



Together

(Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights)

**Report and Financial Statements
for the Year Ended 31st March 2021**

Registered charity number: SC029403

Registered company number: SC199725

Registered Office:
The Melting Pot
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Edinburgh
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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: The Melting Pot
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Edinburgh
EH8 8DL

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Trustees:

Chair: Mary Glasgow

Treasurer: Rozanne Chorlton

Vice Chair: Laura Paton

Board Members: Lucinda Rivers
Rona Blackwood
Susan Elsley (up to September 2020)
Maria Galli (up to September 2020)
Louise Hill (up to 26 May 2020)
Kevin Kane (from September 2020)
Tracy Kirk (from September 2020)
Helen McKeever (up to October 2020)
Mohamed Omar (from September 2020)
Laura Pasternak (from September 2020)
John Ryan (up to September 2020)

Observers: Kevin Kane (up to September 2020)
Susan Hunter (from September 2020)

Company Secretary: Juliet Harris

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

Independent Examiner: Philip Duncan

Volunteer Accountant: Ian J Douglas

Chair's report

I am pleased to present this report for Together's work in 2020-21. This has been an immensely challenging year in which children and families have faced unprecedented challenges due to COVID-19. The staff team has shown incredible passion, determination and resilience in continuing to drive forward Together's mission that children growing up in Scotland have their human rights respected, protected and fulfilled. In the midst of great challenges, their commitment and strength has shone more brightly than ever.

As the pandemic unfolded, Together's priority was to ensure children's human rights were respected, protected and fulfilled through all emergency measures. We campaigned for Scottish Government to implement recommendations from the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child and closely monitored developments, holding public authorities to account for their actions. We elevated the voices and experiences of children, young people and their families, and, as a founder member of the Observatory on Children's Human Rights, supported the production of an independent Child Rights Impact Assessment of Scottish Government's response to the pandemic on behalf of the Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland.

We warmly welcomed the introduction of the UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Bill to the Scottish Parliament in September 2020. We provided leadership to inform the passage of the Bill through Parliament by supporting, informing and coordinating civil society and the contribution of children and young people. We opened up opportunities for children to influence the Bill, including meetings between children and members of the Equalities and Human Rights Committee, and supporting the development of a child-friendly consultation and supporting materials. In March 2021, we celebrated with children, young people, civil society, Scottish Government, UN Committee members and parliamentarians as the Bill was passed unanimously by the Scottish Parliament with cross party support. Whilst a judgment is still awaited on the UK Government's challenge on the legislative competence of certain provisions of the Bill, we look forward to supporting UNCRC implementation to ensure the Bill ultimately delivers on its ambition.

We secured meetings between children, young people and members of the National Taskforce on Human Rights Leadership to shape a forthcoming Bill which will incorporate other human rights treaties into Scots law. We continued to work in partnership with Children in Scotland to convene the Children and Young People's Panel on Europe, enabling children and young people who did not have a vote in the EU referendum to speak to key decision makers about the issues that are important to them as we leave the EU.

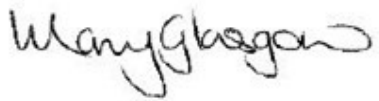
By drawing on the strength of our network to amplify our collective voice, we were able to expand and grow our impact as a membership organisation. In December 2020, we submitted a shadow report to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, drawing upon evidence from across our membership to highlight 30 key rights issues for children in Scotland. We have been active in expanding our membership and ensuring it is open and inclusive. As part of this process, we are taking steps to become an anti-racist organisation through staff and trustee training, internal conversations and contact with members.

We shared our experience and learned from others across the UK, Europe and internationally through networks including the Rights of the Child UK Coalition, Eurochild and Child Rights Connect.

Our strategic priorities are big, challenging and ambitious. We are committed to taking them forward with enthusiasm and rigour. We are grateful to the Scottish Government for its continued support. At the same time, our current level of resourcing restricts our capacity to grow as the demands on our organisation expand. We are addressing this by exploring other funding opportunities so that we can meet the needs of our members and our stakeholders through the delivery of our programme.

Finally, as Chair of the Board of Together, I would like to express my personal thanks to the other nine committed trustees who have given generously of their time and expertise. The Board plays an essential role in the governance of the organisation and in supporting the staff team. I would like to thank those standing down in 2021 and give a warm welcome to new trustees.

We know that 2021-22 will bring a busy programme of work, particularly around implementation of the UNCRC Bill and with the continuing impact of COVID-19. We are confident that Together will rise to the challenges the year brings and look forward to reporting on progress in 2022.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Mary Glasgow'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mary Glasgow

Chairperson

Report of the Trustees 2020-21

The Trustees are pleased to present their annual Directors Report, together with the Financial Statements of the charity for the year ending 31 March 2021. These are also prepared to meet the requirements for a Directors' report and Accounts for Companies Act purposes.

The financial statements comply with the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005, the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended), the Companies Act 2006, the Memorandum and Articles of Association, and Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their account in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities.

