



Together

Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights

**Report and Financial Statements
for the Year Ended 31st March 2014**

Registered charity number: SC029403
Registered company number: SC199725

Registered Office:
Rosebery House
9 Haymarket Terrace
Edinburgh EH12 5EZ

www.togetherscotland.org.uk

Contents

Page

Reference and Administrative Information

Report of the Trustees

Independent Examiner's Report

Statement of Financial Activities

Balance Sheet

Reference and Administrative Information

Charity Name: Together (Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights)

Charity Registration Number: SC029403

Company Number: SC199725

Registered Office: Rosebery House
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Trustees: Chair: Alex Cole-Hamilton
Treasurer: Kate Higgins

Board Members: Selwyn McCausland (Vice Chair)
Kelly Bayes
Susan Elsley
Fiona Jones
Elizabeth Morrison (to 12th May 2014)
Chelsea Stinson
Claire Telfer
Samantha White

Company Secretary: Juliet Harris

Bankers: Bank of Scotland
20/22 Shandwick Place
Edinburgh EH2 4RN

Independent Examiner: Mairi McReynolds FCCA
Barnardo's Scotland
235 Corstorphine Road
Edinburgh EH12 7AR

Volunteer Accountant Ian J Douglas

Report of the Trustees 2013-14

The Trustees submit their Report and Financial Statements for the period ended 31st March 2014.

1. Objectives and Activities

The Charity was incorporated as a company limited by guarantee on 8th September 1999, to further the education of the community on rights of children and young people as defined by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). Donations and membership payments have been received throughout the year from organisations and private individuals. The Charity's affairs are managed by regular meetings of the Trustees of the Company. Throughout 2013-14, the day to day activities of Together were carried out by a full time Director and Policy & Communications Officer and part-time Administrator. The staff team were supported by two part-time interns and a volunteer accountant. The Board of Trustees provided strategic direction and oversight to the charity.

2. Structure, Governance and Management

The Trustees are elected or re-elected by the members at the Annual General Meeting. The number of Trustees shall not exceed 10 persons. All Trustees are appointed for an initial 3 year term after which they can be re-elected for a further 3 years. The Trustees hold regular board meetings and monitor the financial situation of the Charity closely.

3. Reserves Policy

It is the policy of the Trustees to ensure that the unrestricted funds not committed or invested in tangible fixed assets ('the free reserves') held by the charity should be available to cover 3 months of the resources expended. If funds were to drop significantly below this level, the Trustees would consider replacement funding, or reconsider the charity's activities.

4. Risk Review

Internal risks are minimised by the implementation of procedures for authorisation of all transactions and projects and to ensure consistent quality of delivery for all operational aspects of the charitable company. These procedures are periodically reviewed to ensure that they still meet the needs of the charity.

5. Review of Activities

As outlined in its 2013-14 Business Plan, Together's mission is to work towards all children in Scotland being able to enjoy their rights according to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and other human rights conventions. Throughout 2013-14, Together has worked towards this mission through three key aims:

1. Promoting awareness and understanding of the UNCRC.
2. Monitor implementation of the UNCRC.
3. Report on progress on the implementation of the UNCRC and push for full implementation.

Together was able to take forward these aims with funding from the Scottish Government and the Early Intervention Fund. Funding from the Scottish Government enabled Together to continue employing a Director and Administrator. New funding from the Early Intervention Fund enabled Together to employ a fulltime Policy and Communications Officer from June 2013.

Together's aims were taken forward through the following activities:

5.1. Promoting awareness and understanding of the UNCRC

- *Continue to increase membership base to make it broadly representative of the children's sector across Scotland and keep up-to-date and fulfil information needs of members*

Members

Together has continued to promote membership at every opportunity. In the last year, we increased our membership from 210 to 256. These members represented a range of special interest groups and ranged from international, national and local NGOs through to after-school clubs, child rights officers and academics. Throughout 2013-14, Together consulted with members to explore how they could get more involved in the promotion and monitoring of the UNCRC in Scotland. In a survey of members undertaken in March 2014, all respondents stated that Together is good or very good at providing relevant and useful information on children's rights and 91% of members stated that this had raised their awareness and understanding of the UNCRC.

