Handout on later in life letters

**1. Introduction**

Later Life Letters are written by the child's social worker in conjunction with the adopters' social worker and are given to prospective adopters before the Adoption Order is made.  The expectation is that the letter will be given to the child at an appropriate time after the Adoption Order is made.  The timing of the passing of the letter to the child will be considered at the placement planning stage and at subsequent [**Adoption Reviews**](http://www.proceduresonline.com/resources/keywords_online/nat_key/keywords/adoption_review.html).

**2. Purpose of the Later Life Letter**

The Later Life Letter gives the child an explanation of why he/she was adopted and the reasons and actions that led up to this decision being made.  This should include, whenever possible, the people involved in this decision, and the facts at that time.  You must be aware of the pain and anger that may have been around then, and this needs to be reflected in the letter.

The child is the focus of the letter and it must be remembered when writing the letter that the child has a need to know why he/she was placed for adoption.  This is important information and it must be a true account of the process.

If birth parents were involved in the choice of adoptive parents, the letter should include reasons why they chose their child's adoptive parents.  This may seem simplistic - e.g. "they live in the country"- but it needs to be stated (in contested situations this information may not be available).  If the child's birth parent expressed any wishes about the choice of adoptive parents these should be included, e.g. would like him/her to have a sibling.

Remember that every child will see the letter at a different age, and so the letter, whilst being truthful, may have to be written so that a child can understand it.

Our expectation would be that the child sees the letter around the ages of 10-12 years, but the decision on timing would be at the discretion of the adoptive parents.  In very difficult situations (e.g. incest, mental health problems, abuse) it may be better to write two letters.  The second one for when the child is in mid-teens, and more able to understand about his/her history.

The letter is in addition to the child's Life Story Book and should never be a substitute for the book - see [**Life Story Work Guidance**](http://ealing.proceduresonline.com/chapters/g_life_story.html).

**3. What is Important? Everything!**

The information may be lost if not gathered together now.  Experience shows that adult adoptees are eager for information collected at this time, even if it is painful.

The letter can be personalised by the social worker who knew the birth parents and the child at the time of the placement.

Be confident - don't be intimidated by the task.  It is difficult but not impossible.

You have all the information you need.  Think of yourself as an adopted person, what information would you want, what questions would you ask your birth parents?

**4. There is no Right or Wrong way to do This**

The attached are only to be used as **examples** - to give you ideas.  What you produce will have to be something that you feel comfortable in producing, in each case the written style of the social worker and the information available will be different.

It is a good idea to write the letter in sections, for instance the legal situation could be separate from the more personal information.  Initially adopters and the adopted child will need a simple explanation to share with the family and friends, this can then be built up in to the full and true story of events.  As stated earlier, in very difficult telling situations it is a good idea to have two letters.

**5. What Information Should be Included?**

Birth parents - as much information as possible should be included.  Information should also be given about the extended family (i.e. grandparents, siblings, aunts and uncles).  Sometimes information on the birth father is limited.  Whatever is available should be provided.  If the identity of the birth father is not confirmed by him, only non-identifying information about him should be included.

Try and give a descriptive picture of the birth parents.  This should include details about their first names, ages, physical characteristics, their personality, academic and employment history, health, their interests and skills.  Also with whom they were living at the time of placement.  If the child has brothers and sisters, similar information should be given.  Are they adopted?  If they live with birth parents, explain why.  The child needs to know what happened to their brothers and sisters, who cares for them, and if relevant, why there is no contact.  Be careful to give only first names for all birth relatives and do not use addresses or other identifying information.

Information needs to be given about the child's birth, time, day, date etc., which hospital, who was present, what happened next?  Who cared for the child after his/her birth?

Include comments by the social worker on any contact between the child and his or her birth parents and any information about any events that relate to the child around this time.  Do not include the child's original first name and surnames.