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 the human rights of children as defined by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

Together's vision is that all children growing up in Scotland have their human rights respected, protected and fulfilled. Throughout 2020-21, Together worked towards this vision through five strategic aims, as outlined in our Strategic Plan 2019-24:

1. Law in Scotland is fully compliant with the UNCRC and other international human rights standards.
2. Law and policy in Scotland is fully implemented in line with the UNCRC and other international human rights standards.
3. Children and young people's voices are listened to, respected and influence the world around them.
4. Scotland is recognised internationally as a pioneer and an innovator in taking forward children and young people's human rights.
5. Our impact and reach continues to grow, and we develop as a sustainably funded organisation.

Together relies on grants and membership payments to cover operating costs. Throughout 2020-21, Together was able to take forward its strategic aims with funding from the Scottish Government Children's Rights and Participation team, Brexit Stakeholder Engagement Fund, the Children and Young People Early Intervention Fund and other donations from its membership. Funding for ad hoc projects was received from the Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland and the Scottish Parliament's Equalities and Human Rights Committee.

Funding from the Scottish Government Rights and Participation team enabled Together to continue employing a full time Director and part time Policy and Communications Assistant (full time from April 2020). It also enabled Together to recruit two new part time roles - a Membership Outreach Assistant (from December 2020) and Communications Intern (from October 2020).

Funding from the Children and Young People's Early Intervention Fund enabled Together to continue employing a full time Legal and Policy Manager and part time Business Support Officer.

Funding from the University of Edinburgh and Santander Universities UK allowed Together to employ a full time Policy and Events Intern from May until August 2020.

2. Review of Activities

During 2020-21, Together's strategic aims were taken forward through the following activities:

2.1. Law in Scotland is fully compliant with the UNCRC and other international human rights standards.

Advocate for the full incorporation of the UNCRC and other international human rights standards into Scots and UK law.

Incorporation Strategy Group

Together continued to convene its Incorporation Strategy Group (ISG), with the aim of sharing information and coordinating campaigning efforts. The full group, consisting of around 20 member organisations, met 8 times in 2020-21. Together coordinated the group's activities, including joint letters, briefings and resources.

The ISG warmly welcomed the UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Bill which was introduced to the Scottish Parliament in September 2020. Together and ISG members were invited to give oral evidence at Stage 2. Together produced briefings and held meetings with members to ensure they were supported to take part. Together and ISG members led a highly effective campaign to strengthen the Bill through amendments. Thematic subgroups were established to allow for more targeted influencing. Together and members met directly with MSPs to ensure amendments were tabled.

Consultation on the UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Bill

Together supported its members to respond to the Bill consultation through numerous events, briefings, e-news articles, resources and responding directly to members' queries. Specific examples included Q&A webinars with the Scottish Government Bill team and preparing a draft consultation response which was shared widely with members to assist them in writing their own responses.

Together worked directly with the Equality and Human Rights Committee (EHRC) to assist in the preparation of materials for a child-friendly version of the consultation, leaflet and facilitator pack (see section 2.3, below). Together facilitated two engagement sessions between children, young people and EHRC members to allow them to hear children's views directly. These events were planned and delivered in partnership with our member organisations.

Together's Director gave Stage 1 evidence to the Equalities and Human Rights Committee to inform its scrutiny of the Bill. The Director worked closely with members including Who Cares? Scotland, YouthLink Scotland, Inclusion Scotland, the Scottish Coalition for Learning Disabilities and the Scottish Youth Parliament to coordinate the evidence given to present a comprehensive view on the Bill.

Wider engagement, awareness-raising, capacity-building and influencing

Together engaged in a range of other activities around the UNCRC Bill, including a social media campaign, preparing briefings for MSPs at every stage of the Bill and hosting a webinar for MSPs and support staff to build their capacity and understanding.

Our 2021 Membership Survey highlighted the value members placed in Together's incorporation-related activities and support:

“Incredibly knowledgeable team who have hand-held many of us through the UNCRC Bill process.”

“Could not be prouder of you all this year. You've shown such powerful leadership to get us to this point where UNCRC Incorporation is a reality.”

“You are a fabulous organisation - skilled, knowledgeable, generous, effective, accessible and hard working. We'd be lost without you.”

“We have found the updates on the [UNCRC] consultation and parliamentary process particularly helpful.”

In March 2021, we celebrated the unanimous passage of the Bill by hosting a virtual party attended by children, young people, civil society, Scottish Government, UN Committee members and parliamentarians.

Incorporation of wider human rights standards

In January 2020, Together facilitated [three engagement sessions](#) between children, young people and members of the National Taskforce on Human Rights Leadership to ensure that children's views are reflected in proposals for a new human rights framework for Scotland (see Section 2.3, below). Together also participated in meetings of the National Taskforce Civil Society Reference Group to ensure consideration of children's rights issues.

Together continued to sit on the Development Working Group for Scotland's National Action Plan for Human Rights (SNAP 2). The group considered how it can complement the work of the National Taskforce on Human Rights Leadership on incorporation of wider human rights treaties.

Identify where Scots law falls short of the standards enshrined in the UNCRC and advocate for legislation that meets and exceeds international human rights standards.