E-newsletter

The fortnightly e-newsletter has proved a success with members and supporters and now has over 1113 subscribers (an increase of 243 on the previous year). News, resources, information and events, all with a child rights focus, are submitted by children's organisations across Scotland and occasionally internationally. The most well-read articles tend to be specific child-rights research and resources relating to Scotland. In a survey of e-newsletter subscribers undertaken in March 2014, 83% of respondents stated that the e-newsletter has enabled them to bring more of a child rights approach to their work.

Twitter

In August 2013, Together established a Twitter account. By the end of March 2014, there were 231 followers. 23% of members currently follow Together's twitter feed.

- ***Promote greater awareness of good practice of the UNCRC beyond existing membership and engage with wider stakeholders including health, education and community groups to create partnerships for strategic influence***

Contribution to groups and networks

Together continues to contribute to the Cross Party Group for children and young people; the Children's Sector Forum and the informal Children's Policy Officer Network (CPON), by raising a child-rights perspective to Scottish policy issues. Together's Policy and Communications Officer sits on the coordination group of for Scotland's Disabled Children to help embed a rights-based approach to its work for children and young people with disabilities. Together also continues to play an active role in the strategic planning of the Children are Unbeatable! to explore legislative opportunities through which children could be given equal protection from assault. Together's Director sits on a Strategic Litigation Network which combines the expertise of legal and policy professionals to seek opportunities through which strategic litigation can be used to progress children's rights.

Scotland's National Action Plan for Human Rights

Together submitted a detailed response to the Scottish Human Rights Commission's consultation on the Human Rights Action Plan for Scotland. Together's Director has subsequently been invited to sit on two working groups taking forward the Action Plan: 'Meeting Our International Obligations' and 'Justice and Safety' and will be providing a strong expert input as to how children's rights should be taken forward.

Conference and events

Together provided an annual lecture to the University of Edinburgh's Childhood Studies postgraduate Masters on children's rights in Scotland. This continued the close relationship between the University of Edinburgh and Together through which students are made aware of Together's internship opportunities.

The Policy and Communications Officer participated in the Child Rights Connect AGM and provided a Scotland-perspective to the NGO group. She also attended Eurochild's annual conference '*Building an inclusive Europe: the contribution of children's participation*', which provided an opportunity to contribute to discussions on Article 12 of the UNCRC and reflect on work in Scotland. Through these events, Together has been successful in establishing connections with a number of European organisations through which knowledge and expertise in implementing children's rights can be shared.

- ***Inform and influence government policy and practice.***

Children and Young People (Scotland) Bill

Together undertook a range of activities in an effort to ensure that the Children and Young People (Scotland) Bill included strong legislative provisions to further the UNCRC. This included holding meetings with and producing briefings for members and MSPs, providing advice and support to members looking to comment on the rights provisions in the Bill, and working closely with MSPs and Scottish Government officials in the development of amendments to strengthen the Bill.

Together produced a number of briefings for members and for MSPs to inform submissions and debates, particularly focussing on the incorporation of the UNCRC into Scots law and steps that could be taken through the bill to improve the general measures of implementation of the UNCRC. Together also held a number of meetings with its members to inform its evidence, participated in Scotland's Children's Sector Forum and roundtable meetings with the Children's Commissioner, and has been an active participant at children's policy officer meetings. Together's Director provided oral evidence to the Education and Culture Committee at Stage 1 of the bill process. Together took part in an initial discussion meeting hosted by the Scottish Government to look at guidance for the Children and Young People Bill. Whilst the specific amendments put forward by Together were not taken forward in the final Act, the child rights provisions are stronger than those originally proposed when the Bill was first presented to the Scottish Parliament.

Criminal Justice (Scotland) Bill

Together submitted written evidence to the call for views on the Criminal Justice (Scotland) Bill and a briefing in advance of the Stage 1 debate of the Bill. Together's key points were to push for the minimum age of criminal responsibility to be raised through the Bill, for the rights of children affected by parental imprisonment to be taken into account and for children to be granted the same protection from violence in law as adults currently enjoy.

Self-Directed Support consultation

Together took part in discussions with a number of its members around the aspirations and concerns in the guidance for self-directed support legislation. Together's input ensured that children's rights and the general principles of the UNCRC were considered in a number of its members' submissions.

Optional Protocol 3 to the UNCRC

Together continued to press both the UK and Scottish Governments to consider signing up to the third Optional Protocol on the UNCRC. This would enable children and their representatives to bring complaints to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child if their rights had been violated.

