***You said... you wanted better support for mental health. We...***

- participated in the LA commissioned independent review of provision for Social Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) provision. The LA have developed an action plan for 2021 with stakeholders, seeking to ensure there is the right support, at the right time, in the right place to prevent escalation of need.
- raised awareness of support to schools for mental health and well-being and shared good practice. We worked with the Educational Psychology and SEND District Teams to provide a series of parent carer videos comparable to those being provided to schools to help with managing positive mental health and returning to school.
- are pleased that STEPs training was made available for parent carers, schools and settings. STEPs promotes a therapeutic approach to behaviour. It teaches positive social behaviour with consequences rather than punishment for anti-social or unsocial behaviour. Cambridgeshire STEPs has been running for two years, and improvements in schools and settings are beginning to show. We arranged for our team to be trained and commissioned sessions for parent carers.
- participated in the commission of new mental health provision. You told us that you wanted quicker referrals and early help. As a result, the LA are seeking to commission new mental health provision that meets this aspiration.
- resourced and provided workshops for parent carers on issues relating to mental health and well-being.
- developed Handy Guides and web content to help signpost to services and support early.
- co-produced the new NHS Keyworker programme to help children and young people at risk of admission to hospital / inpatient care.

***You said..... you wanted better joined up working between service providers and with families. We...***

- promoted our co-produced new guidance on Assessment for an Education, Health and Care Plan. This ensures that expectations of Health, Social Care, the Local Authority SEND Services, Schools and Settings are clearly set out.
- continued to co-produce the offer around 'Transforming Care'. Transforming Care is about ensuring provision from Health and Social Care including residential and hospital care is of the highest standard, joined up and as local as possible. It includes ensuring preventive measures are in place to avoid unnecessary escalation of Care.
- hosted Partners in Commissioning termly to ensure that service providers and parent carers can share priorities and issues around the provision of services.
- worked with the LA to develop the content of the Local Offer Website
- ran the Annual survey and provided the LA with a clear steer on parental views about services.

***You said... you wanted better preparation for adulthood (PfA) from a young age and seamless transitions to life-long services. We...***

- co-produced a new PfA Guide for parent carers helping you find all the information in one place.
- confirmed with the LA that PfA would be a top priority, addressing the cliff edges at transitions.
- initiated co-produced work to seek resources to support improved routes into employment in Cambridgeshire.
- initiated a new piece of work to look at how we might help those with SEND into employment in partnership with the Local Authority and Papworth Trust.
- initiated new monthly PfA Connections sessions for parent carers – an opportunity for support, training, and a space to raise issues.

***You said... you wanted professionals to have more training and for there to be clearer accountability. We...***

- represented parent carer voices on the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough SEND governance Board which brings decision makers from Health, Local Authority SEND Services, Social Care, and parent/carers together to drive change in a timelier way.
- represented parent carer voice on the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Child Health and Well-Being Board which brings decision makers and providers from Health, the Local Authority, Social Care to address mental health and child health and well-being.
- continued to implement the Personal Outcomes Evaluation Tool (POET). POET is a quick questionnaire that asks how Education Health and Care Plans are working and whether they have made a difference to children and young people's lives.
- worked with the Local Authority as they Quality assured Education Health and Care Plans to ensure they are well-written to meet your child's needs. This work is ongoing.
- ensured your voice was heard through opportunities to participate throughout the year – focus groups, network meetings, feedback in workshops and at Tii Hubs, review of documentation and commissioning and surveys / questionnaires.

***You said...you didn't want to feel so alone. We...***

- resourced and facilitated Tii hubs to make an offer of regular peer to peer support.
- Launched SENDads (and Mums) as an evening offer for those who can't make daytime sessions.
- signposted listening ear services to provide counseling and support.



# **PINPOINT'S 2022 CONFERENCE 21st and 22nd June**



**Making your voices heard**