COVID-19 emergency legislation

Together scrutinised emergency legislation implemented in response to the pandemic. Our [submission](#) to the Joint Committee on Human Rights (JCHR) enquiry highlighted a range of issues including that provisions on compulsory testing fell short of the UNCRC's definition of a child as being anyone under 18; inconsistent definitions of a child across the UK in relation to criminal penalties, breaching the right to non-discrimination; and weakening of the statutory entitlements for disabled children and young carers.

Together played a key role in the preparation of an Independent Child Rights Impact Assessment (CRIA) which added further scrutiny. This was completed by the Observatory for Children's Human Rights Scotland (of which Together is a founding member) on behalf of the Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland.

State of Children's Rights Webinar Series (Summer 2020)

In summer 2020, Together held a [series of webinars](#) to explore the state of children's rights in Scotland. The webinars were delivered in partnership with over 30 member organisations and attracted over 500 participants. The webinars and accompanying survey identified areas of progress and gaps in implementing children's rights in Scotland. This included areas where Scots law falls short of UNCRC standards – for example, inconsistencies in the definition of a child and a minimum age of

marriage that falls below international standards. These findings informed Together's report to the UN Committee to inform the List of Issues Prior to Reporting.

Report to inform the UN Committee's List of Issues (December 2020)

Together submitted a [shadow report](#) to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child to inform its List of Issues Prior to Reporting. Together's report highlighted 30 key rights issues for children in Scotland ahead of the UK's forthcoming review by the UN Committee. Over 60 organisations endorsed the report.

Together worked with its sister organisations in England, Wales and Northern Ireland to identify shared and jurisdiction-specific priorities. Together prepared a joint four-jurisdiction report which was endorsed by these partners.

In February 2021, the UN Committee published its List of Issues reflecting many of the issues identified by Together and its members. Together is continuing to work with members to identify gaps in the UN Committee's report and encourage Scottish Government to proactively address these in its official response.

Influence and inform new legislation brought forward by the Scottish and UK Government to ensure it meets international human rights standards.

Consultation responses (legislation)

To give added value to the expertise of the membership, Together provides a specific children's rights insight to parliamentary and governmental consultations, drawing from the UNCRC, the UN Committee's General Comments, Concluding Observations and evidence from our membership. Together circulates these responses widely to meet the information needs of members and enable them to draw from Together's expertise.

Members sought considerable support from Together in responding to the Equalities and Human Rights Committee's consultation on the UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Bill. Together published a detailed response several weeks ahead of the deadline to enable members to draw from this in their own responses.

Together submitted further responses to UK Government consultations on the Armed Forces Bill and New Plan for Immigration. Together responded to the Independent Human Rights Act review, strongly opposing any amendments which could weaken rights protection.

The 2021 Membership Survey revealed that 82% of respondents found Together's briefings and consultation responses either "extremely" or "very useful" in informing their own considerations on children's rights.

"Advance sight of your consultation responses really helps inform our own responses, plus it's helpful that we can feed into yours as well." (2021 Membership Survey)

Throughout 2020-21, Together also worked to inform and support members own consultation responses – for example, reviewing members responses to the UNCRC Incorporation consultation and informing a response by the Human Rights Consortium Scotland on plans to review the Human Rights Act.

Incorporation of wider human rights standards

Together supported children and young people to share their views on proposals for a new human rights law for Scotland (see Section 2.3, below). Together also participated in the National Taskforce Civil Society Reference Group to ensure consideration of children's rights issues.

2.2. Law and policy in Scotland is fully implemented in line with the UNCRC and other international human rights standards.

Work with our members to raise public and professional awareness and understanding of children and young people's human rights.

Together uses every opportunity to work with its members to raise public and professional awareness and understanding of children and young people's human rights. This includes through membership engagement, our e-newsletter, online resource library, social media, presenting at meetings and hosting events.

Our 2021 membership survey revealed that 100% of respondents believe Together fulfils its aim of providing relevant and useful information on children's rights and the UNCRC either "very well" (74%) or "well" (26%). 78 percent felt that Together had helped increase their understanding of children's rights and the UNCRC "a lot".

Membership engagement

Together worked closely with members in advancing its mission and vision throughout 2020-21.

In summer 2020, Together partnered with over 30 member organisations to plan and deliver our 2020 State of Children's Rights webinar series. These attracted over 500 participants whose expertise directly shaped our shadow report to inform the UN Committee's List of Issues Prior to Reporting. This report was endorsed by over 60 member organisations.

Following the webinars, Together was commissioned by Scottish Government to prepare a routemap for effective implementation of the UNCRC following incorporation. Together worked with its members to shape this report, including highlighting examples of promising practice from their organisations.

From September 2020, we worked extensively with members to shape amendments to the UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Bill. This involved working closely with members with expertise in a particular area – for example children with learning disabilities, children experiencing domestic abuse and care-experienced children.

E-newsletter

The e-newsletter is proving to be a continued success with members and supporters. At the end of March 2021, it had 1779 subscribers (up from 1610 in March 2020 and exceeding our annual target).

