



## **Together**

### **Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights**

(limited by Guarantee)

### **Report and Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2012**

Registered charity number: SC029403  
Registered company number: SC199725

Registered Office:  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Prospect House  
5 Thistle Street  
Edinburgh  
EH2 1DF

[www.togetherscotland.org.uk](http://www.togetherscotland.org.uk)

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# Reference and Administrative Information

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

Charity Registration Number: SC029403

Company Number: SC199725

Registered Office: Prospect House  
5 Thistle Street  
Edinburgh  
EH2 1DF

Telephone: 0131 225 8864

Email: info@togetherscotland.org.uk

Website: www.togetherscotland.org.uk

Directors: Chair: Elizabeth Morrison  
Treasurer: Zoe Picton-Howell

Board Members: Alex Cole-Hamilton (Vice Chair)  
Brian Donnelly  
Susan Elsley  
Selwyn McCausland  
Stephen McGinley  
Colin Morrison  
Kate Sanford  
Claire Telfer

Company Secretary: Juliet Harris

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

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

## **Report of the Directors 2011-12**

The Directors submit their Report and Financial Statements for the period ended 31st March 2012.

### **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 Directors of the Company. Throughout 2011-12, the day to day activities of Together were carried out by a full time National Development Officer and part-time Administrator and supervised by the Directors.

### **2. Structure, Governance and Management**

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

### **3. Reserves Policy**

It is the policy of the Directors 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 Directors 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 2012-14 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 and other human rights conventions. Throughout 2011-12, Together has worked towards this mission through three key aims:

1. Promoting awareness and understanding of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).
2. Monitoring 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, continuing to employ a National Development Officer and part-time Administrator. Together's aims were taken forward through the following activities:

### 5.1. Promoting awareness and understanding of the UNCRC

***Continuing to increase membership base to make it broadly representative of the children's sector and keeping up-to-date and fulfilling information needs of members***

#### *Together members and supporters*

Together has continued to promote membership at every opportunity. In the last year, we increased our number of members and supporters from 152 to 179. This includes 96 children's organisations, 18 statutory bodies, 9 schools and 56 individuals with an interest in children's rights. Throughout 2011-12, the National Development Officer consulted with members and supporters to explore how they could get more involved in the promotion and monitoring of the UNCRC in Scotland.

#### *Together e-newsletter*

Together's fortnightly e-newsletter has proved a success with members and supporters and now has over 800 subscribers (an increase of 50 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 Scottish-specific training materials, resources or consultations on rights-based issues.

#### *Rights of Children & Young People Bill consultation (September 2011)*

Together produced a briefing on the Rights of Children and Young People Bill that was distributed to all members and supporters, and uploaded onto the website. The National Development Officer presented an overview of the briefing at 3 seminars (the Centre for Research on Families and Relationships Human Rights seminar (see 5.3), Youthlink consultation seminar and the Coalition of Care and Support Providers in Scotland consultation seminar. As part of the process for developing a response to the Rights of Children and Young People Bill consultation, Together organised a series of

3 seminars in Edinburgh, Glasgow and Aberdeen and attended a number of consultation events held by other agencies. As a result, we had direct discussions with over 70 representatives of children's organisations across Scotland, including health, education and community groups. Discussions focussed on how the bill could be used to improve outcomes for children and young people and better realise their rights under the UNCRC. 94% of seminar delegates found the events 'very' or extremely' useful and 92% stated that they left the seminar with a better understanding of the UNCRC and of the Scottish Government proposals.

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

*NHS Lothian strategy for children and young people*

In December 2011, Together organised a meeting for its members with NHS Lothian to inform their consultation on their strategy for children and young people. 3 member organisations attended and NHS Lothian undertook to maintain an ongoing dialogue with Together and our members to strengthen a rights-focus to their strategy.

*Conference and events*

In January 2012, the National Development Officer contributed to a debate on the incorporation of the UNCRC into Scots law, organised by the Scottish Child Law Centre at the Scottish Parliament. The panel comprised of Tam Baillie, Professor Norrie (Law School, Strathclyde University) and Juliet Harris. The event was useful in that it showed where Together and other children's organisations need to develop their position on incorporation.

The National Development Officer also spoke at the Holyrood Rights of Children and Young People conference in January 2012. The theme of the presentation was "To what extent is Scotland meeting its obligations enshrined in the UNCRC". Delegates at the conference were mainly local authority staff and those working in education and health.