5.2. Monitor implementation of the UNCRC

- ***Monitor and assess Scottish Government's progress in fully implementing the UNCRC across local authority areas, issues and sectors***

State of Children's Rights report

In November 2013, Together launched its third *State of Children's Rights* report, providing a non-government perspective on the extent to which children in Scotland are able to enjoy the rights enshrined in the UNCRC. It reflected on the progress made over the previous year since the publication of Together's 2012 *State of Children's Rights* report, and discussed what progress has been made and where further efforts are needed. The report drew from evidence gathered through desk research, through Together's *State of Children's Rights* seminars and from an online survey completed by 53 children's organisations working across a wide range of issues including children with additional support needs, Gypsy/Traveller children and children of prisoners.

The report highlighted a number of legislative and policy developments taken by the Scottish Government that show a clear commitment to further the UNCRC and promote its implementation. However, it also highlighted that much more needs to be done to ensure that all children in Scotland are able to realise their rights. Recommendations included in the report have been brought to the Scottish Government through the Scottish Children's Rights Implementation Monitoring Group (SCRIMG) meetings (see 5.3).

Highlight new developments and resources available to support practitioners within geographic, thematic and sectorial areas

www.togetherscotland.org.uk

Together's website provides a growing online resource library which contains a wide range of resources related to children's rights on a local, national and international level, provided by Together's members and partners. This includes the latest research, training materials, news and best practice on children's rights. In the past year, additional features have been added at the request of Together members, including a page dedicated to the Children and Young People (Scotland) Bill and a page dedicated to Together consultation responses. On average, the number of visitors to the website has increased over the past year at approximately 289 unique visits every week, which is an increase of 74 visitors per week since the previous year.

A richer understanding of Article 31 (the right to leisure, play and culture)

Together delivered a workshop at an 'Richer Understanding of Article 31' event organised by IPA, Play Scotland, Creative Scotland and Scottish Out of School Care Network to help maximise the impact of General Comment on Article 31 for children in Scotland. The workshop was attended by a range of professionals working with and for children and young people and focussed on implementing policy around the UNCRC.

Facilitate the participation of children's organisations in monitoring the implementation of the UNCRC.

State of Children's Rights seminars

Three seminars took place during May and June in Fife, Edinburgh and Aberdeenshire attracting over 120 professionals working with or for children and young people. The seminar programme explored the extent to which children across Scotland are able to realise their rights as enshrined in the UNCRC. A report of the findings from the discussion groups was produced for each seminar and these were then collated to create a combined report which is on Together's website. The purpose of the events was to inform Together's 'State of Children's Rights' report 2013 and to contribute to the Scottish Government's periodic report to the UK Government on its implementation of the UNCRC.

5.3 Report on progress on the implementation of the UNCRC and push for full implementation.

Identify and tackle key obstacles/levers of change to improve implementation of the UNCRC and hold UK and Scottish Governments and other duty-bearers to account on their implementation of the UNCRC.

Scottish Children's Rights Implementation Monitoring group

Together seeks to hold the Scottish Government to account on its implementation of the UNCRC through the Scottish Children's Rights Implementation Monitoring group (SCRIMG). This is a three-way meeting including Together, the Scottish Government and Scotland's Commissioner for Children and Young People with the purpose of:

- sharing and discussing relevant statistical information and reports;
- discussing and, where possible, reaching common understanding on progress made at a central and local level and remaining gaps in implementation;
- discussing and highlighting emerging issues and, where possible, agreeing approaches and actions to address them;
- discussing specific thematic areas related to children's rights.

In 2013-14, there were 3 meetings of SCRIMG. These meetings primarily concentrated on the Children and Young People (Scotland) Bill, the Criminal Justice Bill and the UK's report to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child.

Rights of the Child UK Coalition

Together's Director is Vice-Chair of the ROCK coalition, a group of voluntary organisations and individuals from across the UK pushing for the full incorporation of the UNCRC into domestic law. Together took part in a ROCK meeting in London and presented on the Children & Young People

(Scotland) Bill to colleagues from England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Together went on to host a ROCK meeting in Edinburgh and contributed to discussions surrounding the strategic direction of the coalition, including preparations for an annual event.

Highlight successes and areas to improve UNCRC implementation on an international level

Universal Periodic Review (UPR)

Together worked with Child Rights Alliance England (CRAE) to provide a submission to the UK Government's call for views on the final UPR recommendations that the UK and Scottish Governments should prioritise in their mid-term report. Together also raised a number of children's rights considerations to be taken into account by the Scottish Government at a roundtable meeting convened to develop the Scottish Government's report to the UK.