News, resources, information and events with a child rights focus are submitted by Together's members on an increasing basis. The most well-read articles continue to be specific child-rights news articles and resources relating specifically to Scotland. The open and click rates remain above industry averages.

The 2020-21 e-newsletter survey found that 90% of respondents felt the e-newsletter was either "extremely" or "very helpful" for developing their knowledge and understanding of children's human rights. 96% said that the e-newsletter enabled them to bring more of a children's rights approach to

their work. Feedback has indicated a range of applications for the e-newsletter including filtering information to colleagues and supporting members to keep their work focused on the rights of children. In 2021 we commenced a re-design of the e-newsletter, building upon survey feedback.

“Truth be told it's one of the only newsletters I subscribe to that I end up reading top to bottom. Thanks for putting this out!” (2020-21 e-newsletter survey)

Social media

Together's Twitter feed has continued to gain popularity and at the end of March 2021 had 5339 followers (4305 in March 2020). Twitter is an increasingly popular means through which Together can communicate with its membership, and support and coordinate online campaigns. Together's campaign around the UNCRC Bill was particularly powerful and far-reaching, gaining 710k impressions in March 2020 alone.

Together's other social channels also continue to grow. As at March 2021, our Facebook page had 820 followers (513 in March 2020) and our Instagram had 860 followers (460 in March 2020).

Blog

Together's blog has maintained a steady readership and enables members to share good practice and raise awareness of specific children's rights issues. Our 11 blogs published during 2020-21 had a particular focus on UNCRC incorporation and the UN reporting system.

Events

Together hosted a wide range of events throughout 2020-21, many of which were in partnership with our members. Events included:

- **State of Children's Rights Webinar Series:** delivered in partnership with over 30 member organisations and attracting over 500 participants to inform our report to the UN Committee (see above)
- **Webinars for Members on the UNCRC Incorporation Bill**
- **Webinar for MSPs and Parliamentary Staff on the UNCRC Incorporation Bill**
- **Webinars for children and young people to support their engagement with the Equalities and Human Rights Committee on the UNCRC Incorporation Bill**
- **UNCRC Incorporation Party**
- **Human Rights Taskforce consultation events with children and young people on the right to a healthy environment, the rights of disabled children and the rights of black and minority ethnic children.**

Together's Legal & Policy Manager sat on the Working Group for the National Youth Justice Conference 2021 which had a theme of Children's Rights in Justice.

Observatory of Children's Human Rights Scotland

Together continued its work as a founding member of the Observatory - a collaborative of Scottish organisations working to drive implementation of children's human rights in Scotland. The Observatory brings together Together members, the Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland and academic partners from the universities of Edinburgh and Strathclyde to strategically advance opportunities for fully realising children's human rights in practice, policy and legislation.

Work with wider partners and networks

During 2020-21, this included:

Together's Legal & Policy Manager sat on the Development Working Group for Scotland's National Action Plan for Human Rights (SNAP 2), to ensure children and young people are involved in the next iteration of the plan.

Together's Director worked with Who Cares? Scotland to facilitate two webinars with Care Experienced children and young people on children's rights and UNCRC incorporation.

Together's Director took part in an online discussion with Mary Glasgow, CEO of Children 1st, on a rights-based approach to adverse childhood experiences as part of the ACE Aware Scotland webinars.

Together's Director worked with Children in Scotland to deliver a webinar on children's rights as part of the 'More than My Trauma' webinar series.

Together's Director presented in partnership with Dr Katherine Trebeck on children's rights and wellbeing budgeting at the Children in Scotland annual conference.

Together's Director gave a lecture to students on the MSC in Childhood Studies programme at Edinburgh University regarding the UNCRC in Scotland.

Together's Director sat on the National Human Rights Taskforce's civil society reference group to encourage and support children and young people's involvement in the development of a cross-cutting Human Rights Bill for Scotland.

Together's Director co-led the Human Rights Law Clinic course for students on the LLM in Human Rights Law at Edinburgh University. Students explored children's rights in relation to the environment.

Together's Director attended the Children's Sector Strategic Litigation Group in order to discuss potential priorities in the children's rights sector and presented regularly on progress made towards incorporating the UNCRC into Scots law.

Together's Director was a member of Scottish Government's UNCRC Working Group.

Together's Legal & Policy Manager was a member of Scottish Government's Children, Young People and Families Advisory Group to assess the impact of COVID-19 measures and share children and families' experiences.

Influence and build the capacity of our members and duty bearers to inform policy and direct practice.

Website and resource library

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 members and partners. This includes the latest research, training materials, news and best practice on children's rights. Our website had 90k visits in 2020-21.

Consultation responses

Together prepared draft responses to Scottish Government and Scottish Parliament consultations, sharing these with members to inform and support their own responses. This included consultations on regulation of child welfare reporters and child contact centres.

Networks

Together's Director is a standing member of Children in Scotland's Children's Sector Strategic Forum which gives an opportunity for the sector to discuss pressing children's rights issues with Scottish Government officials. As a result, Together led on informing the development of child rights-based developments within Scottish Government, including steps to incorporate the UNCRC into Scots law and work on child rights and wellbeing budgeting.