Talk to the adopters about the letter(s).  When telling the story, try to be positive as well as negative.  You need to acknowledge that possible negative issues around the events leading up to a child's birth and subsequent placement are not necessarily the adopters' views of the situation.  The adopters have to tell this story, and there needs to be a balance of views.  We rely on the adopters passing on this information, so involve them.  Ask if you can talk about their hopes, fears and feelings at the time of the introductory meetings and placements.  Can you include the reason why they wanted to adopt?

Give details of how any agreed contact was decided - whether it is "face to face" or Letter Box.  The child needs to know that birth parents and other relatives want to hear about their progress, and that the adoptive parents agreed to the contact arrangements prior to placement.

When you have drafted the letter(s) in consultation with the adopters' social worker you should show it/them to the adopters; they may have extra information that needs to be added.  They may also wish to ask for some amendments/different wording.  They need to feel comfortable with the content as this will be reflected in the way they help their child later with its contents.

In the letters the birth parents should be called by their first names, and the adopters described as "your parents".

**6. How? Write it to the Child**

Have a look at the **examples**, and then be creative and imaginative.

You can write a letter or letters.

It could be a book.

It could be a loose leaf folder.

It could be a combination of all the above or anything else you feel is appropriate.

Remember the age at which you want the child to get this information and write it to the child at that age.

Sometimes there should be two letters or if you use a loose leaf binder, sections could be geared to different ages.

If the placement situation was difficult - e.g. there were legal problems, incest, rape, abuse, they could be in a separate section to be seen later in the child's life.  These events need to be truthfully detailed.

The basic information needs to be given to the child as early as possible, and this should include the true reason for the adoptive placement.

Brothers and sisters must have separate letters even when placed together, and this includes twins.

You should also give the date the Adoption Order was granted, the name of the court, and the names and office bases of all the social workers and family placement/adoption social workers involved prior to and after the placement.

Date and sign the letter.  Keep a copy on file and send the letter to the adopters' social worker who will give it to the adopters and explain their responsibilities in sharing the information with the child at a later date, i.e. that the information should be made available to the child at a time the adopters consider is appropriate, but no later than the child's 18th birthday.

The adopters should be asked for written confirmation of receipt of the letter and intention to share the information with the child.

**7. Letter For an Adopted Child**

**Example 1 - Straightforward placement of child whose birth parents requested adoption**

CONFIDENTIAL (date and on headed paper)

Dear Anna

I am writing this letter for you to read, now that you are growing up, so that you have information about your birth parents, Sarah and John, and how you came to live with your parents.  I am the worker who knew Sarah and John, and you, right from the beginning of your life.

I first met Sarah when she was about seven months pregnant with you.  She was living with her mother, step-father, brother, sister and John, at her parents home in West Yorkshire.  All the immediate family knew of her pregnancy, but no-one else.  She lived in a small village and her mother, at that time, ran a small business, so it was quite difficult to keep "secrets".

When Sarah, and later John, came to see me it was clear that they wanted to do the very best that they could for you.  They were still students, had not lived together independently, and did not feel ready to settle down and provide the sort of settled lifestyle they wanted for you.

It was arranged that Sarah should go and live with foster carers, Sue and Mike, near Wakefield.  She remained with them for the last part of her pregnancy and briefly returned to them after your birth.  John got some relief work on a local farm, and lodgings nearby, so he was in touch with Sarah during this time.  Sarah's mother and step-father also visited regularly.  Sarah got on very well with Sue and when you were born on Wednesday, 20 October 2001, at 18.45 hours at Wakefield Maternity Hospital, Sue was present throughout your delivery, having driven Sarah to Hospital.  John and Sarah's mother also arrived later, so it was quite a party!

Everything about your birth was normal and you weighed 2.805kgs.  There is a photograph of you taken shortly after your birth, which your parents will have shown you.  You looked very sweet and had lots of dark brown hair.  Sarah had decided that she did not want to see you, but she saw you as you were born.  Sarah spent a few more hours in Hospital and went back to Sue's house and stayed with her for two days.

