

# Barnardo's highlight fostering this week



Look out for some special projections on the old GPO building at the East End this morning and this evening during your commute.

Dame Joan Collins, Andy Serkis, Linda Robson are among stars who have braved the days of acne and dodgy haircuts to release candid photos of themselves as adolescents. Barnardo's approached celebrities for their 'unseen' teen pics as part of a new campaign to recruit more foster carers in the UK.

A number of personalities have sent through informal snaps of themselves in their teen years. They include *I'm A Celebrity Get Me Out of Here* winner Christopher Biggins in hippy garb, a demure Brenda Blethyn and the late Lynda Bellingham playing Puck in a teenage production of *A Midsummer's Night Dream*.

The celebs have also shared pearls of wisdom passed down by their family for Barnardo's Fostering Week 2015 which launches today.

Carol Smillie remembers being told: "If you really want it, don't wait for someone to hand it to you, work hard, and go out there and get it for yourself."

Barnardo's Scotland is looking to recruit 850 foster carers in Scotland 2015 to help address a shortfall of 8,600 carers across the UK. The charity is asking members of the public to consider becoming foster carers and help create happy childhood memories for some of the most vulnerable children in the UK.

Using the celebrity pictures, Barnardo's will be staging

projection stunts throughout the week (12 – 18 January 2014), at Waverleygate today both first thing in the morning and between 5:00 and 7:00pm this evening.

Barnardo's is targeting commuters, January sales shoppers and evening revellers in all three cities, giving a glimpse into the early life of some of the nation's favourite celebrities.

Brenda Blethyn OBE, who is supporting the campaign, said: "I am a long-term supporter of Barnardo's and their fostering services. The work foster carers do is invaluable, as they offer vulnerable children and young people a stable, safe and caring home, sometimes for the first time in their lives.

"Although it is a demanding role, it is very rewarding and we desperately need more potential foster carers to come forward for children waiting for a family. That is why I'm taking part in this year's National Fostering and Adoption Week."

Barnardo's Scotland Director, Martin Crewe, said: "Most of us can remember the advice and support we received from our family growing up. Without the right foster family to care for them, many vulnerable children may never experience the kind of love and stability we take for granted.

"Currently a third of all children in foster care are moved between different families more than twice every year due to the lack of suitable foster carers. The number of children in the care system in the UK has risen for the 8th year in a row to more than 90,000 and at least 8,600 new foster carers are needed in the UK.

"It is a critical situation and Barnardo's is looking for people with patience and commitment to provide a stable home for the most vulnerable children in the UK. Fostering is a caring career and I would encourage those who feel they have a lot of love to give to get in touch."

There is no upper age limit to becoming a foster carer

although there is a minimum age of 21. Barnardo's does not exclude anyone from consideration on the grounds of marital status, gender, sexual orientation, disability or employment status.

To find out more about fostering visit [www.barnardos.org.uk/fostering](http://www.barnardos.org.uk/fostering) or call 0845 894 9501. Follow the campaign on twitter using the hashtag "WhyFoster and share your teen pictures and family advice.