Together's Legal & Policy Manager and Policy & Communications Assistant attend the Child Policy Officers Network. The group meets regularly to discuss changes across law, policy and practice and how to coordinate approaches to inform their development.

Child Rights Impact Assessment & Evaluation project

Together worked in partnership with the Children's Parliament, East Lothian Council and the Observatory to begin a piece of work to explore how children can be better involved in child rights impact assessments and evaluations. The bulk of this project will take place after April 2021. Learning will be used to support effective implementation of the UNCRC at a public body level, particularly in relation to children's involvement in decision-making and scrutiny.

Undertake robust monitoring and reporting to support UN bodies to hold the Scottish and UK Government to account in implementing international human rights obligations

COVID-19

Together raised awareness of the UN Committee's 11 recommendations for securing children's rights during the pandemic. Together secured a commitment from Scottish Government to publish periodic updates against the 11 recommendations and scrutinised these accordingly, making recommendations where more could be done to meet the UN Committee's requirements.

Report to inform the List of Issues Prior to Reporting (December 2020)

Together submitted a shadow report to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child to inform its List of Issues Prior to Reporting. Together's report drew upon findings from our webinar series and survey (see section 2.1, above) to highlight 30 key rights issues for children in Scotland ahead of the UK's forthcoming review by the UN Committee. Over 60 organisations endorsed the report.

Together worked with its sister organisations in England, Wales and Northern Ireland to identify shared and jurisdiction-specific priorities. Together prepared a joint four-jurisdiction report which was endorsed by these partners.

The UN Committee published its List of Issues in February 2021, reflecting many of the issues identified by Together and its members. Together is continuing to work with members to identify gaps in the UN Committee's report and encourage Scottish Government to proactively address these in its official response.

2.3 Children and young people's voices are listened to, respected and influence the world around them.

Consistently explore, embed and develop opportunities to ensure that children and young people's views, experiences and concerns are listened to and acted on. Achieve this through partnerships with our members and all levels of government

Children and Young People's Panel on Europe

Together continued to support the Children and Young People's Panel on Europe, in partnership with Children in Scotland, to ensure that children's views were heard in discussions about Brexit. During the second phase of its work, the Panel held online meetings with decisions makers, gathered peers' views, wrote joint letters to Scottish and UK Government Ministers and led a successful social media campaign. Together's Legal & Policy Manager and Policy & Communications Assistant have played a key role in producing child-friendly materials for the project and preparing members for meetings with decision-makers. The Panel launched its second report "Listen to Us: It's our future too" in December 2020, presenting key findings to Scottish Government officials.

UNCRC Incorporation Bill

Together supported the Equality and Human Rights Committee (EHRC) to prepare a child-friendly version of the consultation, leaflet and facilitator pack. The facilitator pack included a range of activities to help children explore incorporation and share their views – this was drawn from a pack Together created in 2019.

Together facilitated two engagement sessions between children, young people and EHRC members to allow them to hear children's views directly. These events were planned and delivered in partnership with our member organisations. One event engaged under 12s while the other focused on children aged 12-18.

National Taskforce on Human Rights Leadership

Together supported children and young people to share their views on proposals for a new human rights law for Scotland. In January 2020, Together facilitated [three engagement sessions](#) between children, young people and members of the National Taskforce on Human Rights Leadership. Together prepared child-friendly materials to help participants prepare. Following the event, Together prepared a summary report outlining specific calls the children and young people made around the protections they need for their rights.

Views on COVID-19

Together worked with members to capture children's views and experiences in relation to COVID-19 and lockdown. We created a [dedicated page](#) on our website to share children and young people's views and experiences, as well as those expressed by parents, carers and family members. These pages highlighted the specific issues affecting children belonging to particular groups, whilst acknowledging the intersectionality of these.

Day of General Discussion 2021

Together worked with international partners to plan the 2021 Day of General Discussion (DGD) on children's rights in alternative care. Together's Legal & Policy Manager sits on the Taskforce which supports the child and young person advisory teams. Together has ensured members are kept updated with calls and consultations arising from the DGD.

2.3. Scotland is recognised internationally as a pioneer and an innovator in taking forward children and young people's human rights.

Bring learning from the international community to inform and develop work in Scotland to further children and young people's human rights. Promote and share good practice from Scotland with partners in the international community

Create and promote opportunities for our members to learn from – and bring learning to – the international human rights community.

Eurochild

Together's Legal & Policy Manager participated in Eurochild's General Assembly in April 2020 and National Partner Network meetings to learn from international partner organisations and bring examples of good practice from Scotland.

Child Rights Connect

Together's Director attended Child Rights Connect's in May 2020, to learn from international partner organisations and bring examples of good practice from Scotland. In May 2020, Together's Director presented to UN Permanent Missions on how UN guidance was being implemented in Scotland's COVID-19 response.

Day of General Discussion 2020/21

Together has been supporting members to participate in the postponed Day of General Discussion on children in alternative care – for example through the consultations. Together will work with members to share good practice from Scotland with the international community and bring learning from other jurisdictions home to inform and develop work to further children and young people's human rights.