You stayed in Hospital until 22 October, but Sue visited you during the time you were on your own there.  Sue and I took you home to her house, and you remained there until you moved to live with your parents and Robert on 2nd December 2001.  You were a very contented baby, sleeping and feeding well, and you were given lots of cuddles by Sue and her family.

Sarah and John were involved in choosing your parents for you and they met them on the 26 November in my office.  The meeting went well, although everyone was nervous.  Sarah and John had a clear idea of the sort of family they wanted you to be part of, and felt your parents were exactly what they wanted for you.

Sarah and John said "goodbye" to you at Sue's house on the evening of 1 December 2001.  The day before your parents took you home.

Let me tell you a little about Sarah and John.

Sarah was born on 16 November 1982.  She was an attractive woman of 5ft 8ins tall, weighing about 9 stone.  She had long blondish/brown hair, blue/green eyes and the sort of skin that tans easily.  Sarah was a very friendly sort of person, not at all shy, and able to say exactly what she thought.  Sarah was very close to her family, and continued to live with them for a long time after your birth.  Sarah's family included her mother, Helen, her stepfather, Peter, her full sister Elizabeth, who was born on 21 July 1984, and half-brother, Michael born on 18 January 1987.  Her step-father was a farm manager so she has usually lived on farms.  For a time her mother had a milk round as well as running a small business.

Sarah attended school until she was 17 years old and left with GCSEs in English, Art, German, Business Studies, Geography, Typing, Sociology and Biology.  She thought about doing "A" levels but decided to go to Agricultural College instead.  She gained a Diploma in Agriculture, and since then has worked in farming.  She had ambitions to pursue this career and get further qualifications.

Sarah's passion has always been horses, and she regularly hunts and participates at "point to point" meetings.  When I knew her she had two horses.  She is interested in all sports, especially Badminton and Tennis.  She also belonged to the Pony Club and the Local Young Farmers Group.

John was born on 17 September 1981.  He is 5ft 9ins tall and weighs about 10 stone.  He is very slim.  He has blue eyes and dark brown curly hair.  He is a quiet and gentle person, very friendly and easy-going.

John's family are farmers.  He grew up living with his father, mother and two sisters, Kate, who is two years older than him, and Julie who is eight years younger.  John was not so close to his family as Sarah was to hers, and it was a long time before he told them about your birth.

John left school at 16 with GCSEs in Maths, English, Science, Art and Design, Economics and Metalwork.  He then worked on his father's farm before attending Agricultural College.  He left College with a Certificate in Agriculture.  When I knew him he was doing general farm work for his father, Sarah's step-father and other farmers on a contract basis.  Eventually he expected to be much more involved in running his father's farm.

John's interests were horse-riding, pool, shooting, swimming, biking and cars.  Like Sarah he belonged to the Young Farmers and various other clubs.

I remember he liked cars and having a very "fast" journey with him and Sarah when he went to meet Sue and Mike for the first time.  Sarah was very cross and told him to slow down, which he didn't.

Sarah and John met at College about sixteen months before you were born.  They had a lot in common and got on very well.  They remained friends after your birth.

Sarah and John both enjoyed being single, without responsibilities.  They were quite ambitious in their future careers, and neither wanted to settle down yet.  The decision to place you for adoption was made by both John and Sarah.  They thought very seriously before coming to this decision and never changed their minds.  They both felt that, at this stage in their lives, they could not offer the stability and security they wanted for you.  They were very happy when they became aware that your parents could offer you all the things they wanted for you, and pleased that you could live with them and be adopted by them.

Your Adoption Order was made at Leeds County Court on 16 November 2003.  You and all your adoptive family and Jane Bloggs (your parents' social worker), and I all attended Court.  It was a very happy occasion and photos were taken - inside the Court with the Judge, and outside the Court, I am sure you will have seen them.

I hope that what I have written in this letter will help you understand how you came to live with your parents.  Perhaps, after you have read this letter, you should discuss it with them, as they will be able to help you sort out anything that seems unclear.

With all good wishes for the future.