5.4. Establish & maintain functional governance structure

In addition, Together worked to meet Companies House and OSCR requirements.

Trustees

Fiona Jones of CL@N Childlaw, Chelsea Stinson of the Children's Parliament and Samatha Whyte of UNICEF UK were elected to the Board of Together in September 2013, alongside the former Chair, Elizabeth Morrison and former Board member Kelly Bayes. Alex Cole-Hamilton was elected as Chair, with Selwyn McCausland elected as Vice Chair and Kate Higgins Treasurer. Together's board brings a range of skills and expertise ranging from academics to policy officers and Directors of national NGOs. Board meetings are held every two months, and subgroups have been established when needed to help focus expertise on certain issues. Together has an ongoing Finance Subgroup to monitor finance.

Policies and procedures

Throughout the year, staff and the Together Board have continued to draft and revise organisational policies and procedures to ensure best practice in the day-to-day and overall governance of the charity are followed.

6. Responsibilities of the Trustees

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial period that give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company at the balance sheet date and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including income and expenditure, for the financial period. In preparing those financial statements, the Trustees should follow best practice and:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to assume that the company will continue on that basis.

They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Basis of accounting

For the year ending 31 March 2014 the company was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its accounts for the year in question in accordance with section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

The Trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts.

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies regime.

By order of the Board

Alex Cole-Hamilton
September 2014

Independent examiner's report to the Board of the Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights

I report on the accounts of the company for the year ended 31st March 2014, which are set out on pages 14 and 15.

Respective responsibilities of Trustees and examiner

The Trustees (who are also the Trustees of the company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The Trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 43(2) of the Charities Act 1993 (the 1993 Act) or under Regulation 10 (1)(a) to (c) of The Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (the 2006 Accounts Regulations) and that an independent examination is needed. The charity is required by company law to prepare accrued accounts and I am qualified to undertake the examination by being a qualified Chartered Certified Accountant.

Having satisfied myself that the charity is not subject to audit under company law and is eligible for independent examination, it is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 43 of the 1993 Act) and section 44(1)(c) of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 (the 2005 Act);
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 43(7)(b) of the 1993 Act; and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission and is in accordance with Regulation 11 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 386 of the Companies Act 2006 and section 44(1)(a) of the 2005 Act; and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records, comply with the accounting requirements of the Companies Act 2006, section 44(1)(b) of the 2005 Act and Regulation 8 of the 2006 Accounts Regulations; and
 - which are consistent with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charitieshave not been met; or
2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Mairi McReynolds FCCA
September 2014

Statement of Financial Activity as at 31st March 2014

	Unrestricted Funds 2014	Restricted Funds 2014	Total fund 2014	Total funds 2013
Incoming Resources				
Incoming Resources from generated income:				
Voluntary Income	4620	100,000	104,620	79,362
Investment Income	0	0	0	0
Other incoming resources		0	0	0
Total Incoming Resources	4,620	100,000	104,620	79,362
Resources Expended				
Charitable activities	0	97,915	97,915	76,068
Governance costs	0	75	75	0
Total Resources Expended	0	97,990	97,990	76,068
Net Incoming/Outgoing Resources	4,620	2,010	6,630	3,294
Transfer between Funds	0	0	0	0
Net Movement in Funds	4,620	2,010	6,630	3,294
Total Funds @ 31 March 2013	8,883	3,814	12,697	9,403
Total Funds @ 31 March 2014	13,503	5,824	19,327	12,697

Mairi McReynolds FCCA
September 2014

Notes:

No remuneration was paid to Trustees during the year.

Expenses of £75 were paid to Trustees during the year.

Together

Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights

Balance Sheet as at 31st March 2014

	2014	2013
Fixed Assets		
Tangible Fixed Assets	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
	-	-
Current Assets		
Debtors	1,904	
Cash at Bank	<u>18,154</u>	<u>14,248</u>
	20,058	14,248
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	<u>731</u>	<u>1,551</u>
Net Current Assets	<u>19,327</u>	<u>12,697</u>
Total Net Assets	<u>19,327</u>	<u>12,697</u>
Funds		
Restricted Funds	5,824	3,814
Unrestricted funds	<u>13,503</u>	<u>8,883</u>
Total Funds	<u>19,327</u>	<u>12,697</u>

Mairi McReynolds FCCA
September 2014