2.4. Our impact and reach continue to grow, and we develop as a sustainably funded organisation.

Ensure operational compliance and good governance in all we do.

Board of Trustees

Together's Board of Trustees works to meet Companies House and OSCR requirements. Throughout the year, staff and the Together Board 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.

Four new trustees were elected at the 2020 AGM: Laura Pasternak, Mohamed Omar, Tracy Kirk and Kevin Kane. Three trustees stood down: John Ryan, Susan Elsley and Maria Galli. Mary Glasgow was elected as Chair, Laura Paton as Vice-Chair and Rozanne Chorlton as Treasurer. The Board brings a range of skills and expertise, offering valuable strategic oversight to the organisation.

Board meetings are held once a quarter, and subgroups have been established to help focus expertise on certain issues. The Finance sub-group led by the Treasurer met regularly to oversee the

production of the monthly management accounts and propose budgetary and spending decisions to the Board of Trustees. An executive subgroup of office-bearers met regularly to streamline Board decision-making.

Membership Taskgroup

A Membership Task-group was established in January 2021 to support in reviewing Together's membership policies and structure. The group consists of Together's Director, Membership Outreach Assistant, representatives from the Board and member organisations. A review of Together's Memorandum and Articles of Association (MARTS) is being undertaken by the Taskgroup on behalf of the Board of Trustees. The review will involve ongoing consultation with members with a final proposal expected to be tabled at the 2022 AGM.

Lobbying register

Together has ensured that all regulated lobbying activities are registered in the appropriate manner and that new staff understand the procedures before attending events where they may become involved in such activities.

Develop our staff, volunteers, interns and trustees to ensure there is a strong foundation from which we can progress our mission.

Staff team changes

There have been several changes to the Together staff team:

- In April 2020, Naomi Sutton became a full-time Policy and Communications Assistant, having previously been part-time.
- From May-August 2020, Molly Little joined as a full-time Policy & Events Intern
- From October 2020-January 2021, Martina Trusgnach joined as part-time Communications Intern
- In December 2020, Isla Kitching joined as a part-time Membership Outreach Assistant.
- In December 2020, Louise Wood retired from her role as Business Support Officer.
- In January 2021, Christine Klien joined as a part-time Business Support Officer.
- In February 2021, Helen Schwittay joined as part-time Communications Intern.

Over summer 2020, Together also benefitted from the work of Sara Helgesson who joined Together as a placement student as part of her LLM in Human Rights at the University of Edinburgh.

Together continued to benefit from the contribution of Ian Douglas, voluntary accountant.

Training and development

Staff training and development needs have been supported through the following courses:

- NSPCC child protection training – all new staff and interns as part of their induction.
- Cyber security training – all new staff and interns as part of their induction.
- CORRA online safety training – Legal & Policy Manager (October 2020)
- Microsoft Excel training – Policy & Communications Assistant and Membership Outreach Assistant

Assess and measure our impact to ensure we learn from successes and challenges and develop our approaches and strategies.

Together continued to promote membership at every opportunity. Between 2020-21, 93 new members joined Together, including NGOs and professionals working with and for children and young people.

At the end of March 2021, Together had 473 members across Scotland. The high number of new members reflects a programme of work commenced by Together's new Membership Outreach Assistant from January 2020 to map existing membership, identify and address gaps. It also reflects the work undertaken by Together through our briefings, e-newsletter and social media to try to engage wider stakeholders whose work impacts on children and young people.

Together's Membership Outreach Assistant has initiated a range of activities to meet the needs of our members – including a new membership handbook to clarify benefits and opportunities.

Together conducts an annual membership survey and annual e-newsletter survey to monitor our impact, learn from our membership and develop our approaches and strategies. The 2020-21 surveys showed high levels of satisfaction. We also ensure that attendees at all Together events are asked to complete an evaluation form to understand what worked well and how future events could be improved.

3. Structure, Governance and Management

Together (Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights) is a company limited by guarantee governed by its Memorandum and Articles (dated 17th August 1999, and last revised 23rd September 2013). It is registered as a charity with the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator.

4. Appointment of Trustees

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. None of the Trustees receive remuneration or other benefit from their work with the Charity.

5. Organisation

The Charity's affairs are managed by regular meetings of the Trustees of the Company. Throughout 2019-20, the day-to-day activities of Together were carried out by a full time Director, full time Legal & Policy Manager, Policy & Communications Assistant (part-time and full-time as outlined above) and a part-time Business Support Officer.

The staff team was also supported by two placement students and a full-time intern during summer 2019, and a volunteer accountant.

The Board of Trustees provided strategic direction and oversight to the charity.

6. Reserves Policy

To avoid closure if funding difficulties were to happen the Board has agreed to maintain unrestricted reserves at a level of at least three months essential operating costs, which would allow staff to

continue working, primarily to secure new funding or to be able to safely manage exit costs. The Board can decide to increase this amount as needed, for example to ensure financial stability in times of uncertainty such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Trustees have agreed that the surplus of £6,570 generated from unrestricted income in 2020-21 should be retained in reserves as a matter of prudent governance given the likely financial impact of Covid-19 and the uncertainty of restricted funding beyond March 2022.

