



**Gwasanaeth  
Mabwysiadu  
Dewi Sant**

**St David's  
Adoption  
Service**

**AdoptionUK**  
Teulu gyda'n gilydd  
Together we're family



# **PARENTS AFFECTED BY HISTORIC ADOPTION INTERMEDIARY SERVICE**

**SUPPORT FOR PARENTS WHOSE CHILD WAS  
ADOPTED BEFORE 1976**

As the parent of a child who was adopted you may have reached a stage in your life when you would like more information and support with this loss.

**A GUIDE FOR PARENTS AFFECTED BY HISTORIC ADOPTION**

# INTRODUCTION

The All-Wales Intermediary Service specifically supports parents whose child was adopted before 1976. We understand that as parents you may wish to gain more understanding about your child's adoption and if possible seek to make contact and meet with them.

This service is delivered in partnership by St David's Adoption Service and Adoption UK, in conjunction with the Regional Adoption Agencies in Wales. The service is aimed at effectively supporting you to gain understanding, and if possible to trace and contact your child and to provide you with counselling support throughout the process if you request it.



# ABOUT ST DAVID'S ADOPTION SERVICE



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As a registered Voluntary Adoption Agency St David's Adoption Service offers an intermediary service to parents who wish to gain more understanding of their child's adoption.

We are here to act as a supportive professional to help you through what can be an emotional process. We understand it will have taken you some time to decide to seek more information about your child's adoption and we are here to listen, guide and support you.

The service we offer is called an **Intermediary Service**.



# INTERMEDIARY SERVICE



You may have made a decision that you would like to gain more understanding around you child's adoption, and you may wish to, if possible, trace and, in some instances, contact your adopted child. We are here to support in searching for your adopted child and, if you wish, we are able to approach them to make contact on your behalf. We will also offer support in establishing contact and preparing for potential reunions.

## THE ELEMENTS OF THIS PROCESS INCLUDE:

- An initial discussion meeting with you to check identity and obtain permissions.
- Research undertaken to search for birth family members.
- Initial contact made with birth family members.
- Feedback provided to you as the adopted person.
- Support with contact arrangements.

During the process we will also check to see if your child may have expressed a view regarding contact. Sometimes, they may have requested that they are not contacted, and we will discuss this with you and support you with this information.

We recognise that this will be an emotional time and it can be difficult to wait for a response. We are here to support you and to approach your child sensitively and confidentially on your behalf. We will work with you to help with establishing contact, exchanging letters, and preparing for a possible reunion.

We know that having professional and experienced intermediary support during this time can help in determining good outcomes and that this support provides reassurances, guidance and information during this emotional process. You are also able to access further support through the services offered by Adoption UK.

# ABOUT ADOPTION UK



Adoption UK is the leading charity for those affected by adoption.

We work with adopters, adopted people, parents, professionals and decision makers in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

We also work with kinship families and those parenting children with a special guardianship order.



# PATH

PATH is Adoption UK's therapeutic service. We are a team of psychologists, psychotherapists, therapeutic practitioners, and peer support workers. We offer a wide range of therapeutic support to people affected by adoption and those caring for children who cannot live with their birth parents.



## **SUPPORTING THOSE AFFECTED BY HISTORIC ADOPTIONS – THE ADULTS AFFECTED BY ADOPTION PATHWAY**

The Adults Affected by Adoption PATHway is a response to the recognition that adoption can impact on people throughout their life and finding specialist support is not always easy.

Recent inquiries and reports have highlighted the troubling stories of mothers and children who were separated prior to 1976 and the on-going impact adoption has had on their lives.

There is an increased awareness of the need for parents who lost their children under these difficult circumstances to access specialist support. There have been barriers in place limiting the resources available, and parents have been left too long having to cope without support to manage this significant loss.

This is paired with the increased awareness of the need for adopted persons to access their adoption records and to understand their life story. However, this can be a challenging process and emotional support is not always readily available. The Adults Affected by Adoption Pathway is a pilot project that has been developed to fill this gap and to provide therapeutic and peer support at a time that can be difficult to navigate alone.

## **WHAT IS THE ADULTS AFFECTED BY ADOPTION PATHWAY?**

The Adults Affected by Adoption Pathway is a service primarily for adopted people who are in the process of, or are considering, accessing their adoption records or an intermediary service. The pathway works in collaboration with St David's Adoption Service and the regional adoption agencies to identify those who might need further emotional support at this time.

We recognise however that parents can experience the life-long impact of having lost a child in these circumstances and may need therapeutic support to navigate this process.

During the pilot, PATH are able to offer a small number of places for individual therapeutic support with a psychologist or psychotherapist. This would include up to 15 sessions of individualised therapy sessions. This offer is for adopted people and also for parents in these circumstances.