Signed:

Social Worker or

Your usual work title.

**Example 2  -   Letter where birth mother chose not to tell birth father about the child, the birth mother continued to care for two older children.**

CONFIDENTIAL (Date and on headed paper)

Dear Simon

Your parents will already have told you a great deal about your adoption.  I thought it might be helpful if I wrote something down so that you can read about your birth parents and about how it was that you came to be adopted.

You were born in Wakefield Hospital on 15 January 2001 at 4.27 in the morning.  You weighed 2.940kgms, you were 48cms long and your head circumference was 33cms.

Your birth mother's name was Judith.  She had come to Wakefield in September because she was unhappy with where she lived.  She knew that she was pregnant but told no-one about your expected arrival until two weeks before you were born.  The doctors thought that you were probably three to four weeks early.  Judith cuddled you just after you were born and after that you were looked after in the Special Baby Unit.  Judith came to say goodbye to you before she left the Hospital later in the day.  At the time you were very pink and wrinkly with big blue eyes and lovely little chin.  Everyone who saw you thought that you were a long skinny baby with lovely fair hair.

Judith had only recently begun to plan for you because she'd recently been through a difficult time so she asked her social worker if she could arrange for you to go and live with another family until she was sure what was best for you.  This family were foster carers Beryl and Dennis.  You went to stay with them on 19 January 2001 and stayed there until 14 May 2001.

Beryl and Dennis had a grown up family and you were quite a favourite with everyone.  You particularly liked to know what was going on and used to yell if you were left in the quiet.

Judith and I began to talk about whether adoption within her family would be a possibility but although her older brother John and his family thought about it they felt, for lots of reasons, that although they loved you, they wouldn't feel able to offer you what they wanted for you.

It was after this that Judith decided to make sure that you had a very special family.

During this time Judith had lots of talks with her social worker, and myself, and finally reached the conclusion that adoption by another family would be the best solution for you.

Judith was always sure that she loved you and wanted you to have a happy, settled family to grow up in.

Judith, your birth mother, was born on 7 November 1968 in Coventry and when you were born she was 33 years old.  Judith was 5ft 3ins tall, slim with large blue/green eyes and her most striking feature was her dark, curly red hair that she wore long.  She was quietly spoken but had strong views on things.  Judith enjoyed school but left at 15 years without exams.  She enjoyed doing projects, particularly history.  Judith had been close to her family as a young child, but she found their restrictions difficult as she got older, she therefore left home at 15.

At the time of your birth, her father, Tony, an engineer, was 55, her mother Doreen, was 56 and a housewife.  Her older brother Steve was 35 years old.  He worked as a bus and tram driver in Blackpool.  He lived with his wife and their daughter Clare, then 7 years old.

Judith's only sister was called Carol.  She was 4 years older.  She had three children - Mark 14, Debbie 12, and Anna aged 3 years.  They were all living in Coventry - Judith's younger brother, Ian, was working as a teacher in Liverpool.  He and his wife had Susie aged 9 years.

By the time that I knew Judith, she had fallen out with her father, but she saw her mother Doreen every week.  Doreen was very concerned about what would happen to you and she bought a teddy and I'm sure that your adoptive parents will have kept it safe for you.

After she left school, Judith lived with her sister but when she found herself pregnant with Darren, born 18.3.87, she went back to live with her parents.  She then met Joe.  They had Peter together, born 27.9.88.  Unfortunately they weren't happy together.  Joe was violent and cruel and eventually Judith went with the children to live in a Women's Refuge in Newcastle-on-Tyne.

It was during the time at Newcastle that she met your father.  They were together for sometime, but he became violent and so Judith left Newcastle for Wakefield.  Your birth father was called Colin.  He was 29 years old at the time of your birth.  He had light brown straight hair with hazel eyes and a moustache.  Judith had little contact with his family but she said Colin had told her that his mother and father had split up when he was young.  He'd been a "bit of a lad" and had at one time attended a special school for children who were having problems.  Colin hadn't done well at school and had left school at 15 with no exams.  He had various jobs.  At one time he was in the army, where he enjoyed parachuting.  He left the army because he hurt his back.  Mostly he liked motorbikes.