7. Risk Management

Internal risks are minimised by the implementation of policies and procedures for authorisation of all transactions and projects and to ensure consistent quality of delivery for all operational aspects of Together's work. These policies and procedures are periodically reviewed to ensure that they still meet Together's needs. The key risks identified and associated mitigating actions are:

Funding and Fundraising: To ensure Together is able to fund its core objectives and work programmes, the Trustees keep funding under review with quarterly updates and scenario planning. Trustees conduct a regular review of the reserves policy. The Director maintains ongoing contact with existing and potential funders.

To ensure adequate financial controls, budgeting and scenario planning, funding strategy, reserves policy and financial reporting, the Trustees scrutinise income/expenditure against budget on a quarterly basis with ongoing oversight by the Finance Subgroup. The Treasurer works with the Finance Subgroup to apply financial controls and ensure an annual independent financial examination.

Good governance structures and boards: Trustees are attentive to relevant communications and scrutinise all Board papers. Board meetings are held quarterly Board meetings with accurate information provided by Together's Director to inform quality decision making. The Executive and Finance Subgroups meet 3 monthly at a minimum with at least one Trustee Office Holder (Chair, Vice Chair and Treasurer) in attendance at every meeting. Trustees tasked with supporting the development of policies and procedures in relation to governance, finance and human resources and monitors risk on an ongoing basis. A parttime Business Support Officer supports the Trustees and Director with governance needs.

Staff retention and recruitment: Trustees take a range of actions to promote the retention of key staff. This includes developing and applying human resources policies and procedures. Within the staff team, there are daily check-ins and regular 1-1s between staff and Director with relevant issues explored. The Trustees conduct a 4 monthly Staff Wellbeing Survey to identify any pressing concerns or issues. Pay, remuneration and pension policy is reviewed by Trustees annually and the remuneration package is deemed competitive. All job descriptions were reviewed in March 2021 and every step is taken to ensure that training and support meets the needs of the role. A new staff handbook under review and is due to be finalised by October 2021.

Covid-19: The Trustees have been mindful of the impact of COVID-19 on financial planning, staff and operations. Staff have been working remotely from home since March 2020. To minimise the impact of this change, Trustees have encouraged staff to have flexible work patterns to enable them to work around other demands. A statutory working from home allowance has been paid to all staff with an additional winter working from home allowance offered. Systems have been set up to

support online working and staff equipment and IT needs have been identified and met. There are robust team communications and support systems in place.

The Finance Subgroup has been charged with developing a comprehensive Risk Register which will be a standing item for the Board of Trustees from summer 2021. This will formalise:

- an annual review of the risks the charity may face, undertaken in accordance with SORP Accounting and Reporting for Charities;
- the establishment of systems and procedures to mitigate those risks identified;
- the implementation of procedures designed to minimise any potential impact on the charity should these risks materialise.

8. Responsibilities of the Trustees

The Charity Trustees (who are Directors of the Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing a trustees' Annual Report and Financial Statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

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;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the Financial Statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to assume that the company will continue on that basis.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and the group and hence taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities. The Trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charitable company's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

9. Statement as to disclosure to our Independent Examiner

In so far as the trustees are aware at the time of approving our trustees' annual report:

- there is no relevant information, being information needed by the Independent Examiner in connection with preparing their report, of which the Independent Examiner is unaware; and

- the trustees, having made enquiries of fellow directors and the Independent Examiner that they ought to have individually taken, have each taken all steps that he/she is obliged to take as a director in order to make themselves aware of any relevant information and to establish that the Independent Examiner is aware of that information.

By order of the board of trustees



Mary Glasgow, Chair
September 2021

10. 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.

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 Charities

have 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.



Philip Duncan
5 James Bell Wynd,

**Charity Statement of Financial Activities
(including income and expenditure account)
for year ending 31 March 2021**

	Note	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds 2021	Total Funds 2020
Income:					
Donations	13	14,467	138,823	153,290	146,119
Investments	14	0	0	0	0
Other income		175	0	175	0
Total income:		14,642	138,823	153,465	146,119
Expenditure:					
Charitable activities	15,17,18	8,072	139,406	147,478	133,553
Governance costs	16	0	(583)	(583)	1,134
Total expenditure:		8,072	138,823	146,895	134,687
Net income/(expenditure) and net movement in funds for the year					
		6,570	0	6,570	11,432
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward		65,734	0	65,734	54,302
Total funds carried forward		72,304	0	72,304	65,734

Balance Sheet as at 31st March 2021

	Note	2021	2020
Fixed Assets			
Tangible fixed assets		<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
		0	0
Current Assets			
Debtors	20	19,000	36,500
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>57,667</u>	<u>41,375</u>
		76,667	77,875
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	21	<u>4,363</u>	<u>12,141</u>
Net Current Assets		<u>72,304</u>	<u>65,734</u>
Total Net Assets		<u>72,304</u>	<u>65,734</u>
Funds			
Restricted funds		0	0
Unrestricted funds		<u>72,304</u>	<u>65,734</u>
Total Funds		<u>72,304</u>	<u>65,734</u>

Notes on the accounts

1. Accounting Policies

The principal accounting policies adopted, judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty in the preparation of the financial statements are as follows:

2. Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities published on 16th July 2014, the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities (effective January 2015) and the Companies Act 2006. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note(s).