***Informing and influencing government policy and practice.***

Through the year, Together made a number of submissions to the Scottish Government's consultations. These included:

*Common Core of Skills, Knowledge, Understanding and Values for the Children's Workforce*

In June 2011, Together responded to the Scottish Government consultation to urge that the principles of the UNCRC are evident as a key thread running through the Common Core. *The final Common Core which was then launched by the Scottish Government in June 2012 uses the UNCRC as its core framework and incorporates its principles throughout.*

*Improving Advocacy for Children and Young People: Principles and minimum standards*

Together was asked by the Minister for Children and Young People to prepare a response to the advocacy consultation. Together made a submission in February 2012 based on the principles of the UNCRC and drawing from the UN Committee's general comment number 12 on the right of the child to be heard.

*Rights of Children and Young People Bill*

In December 2011, Together made its formal response to the Scottish Government's Rights of Children and Young People Bill consultation. The response was based on the views of Together members gathered through the above seminar programme. Together welcomed the Scottish Government's intention to further protect the rights of children and young people in Scotland and put forward a number of steps that the Scottish Government could take to significantly strengthen the bill. *In May 2012, the Scottish Government announced its intention to integrate the Rights of Children and Young People Bill with a proposed Children and Young People's Bill.*

*National Parenting Strategy*

In March 2012, Together submitted a paper to the Scottish Government to outline the many references that the UNCRC makes to the role of parents and parenting. The aim of this paper is to ensure that the National Parenting Strategy, to be launched in autumn 2012, is underpinned by the UNCRC and maximises the opportunity to ensure that parents are aware of the UNCRC, its key principles and values.

## **5.2. Monitoring 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 September 2011, Together launched its second 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 2010 State of Children's Rights report, and discussed what progress has been made and where further efforts are needed. Key issues highlighted throughout the report were mental health, disability, child poverty and domestic abuse. 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 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 providing the minutes of each SCRIMG meeting and more about the UN Committee's General Comments. Although, on average, the number of visitors to the website has remained constant over the past year at approximately 170 every week, the length of time that visitors spend on the website has doubled from 2 minutes to 4 minutes and the number of resources downloaded has also increased by 50%.

*for Scotland's Disabled Children (fSDC)*

Together has continued to support for Scotland Disabled Children by helping them to provide a specific children's rights focus to their work and consultation responses and contributing to the discussions on the future of the fSDC liaison project.

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

In summer 2011, Together was invited to join a focus group (alongside IPA, Play Scotland, Creative Scotland and Scottish Out of School Care Network) to maximise the impact of the forthcoming General Comment on Article 31 for children in Scotland. Together use this opportunity to promote more widespread knowledge and understanding of all General Comments to our membership and across the children's sector. Together is encouraging specific member organisations to get involved in the work of the group to ensure that its impact goes beyond the play and early years sector to involve young people and look at the wider aspects of Article 31 including recreation, leisure and cultural activities.

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

*State of Children's Rights consultation*

Together's 2011 State of Children's Rights report as above was compiled and produced following wide consultation with children's organisations across Scotland. This involved gathering views and opinions from over 250 professionals working with and for children through seminars held in Ayr, Inverness, Aberdeen, the Scottish Borders and Edinburgh. The seminars were followed by an online survey completed by sixty-one children's organisations working across a wide range of issues including mental health and wellbeing, disability, additional support needs, asylum and domestic abuse. The State of Children's Rights report 2011 was a culmination of the feedback received throughout the consultation alongside further desk research into issues that were highlighted as being of particular priority.

### 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 discuss 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 2011-12, there were two meetings of the SCRIMG. These meetings drew again to the attention of Scottish Government specific issues raised through Together's State of Children's Rights reports including the training for professionals, child rights impact assessments, UNCRC Third Optional Protocol, challenging negative perceptions of children and young people and non-discrimination.

#### Rights of the Child UK (ROCK)

The National Development Officer plays an active role in 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. Work undertaken in the last year by the coalition has included drawing together learning from across the UK to respond to the Bill of Rights UK consultation and the consultation on the Rights of Children and Young People Bill (Scotland).

#### Human Rights/Children's Rights seminar

Together worked in partnership with the University of Edinburgh and Scottish Human Rights Commission (SHRC) to host a seminar in October 2011 to look at the Human Rights Act and children's rights. This followed on from Professor Alan Miller's comment at the launch of Together's 2010 State of Children's Rights report that the Human Rights Act and EHRC should be taken into account more when speaking of children's rights.