After a short while of going out together Colin moved in to live with Judith, Darren and Peter.  Within a short time Judith realised she had made an awful mistake.  She and Colin had lots of rows and he was very unkind to them all.  Eventually Judith felt that she had had enough and came to Wakefield to a place that was found for her by Women's Aid.  By this time, Judith knew she was having you but decided not to tell Colin.

She didn't tell anyone else until two weeks before you were born.  Her social worker, Liz Brown, came to see you just after you'd been born and talked with Judith about her plans for you.

Judith thought a great deal about what was best for you.  When the idea of a family adoption wasn't possible she began to talk with me about the sort of family that she wanted to become your family.

I was the social worker who was with her when she chose Gordon, Caroline and Jason to be your family.  She liked the sound of them because they liked lots of cuddles and sounded as though they enjoyed life together.  Judith was particularly pleased because they already had one little boy, as one of the things that was important to her was that you shouldn't be an only child.  She wanted you to be part of a loving family and knew that because of other problems she would not be able to provide you with what she wanted for you.

I expect Caroline and Gordon have told you about their own disappointments about being unable to have children of their own and how they'd already adopted Jason.  They had come to this agency for help to get another child and were waiting to hear.  They were very excited when they heard that Judith had chosen them and were keen to see you.

They first visited you at your foster carers, Beryl and Dennis' home on 13 May 2001, when they were both bowled over by your smile.  They quickly decided that they wanted to take you home as soon as they could.

They were very keen to meet Judith and this meeting took place on 14 May 2001. I am sure that your parents will have told you about it.  We all sat around a large table and Judith showed your parents photographs of her family and told them a bit about herself and they did the same.  She liked your parents a lot and thought that she'd made a good choice for you.  It reassured her to think that they were people who were loving to each other and to your brother Jason.

After this meeting your parents took you home.

It was not an easy decision for Judith to make but she made it knowing that you were going to a loving home.

Your adoption was arranged by the Family Services Directorate in Wakefield and the social worker who knew your birth mother was Liz Brown.  Sue Jones was the social worker who worked with your adoptive parents.

The Adoption Order was made in the Leeds County Court on 3 December 2001.

With very best wishes for the future

Yours sincerely

Signed:

Social Worker or

Your usual working title

**Example - Difficult and complicated birth family history - letter has been written in sections to facilitate giving information to the child at different times. ( from Ealing’s procedures)**

(Front Sheet)

**JOSHUA'S SPECIAL BOOK**(To be kept in a safe place)

**YOUR BIRTH:**

You were born in Wakefield on Tuesday, 11 May 2001 at approximately 8.00 am.

Your birth weight was 3.3 kilograms.

When I visited the hospital with my team manager later that same morning I saw you beside your mother's bed in your own cot.  You were a very alert baby already aware of what was going on around you, and with a plentiful head of mid-brown hair.  Your birth mother, Mary, told me that your birth had been a straightforward delivery without any complications.

She also told me that your birth father, John, had been with her in the delivery room when you were born.

We discussed with Mary our concerns for your future care.

When Mary insisted that she would be leaving the hospital with you to return home with John, in spite of all our advice that she should remain in hospital with you, we took the necessary legal steps, via the Courts, to ensure that you remained in the security of the hospital.  Your birth mother, Mary, eventually returned home at about 5.00 pm and you remained on the ward at the hospital.

Both Mary and John returned to see you on 13 and 14 May and saw you in the presence of either the nurses or myself.

By the 14 May I had found a foster family who could look after you temporarily and I introduced them to Mary and John when you were ready to move from hospital.