# WHO IS THE PATHWAY FOR?

The Pathway is open to those who were affected by adoption practice before 1976, when the legislation changed. It is intended to provide therapeutic support for those in the process of accessing information about their child's adoption or considering contact with their adopted child. There may be times when the difficulties someone is experiencing make it too hard for them to deal with the search for their adopted child or consider contact. This might be because they need an additional level of support or it might be because of the nature of their experiences.

This can be at any stage of the process of accessing information or considering contact with their adopted child. This may also be while they are still contemplating whether to go ahead or not. Everyone will be affected by the process in different ways and at different times and the service is available whenever this is needed.

## **CRITERIA FOR REFERRAL TO PATHWAY -**

- Adoption pre-1976
- In need of further support to cope with the emotional impact of adoption

## **WHO IS THE PATHWAY NOT FOR?**

The Pathway is not suitable for anyone who is engaged in other therapeutic supports. The Pathway is not suitable for anyone experiencing severe or enduring mental health difficulties. Pathway does not offer a crisis service or out-of-hours service and so would not be suitable for anyone needing intensive support. In this instance, statutory services, like GP or other mental health services, would be more appropriate.



# REFERRALS

## **HOW DO I GET A REFERRAL FOR SUPPORT?**

All referrals to the adults affected by adoption pathway are made through a social worker. If you are engaged with St David's Adoption Service or any of the regional adoption agencies, then you can ask your allocated social worker to make a referral on your behalf.

## **WHAT HAPPENS ONCE A REFERRAL HAS BEEN MADE?**

Once a referral is received, it will be discussed by the PATH team to make sure we have all the information we need. Someone from the PATH team will then get in touch with you to arrange a consultation with a clinician. This will be to ensure that the pathway is the right support for you. You will be sent a service agreement that outlines the support that will be offered, the expectations and timescales of the services, and our policies on confidentiality and information sharing.

## **EVALUATION OF THE SERVICE**

As this is a pilot service, it is important that we gather information to help us understand how effective the service has been and what people have found helpful or otherwise. To help us with this, we will ask you to complete some questionnaires before you start receiving support and again at the end. We also value your feedback on the service you receive and would ask you to provide this when your support ends.

## **COST OF THE SERVICE**

The pilot is funded by Welsh Government through the National Adoption Service and will be provided free of charge to anyone accessing the service for the duration of their support as set out in their service agreement.



## IF YOU HAVE A COMMENT, CONCERN OR REASON FOR COMPLAINT

Adoption UK always endeavours to provide a sympathetic, courteous and professional service to its membership and service users. While we hope that our services will not give rise to any complaints, we will respond fairly, positively and promptly to complaints from the membership and service users when they feel we have not met their expectations or needs.

Furthermore, we are always pleased to hear members' and users' views on our services, so that steps can be taken to review and improve our services, as necessary. These views may be positive, as well as negative, and will be welcomed as constructive feedback on our work.

All complaints will be treated in the strictest confidence.

**Contact us for full details of our Complaints Policy and Procedure.**

At St Davids' Adoption Service we always try to deliver the highest standard of service and we hope that our service met with your expectations. We do accept that on occasions concerns may arise that you wish to raise and discuss, and we will always listen to these openly and fairly. If you feel dissatisfied with the service you have received then we welcome you to contact us.

As a reflective and learning organisation we always welcome your views on the service you have received to that we can continue to develop and grow to provide a service that best meets the need of the people we work with. Compliments, constructive feedback or complaints will all be treated respectfully, sensitively and confidentially.

**You can request full details on our complaints policy and procedures by speaking with your social worker or emailing [info@stdavidscs.org](mailto:info@stdavidscs.org).**

# AdoptionUK

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Together we're family

Wales Office

Adoption UK Cymru, Office 9 Big Yellow,  
65 Penarth Road,  
Cardiff, CF10 5DL

Registered Charity No. 1160647 (England & Wales)  
Registered Charity No. 50037892 (Scotland)  
Adoption UK is a company limited by guarantee  
Company Number 9454381

Vision: A society in which every child who cannot live with birth family can thrive in childhood and has an equal chance of a bright future into adulthood.

Purpose: To secure the right support at the right time for children who cannot live with their birth families, from childhood into adulthood.

Our vision is every child with an adoption plan in Wales is found a loving family and supported to be the best that they can be.



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St David's Children Society  
28 Park Place  
Cardiff  
CF10 3BA

St David's Children Society is a registered charity with the Charity Commission for England and Wales (Registration No. 509163 and a company limited by Guarantee (Registered 1546688)