



**CAFIS- Connecting Adopted Families Independent Services on behalf of APSE-
Adoption Partnership South East**

CAFIS provides a number of services on behalf of the Regional Adoption Agency- Adoption Partnership South East which consists of Kent, Medway and Bexley Local Authorities. This leaflet concerns:

Access to information and Intermediary services for birth relatives, descendants and those with a prescribed relationship to an adopted person:

These services are available to all as detailed above who live in Kent, Medway or Bexley, known as APSE. If you live outside of these areas but can show that Kent, Medway or Bexley were the Appropriate Adoption Agency (AAA) that dealt with the adoption of the person you are seeking and are willing to travel to Kent to meet with us then we can also offer you a service.

Access to information and intermediary services

As a relative, someone with a prescribed relationship by blood (including half-blood), marriage or civil partnership; or by virtue of the adopted person's adoption, or a descendent of an adopted person you may be entitled to some non-identifying information and support in making contact with the birth relative or adopted person.

Whilst we can support you making contact with the adopted person or birth relative if contact details are unknown we unfortunately are unable to undertake searches and this would be your financial responsibility to employ a registered searcher. We can though, support with this. It will be important to note that whilst you finance the search any identifying information would be passed to CAFIS. Should the adopted person or birth relative not want this information shared this would be retained by CAFIS.

Some may have over the years been part of on-going contact with the adoptive family members following the adoption and are looking at more direct contact now they are 18 years old. Whilst it is considered that this is the age of majority, this does not mean that we will make contact. Consideration is given to current circumstances such as education and other younger family members.

Support

Before you begin your journey with us we will speak to you to and take you through the processes looking at different possible outcomes. At this point it may be considered that now is not the right time for you or other circumstances prevent the service from being taken forward. We can support you with looking at support that you may need including counselling. Should your referral be progressed we will need to photographically identify you including any name change and obtain

evidence of your address; and proof of your relationship with the person you are seeking, usually through birth certificates or other formal documentation.

Once allocated, a meeting will be held with one of our experienced members of staff who will complete an assessment of your needs; they again will discuss possible outcomes to ensure that you are emotionally ready to deal with these or consider other support that you may need.

We have a duty of care to all that we come into contact with and it may be that the worker does not feel that you should begin/continue with this journey. If this is the case and you disagree with this view the worker will take you through the options that you have which will include making a complaint or if you were adopted after 31st December 2005 having your case reviewed by a panel known as the Independent Reviewing Mechanism (IRM).

There is much to consider as you think about taking your journey, and you are likely to have many questions. So call or email us and we will do our very best to answer any questions that you have whether this is about the process or information about counselling or other support. Our email address is cafiskent@barnardos.org.uk, this is our preferred method but you may also call us on 01795- 532081 and your details will be put on our duty system and an experienced worker will call you to discuss your needs in more depth.