**LEGAL BACKGROUND TO LOCAL AUTHORITY DECISION FOR YOU TO BE ACCOMMODATED BY FOSTER CARERS FOLLOWING YOUR BIRTH, AND THE BACKGROUND CIRCUMSTANCES:**

IMPORTANT. Joshua - this is likely to be an especially difficult and painful chapter for you, and I think you should think of talking through its contents with your parents or some other trusted person.

Since 2000 your birth mother Mary had been living with your birth father John.  John had been charged with very serious offences, which you can discuss with your parents or a social worker when you are older.

When in March 2000 we received information that Mary was pregnant we arranged to hold a Child Protection Conference (involving amongst others the social workers in the Social Services Department) in order to make a plan to protect you after your birth.  Mary and John attended this meeting and were aware of the conference decision that the local authority would seek an Emergency Protection Order should Mary continue to live with John, whilst an up-dated risk assessment was made regarding his attitude and intentions.  In the event Mary and John did not agree to this suggestion.

Following your birth on 11 May, it was explained to Mary and John, both by myself and by the Guardian ad Litem (an independent person appointed by the Court), that the Emergency Protection Order I had obtained from the Courts did not prevent Mary remaining with, and caring for, you in hospital.  However, she chose not to stay and left the same afternoon in the company of John.

John denied that he was (or would be) a risk to your well being and proper development and Mary supported him in this, always maintaining that he had been wrongly convicted in the first place of these serious offences.

As a result of going before the Court charged with these offences, John spent 18 months in a Young Offenders Prison.

Both your birth parents declined to co-operate in the psychological and other assessment, which the local authority proposed to them.  However, the first Court hearing in November 2000 was postponed when your birth father agreed, at the last minute, to undertake a "risk assessment" before two selected experts (one of his choosing, one of ours) but in the event, for his own reasons (which are unknown to me), he decided not to proceed.

When the Court reconvened in December 2000 the Judge gave his approval to the Care Order, which gave us legal responsibility to secure your future with an adoptive family - namely Eric, Stephanie and Ellen.

**YOUR FIRST FOSTER PLACEMENT:**

On 14 May, you left the hospital and I arranged for you to be collected by your foster carers Lyn and Pete, who took you to their home in Wakefield.

Lyn and Pete looked after you very well, loving and caring for you as if you were their own son.

From 17 May to 4 June Mary visited you for up to four hours every weekday morning at the foster home.  Later she found work and her contact with you was varied to one hour three times per week in the evenings, but still at Lyn and Pete's home.

During her visits, Mary handled you very lovingly and caringly, feeding and cuddling you.

John saw you every fortnight for one hour at a Social Services office in Wakefield.  These contacts were always supervised by me.  John was always pleased to see you, and often bounced you on his knee and held your bottle if you needed to be fed.  He seemed less spontaneous than Mary, possibly because he saw you less often, and these contacts were always in the presence of a social worker.  The contacts continued until 20 October after which John decided he could not come and see you again.

In your "Life Story Book" (put together lovingly by Lyn and Pete) you have photographs taken of Mary, John and yourself during some of these contact visits.

**MARY'S FAMILY AND EARLY HISTORY:**

Mary, your birth mother was born on 4 October 1976.  She was the second eldest of three daughters.  The family lived in an isolated "tied" cottage.  Mary's father (your maternal grandfather) worked long hours as a farm labourer and her mother (your maternal grandmother) was a semi-invalid due to persistent ill health who would venture no further than the local market town once a week to do her shopping.

These are the people in Mary's family:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Her father | David | d.o.b. 29.12.46 |
| Her mother | Ann | d.o.b. 13.10.48 |
| Her sister | Jane | d.o.b. 13.9.83 |
| Her sister | Liza | d.o.b. 24.4.80 |

Jane is now married and living in Calderdale; Liza is still living with her parents.

