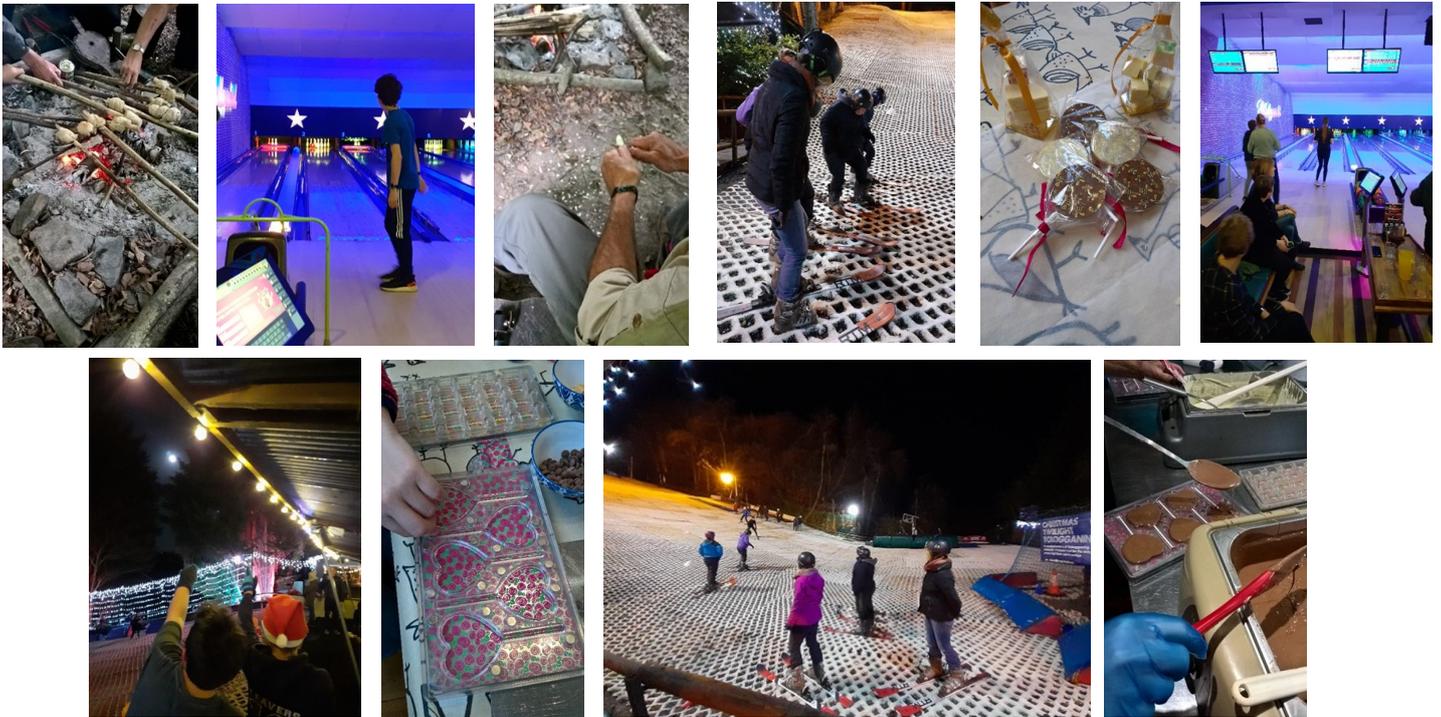




April 2020

During this time of uncertainty, we are sharing some good news stories to hopefully bring some joy to your day!



Our Independent Visitors and their young people enjoyed many fun outings organised by Route1 during 2019-2020 including a canal boat trip, forest school, chocolate making, skiing and tobogganing and recently bowling. "My skiing trip—it was amazing, so much fun. The group was so supportive, the best thing ever!" Of Forest school—"This is actually quite good! I like whittling!" More activities are in the pipeline including another forest school (back by popular demand!) and exciting projects and activities with RSPCA - sunny and fun times will soon be with us again.

Advocacy

A very big thank you to all our advocates -

Over 800 occasions during 2019—2020 you supported children and young people to have their voices heard at meetings concerning their care.

During this time of coronavirus 19 Advocates have signed up for telephone advocacy—Thank you



Community spirit stories

A wonderful clip on BBC news about a gathering on an ordinary street. It started as a regular 11am catch up but has grown into one resident leading a dance routine and others requesting songs!

And amazing experiences of NHS Thursday's 8.00pm



Shout out to a couple of our Independent Visitors (IV) who were in process of being matched with a young person but hadn't formally met. One was being matched with an unaccompanied asylum seeker who had expressed that he really wanted to improve his English language skills, our IV suggested that they were introduced and begin their relationship through letter writing—Brilliant :) Another IV, who again was an introduction away from starting a relationship is talking to her young person on the telephone and via snapchat; they are planning and discussing all the activities and trips they want to do when they can, just wonderful!





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To all our volunteers, The Route1 team are incredibly proud to have so many wonderful, kind, inventive and generous people who undergo and support important and valuable work in caring for and safeguarding many vulnerable children and young people in Somerset. We recognise that we are all in challenging times, even more so if you are needing to self isolate for an extended period of time. **Remember, as you are here for us, we are here for you .**

Stories of what our IV's are doing..

We have received some great stories about what our independent visitors have been up to to maintain contact with their young people... One IV has sent her young person a book, she also has a copy of the same book and they read the story together.

Another is sending her young person some seeds to grow so she can share the progress of them and send photos, they are also sharing recipe ideas and compare how they get on! Another has sent links to BBC audio books, one has suggested doing a diary Anne Frank style and another is sending their young person a DVD of their favourite film! As always, diverse and creative - Thank you!



Fantastic learning...

All services involved in the care of children and young people are needing to work differently right now. What is wonderful is that we are learning and developing our practice in the most diverse and unique ways. One of these areas is about being an Independent Visitor and how we can engage in different ways that can equally meet a child's needs. For some children and young people talking to someone on the telephone, snapchat or exchanging notes, photos and letters is absolutely the right means of engagement for them.

Feedback and quotes from professionals..

"Please could you pass on my personal thanks to A, he really is a fantastic advocate and always, always has the children's best interests at the very centre of all he does. I really do appreciate the hard work all of the advocates do on behalf of the children." – Kind Regards, S (social worker)

"Thanks so much to C, who represented the children really well. Especially many thanks to him for responding so quickly to the referral requests" N (social worker)

"Please can I pass on huge compliments to the service provided by Route1, but more specifically K for the family group conference today. At short notice she went out last night in order to see a child she had previously worked with and then attended a 2 hr family group conference today". N (FGC coordinator)

There are many more and we thank all of our Advocates and Independent Visitors for the fantastic work you do every day.

Thank you also to all those volunteers who have offered emergency foster placements to support Somerset children in care.

Take care everyone, stay safe and stay well