



*"A world that unlocks the infinite potential of every child."*



**The Joe Homan Charity**

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Dear sponsors, supporters and donors of JHC,

Many of you are aware that the Joe Homan Charity has been through a period of significant change, with some difficult decisions, and some exciting opportunities. As one of our valued supporters, we are writing to update you on recent developments at the Joe Homan Charity. Some of you will have already received this communication and we apologise for any duplication, but we want to ensure that you have not missed this vital information.

There are five important updates we wanted to share with you all:

1) **The Joe Homan Charity is relaunching with the new working name Paper Boat.**

It's important to emphasise that neither our vision nor our values are changing. The name Joe Homan only communicates those values and vision to those who knew Joe, and therefore cannot attract new supporters or help us to reach new audiences as we must do if we are to continue to support children at the margins in India and Thailand. If you want to find out more about our work going forward, and the inspiration behind the name Paper Boat, please check your e-mails for 'Waypoint' or find us on social media.

2) **On the 18<sup>th</sup> December 2019 all 193 member states of the United Nations adopted the 2019 Resolution on the Rights of the Child** and called on States to transition away from the institutionalisation of children and redirect resources to family and community-based care. This recognizes the responsibility of States to support and strengthen families, so that poverty is never the reason to separate a child from their parents. This echoes what is already law in India and the UK, that residential care for children should be a last resort only. This places the onus on small charities like us, that have traditionally supported residential welfare programmes, to reconsider how we operate in light of the evidence of recent decades and this mandate from the UN.

3) **Due to ongoing safeguarding concerns JHC is changing the way we operate, and supporters will no longer be able to sponsor children at ISS, MSGH or BTS.** Some of you will already be aware of these changes as we are in the process of contacting all whose donations had been withheld with information and options. This decision has not been taken lightly and arises for the following reasons:

- a. The safeguarding and child protection audit conducted in November 2018 revealed significant failings across all three partners and corroborated issues that had already been picked up by local authorities, such as the Child Welfare Committee.
- b. Crucially, all three failed to meet their minimum legal responsibilities under the Juvenile Justice Act of India which obligated us to withhold funding per advice and guidance from the Charity Commission of England and Wales.
- c. All partners were given more than a year to work with us to address these issues. They were offered support from child rights and safeguarding experts. Sadly, this was not taken seriously with partners failing to share recommendations and findings from the safeguarding audit with their governance and leadership teams. In more than one instance partners refused a financial audit as part of the due diligence required by the Charity Commission.
- d. We understand that for many long-term supporters the Boy's Town Society is intimately connected with their memories of Joe and an integral part of what they see as the charity's work. **Trustees and staff however are unwilling to turn a blind eye when there has been the preventable death of a child**, as there was in November 2018. Multiple safeguarding failings at BTS remain unresolved and BTS is currently under investigation by the local Indian authorities.



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- 4) **Implications for your sponsorship money:** With our accountant we have identified supporters who have sent sponsorship money during the period that funds had been withheld from the designated organisation. These donations had been held and not used for any other purpose.
- Information about what happens now, and how these changes affect sponsorships is being sent to all sponsors whose donations had been withheld. Most of you should have already received these communications via post. If you think your money may have been withheld but have not received a communication regarding this email [JHC@joehoman.org.uk](mailto:JHC@joehoman.org.uk) and we would be happy to double check that for you and e-mail across letters and forms if required. Please note we are a small team and that we cannot always respond quickly.
  - Many thanks to those who have responded already, it's great to see how many are supportive of what we are doing and happy to continue to give to community-based projects. However, we are still waiting for quite a few people to get back to us. We understand that this is not necessarily an easy decision and people might want to take some time to reflect on the best course of action.
  - If we have not heard from you by **5<sup>th</sup> April 2020** (the end of the financial year) we will be contacting the charity commission seeking their permission to repurpose this funding in line with legal advice that we received last year.
- 5) **Governance that ensures the continuity of Joe's vision and values:** We currently have four trustees that have a longstanding association and a deep commitment to this charity;
- Deborah Wetherall, an experienced educational professional, who first met Joe and was deeply inspired by him in the 1980s when he would stay at her family home during his fundraising tours. Deborah has been on the board for three years.
  - Arun Chinnaraj, a senior strategy advisor for the NHS, who is from Madurai and met and was inspired by Joe when he was eight years old. Arun has been on the board for four years.
- We have recently welcomed:
- Justin Segrave-Daly, a renewable energy expert, whose career path was inspired following time volunteering with Joe on a solar energy project when Justin was eighteen years old. Justin was co-opted onto the board in June 2019 and formally appointed at the AGM in October 2019.
  - Tom Wilkinson, a doctoral researcher at the London School of Economics, whose commitment to the charity was inspired by his parents and grandparents support for Joe from the earliest days. **We are excited to announce that Tom was co-opted onto the board at our latest meeting in February 2020.**

We continue to work with the relevant authorities in India to ensure that the welfare and wellbeing of children within these institutions is the guiding priority.

With best wishes,

Deborah Wetherall, Trustee  
Arun Chinnaraj, Trustee  
Justin Segrave-Daly, Trustee  
Tom Wilkinson, Trustee