Mary left home in 1994 and gave birth to her first child, Hazel, in 1995.  She was at that time being supervised by another social worker and was living in supportive lodgings.  Later she found a flat of her own.  Hazel's father, Gavin moved in with her and they eventually were married in April 1997.  I actually knew Mary during this period and it was a very difficult time for her in many ways.  She lived with Gavin and Hazel in a very small upstairs flat and due to the lack of any regular income there was always a shortage of money to buy things in the family.  As a result Mary had very angry arguments with Gavin.  In the early part of 2000 she decided to leave Gavin taking Hazel with her.  After a few days she returned to Gavin to leave Hazel with him.  In January 2000 Mary and Gavin were divorced and Hazel continued to live with Gavin.

Hazel is your half sister and she was born on 4 July 1995.

I always found your mother Mary to be a shy rather quiet person.  As a young child she was assessed at quite an early age as having special education needs and she went to a school in Leeds, which she left at sixteen.  Physically she was approximately 5ft 4ins tall and of slender build.  She had a fair complexion with short brown hair and blue eyes.  Mary was not married to John at the time of your birth but they have since married and still live together as far as I know.

**JOHN'S FAMILY AND EARLY HISTORY:**

Your birth father John was born on 1 October 1977.  He is the eldest of five children (three younger brothers and one younger sister).

The family details are as follows:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| His father | Charles | d.o.b.11.11.55 |
| His mother | Theresa | d.o.b. 23.9.57 |
| His brother | Edward | d.o.b. 23.8.78 |
| His brother | Robert | d.o.b. 19.4.82 |
| His sister | Tracey | d.o.b. 7.8.84 |
| His brother | Peter | d.o.b. 26.8.87 |

The family used to live in Cumbria and it was whilst living here that the serious offences for which John was sent to prison took place.  At the time of the investigations, John's brother Edward was also convicted for similar offences.

As a direct result Robert, Tracey and Peter were made subject to Place of Safety (Emergency Protection Order) and went to live with foster carers.  In December 1998 Care Orders were granted to Cumbria County Council.  Now they are 18 years of age Robert and Tracey are independent.  Robert has remained as a lodger in his foster home, and Tracey is living locally in her own flat.

Theresa (your paternal grandmother) left Charles (your paternal grandfather) and their home in early 1997.  In November 1999 she remarried and lives near Leeds.  Charles (your paternal grandfather) has also entered a new relationship and lives in Bradford.

Your father John married Kate (d.o.b. 29.10.75) in early 1994 when he was still at school.

They had three children - your half brothers and sister

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Michael | d.o.b. 11.6.94 |
| Harriet | d.o.b. 14.9.95 |
| James | d.o.b. 17.8.96 |

This family lived in Cumbria until January 1997 when Kate was advised by Social Services Department to leave, and not allow John back into her new home.

Following his release from custody in July 1997 John had relationships with several young women and it was necessary for Social Services Department to intervene and alert them to the concerns regarding John.

In my contact with John I always found him very polite and well spoken.  Physically he was approximately 5ft 10ins tall broad shouldered and of a strong build.  His complexion was fair with brown eyes.  John attended High School where he studied subjects to GCSE level.  After leaving school he worked in electronics as a trainee system engineer.

In his spare time he enjoyed clay pigeon and both target and "rough" shooting, and at weekends he ran a successful mobile disco for local pubs and parties etc.

Joshua  - I saw you on the day you were born and later I saw you very regularly whilst you were at Lyn and Pete's house.  I also saw you in the early stages of your placement with your parents and after your adoption by them.

You were always a responsive alert baby.  You smiled and vocalised a great deal.  You seemed to me to be very happy and lovable, eager to discover and get on with things.  You walked, talked and did everything young children should do, at the right time.  There were no concerns about your health or developmental progress to my knowledge.

Lyn and Pete loved you a lot and were very sad for a while when the time came for you to move on to live with your parents.

I hope that the information I have given will give you some of the answers to the many questions that may arise in your mind as you grow older and which you must discuss with your parents and/or social worker.

The future "chapters" of your life are for you to write together with your parents and Ellen.

Signed

Date

Social Worker or your usual work title

Also work base address

**End**

**2012 (Kind permission given from L. Borough of Ealing from their guidance on later in life letters)**