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

### **Framework Convention for National Minorities**

The National Development Officer reported to Council of Europe representatives from the committee of the Framework Convention on National Minorities. This included inputting information about Gypsy/Traveller children into Amnesty International's alternative report to the committee, particularly focussing on media attitudes, inequality in access to education and health and bullying – issued raised in Together's 2010 State of Children's Rights report.

### **Universal Periodic Review (UPR)**

Together submitted a report to the UN Human Rights Council for the 2<sup>nd</sup> UK Universal Periodic Review, which took place in May 2012. The report was based on learning from the 2011 State of Children's Rights report and was produced in collaboration with the Children's Rights Alliance England and UNCRC Monitoring Group in Wales to ensure that the recommendations made chimed wherever possible. Together encouraged involvement from its members to ensure the data included was as up-to-date as possible. Together is working with its members to produce specific briefings on children of prisoners, child poverty and incorporation of the UNCRC into law. These briefings will be used to support lobbying efforts to ensure the issues are raised at the UPR.

## **5.4. Establish & maintain functional governance structure**

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

### **Directors**

Seven Directors who were appointed to the Board of Together in September 2010 remained as Directors throughout 2011-12. Three new directors were appointed in September 2011 from Together's membership and the former Chair, Kelly Bayes, was invited by the incoming Board to return as an Observer. Together's board brings a range of skills and expertise ranging from academics to child rights 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 a ongoing Finance Subgroup to monitor finance and a Strategy Subgroup to advise the Board on business planning and broader strategic issues.

### **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. New policies introduced throughout the year include a code of conduct for Board members, conflict of interest policy and a social media and communications policy.

## 6. Responsibilities of the Directors

Company law requires the Directors to prepare financial statements for each financial period that give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company as 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 Directors should follow best practice and to:

- 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 2012 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 directors 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**

**Elizabeth Morrison, Director**  
**September 2012**

## **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 31<sup>st</sup> March 2012, which are set out on pages 14 and 15.

### **Respective responsibilities of Directors and examiner**

The directors (who are also the directors of the company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The directors 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 2012**

# Together

*Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights*

## Statement of Financial Activity as at 31st March 2012

	Unrestricted Funds 2012	Restricted Funds 2012	Total funds 2012	Total funds 2011
<b>Incoming Resources</b>				
Incoming Resources from generated income:				
Voluntary Income	1300	65,500	66,800	73,784
Investment Income	0	0	0	0
Other incoming resources	0	0	0	65
<b>Total Incoming Resources</b>	<b>1,300</b>	<b>65,500</b>	<b>66,800</b>	<b>73,849</b>
<b>Resources Expended</b>				
Charitable activities	0	64,806	64,806	81,865
Governance costs	0	0	0	0
<b>Total Resources Expended</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>64,806</b>	<b>64,806</b>	<b>81,865</b>
Net Incoming/Outgoing Resources	1,300	694	1,994	(8,016)
Transfer between Funds	0	0	0	0
Net Movement in Funds	1,300	694	1,994	(8,016)
Total Funds @ 31 March 2011	6,233	1,176	7,409	15,425
Total Funds @ 31 March 2012	7,533	1,870	9,403	7,409

Mairi McReynolds FCCA

### Notes:

No remuneration was paid to Directors during the year.

Expenses totalling £550.15 were paid to two Directors were paid during the year.

# Together

*Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights*

## Balance Sheet as at 31st March 2012

	<b>2012</b>	<b>2011</b>
<b>Fixed Assets</b>		
Tangible Fixed Assets	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
	0	0
<b>Current Assets</b>		
Debtors	0	70
Cash at Bank	10,396	7,354
	<u>10,396</u>	<u>7,424</u>
<b>Creditors: amounts falling due within one year</b>		
	<u>993</u>	<u>15</u>
<b>Net Current Assets</b>	<u>9,403</u>	<u>7,409</u>
<b>Total Net Assets</b>	<u>9,403</u>	<u>7,409</u>
<b>Funds</b>		
Restricted Funds	1,870	1,176
Unrestricted funds	7,533	6,233
<b>Total Funds</b>	<u>9,403</u>	<u>7,409</u>

Mairi McReynolds FCCA