3. Preparation of the accounts on an ongoing concern basis

The Trustees have prepared these financial statements on the assessment that Together (Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights) is an ongoing concern. There are no material uncertainties of which the trustees are aware that ought to be disclosed in relation to this assessment.

4. Interest receivable

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the bank.

5. Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds are available to spend on activities that further any of the purposes of the charity. Restricted funds are donations which the donor has specified are to be solely used for particular areas of Together's (Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights) work.

6. Expenditure and irrecoverable VAT

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment to a third party. It is probable that settlement will be required, and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is classified under the following activity headings:

Costs of raising funds comprise the costs of staff time involved in applying for grants from statutory and trust funding sources, as well as meeting the monitoring and reporting requirements in relation to funds secured.

- Expenditure on charitable activities includes the costs of all activities undertaken by Together (Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights) which promote the UN Convention on the Rights of Child and monitor its implementation across Scotland, including policy, membership and events and their associated support costs.
- Other expenditure represents those items not falling into any other heading.
- Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

7. Support costs

Support costs are those functions that assist the work of the charity but do not directly undertake charitable activities. Support costs include some finance, personnel (including volunteers) and payroll costs which support Together (Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights) overall activities. Support costs have been detailed in note 15.

8. Debtors

Debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any discount offered.

9. Cash in bank and in hand

Cash at bank and in hand includes petty cash and the cash balance of Together's deposit bank account.

10. Creditors

Creditors are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will result in a transfer of funds to a third party, and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors are normally recognised at their settlement amount allowing for any discounts due.

11. Pensions

Together (Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights) had a staging date of 1st February 2017 to meet the automatic enrolment requirements of the Pensions Act 2008. The Finance Subgroup, with agreement of the Board of Trustees, has opted to use NEST (National Employment Savings Trust) as its automatic enrolment pension provider. A defined contribution scheme with NEST has been in place from 1st February 2017 and is open to all staff. The NEST pension scheme operates in line with Government legislation and employer contributions will match at least the minimum levels stipulated by the Government. During the employee's term of employment, Together (Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights) will contribute 6% of basic salary each month to the NEST pension or other qualifying pension scheme that the employee may have.

12. Legal status of the charity

Together (Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights) is a company limited by guarantee and has no share capital. The liability of each member in the event of winding-up is limited to £1.

13. Income from donations

The income from donations was £153,290 (2019-20: 146,119). Of this, £14,467 was unrestricted (2019-20: £11,432). Together is particularly grateful for the ongoing support of the Scottish Government's Rights & Wellbeing Team and the Children & Young People's Early Intervention Fund which provides core funding for its activities.

Donations	2020-21	2019-20	
Membership donations	14,467	10,182	Unrestricted income
Scottish Government Core	77,943	79,557	Core funding from the Rights & Wellbeing Team
Children & Young People's Early Intervention Fund	48,500	48,500	Project funding for the Policy & Communications Officer and the Business Support Officer posts
Brexit Project	5,270	3,955	CYP Panel on Europe in partnership with Children In Scotland (funded by the Scottish Government)
Conference & Grants	0	1,100	2019 costs for ROCK conference.
Scottish Government Human Rights Taskforce	2,200	0	Project funding for hosting webinars and creating consultation resources for children and young people
EHRIC	450	0	Project funding to support production of child friendly consultation for UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Bill
Children and Young People Commissioner Scotland	3,200	0	Project funding for Child Rights Impact Evaluation work with East Lothian Council and Children's Parliament
Edinburgh University	1,260	2,825	2020-21 Internships
	153,290	146,119	

Together (Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights) benefits enormously from the ongoing commitment and enthusiastic support of its many Trustees and our dedicated Finance Volunteer who has supported our work for many years. More detail of their work is given in our annual report. In accordance with accounting standards, the economic contribution of these volunteers is not measured in the accounts.

14. Investment income

No interest was paid to Together in this period arising from money held in interest bearing deposit accounts.

15. Analysis of expenditure on charitable activities

Expenditure on charitable activities was £147,478 (2019-20: £133,553). Of this, £8,072 was unrestricted (2019-20: £nil) and £139,406 was restricted (2019-20: £133,553).

Expenditure	2020-21	2019-20	
Marketing & promotion	1,028	6,650	Includes website and printing of reports
Office costs	9,970	11,173	Includes rent, telephone, stationery, postage, and IT equipment and furniture for all staff
Professional fees	542	703	Includes insurance
Travel	-263	2,199	Includes all staff travel and subsistence, as well as refunds due to COVID
Events	174	3,432	2020-21 includes cost for translations at online webinars 2019/20 includes ROCK conference and CHRD events
Staff costs	132,749	106,707	Includes salaries, employer's NI and pension, and working from home allowance
Support costs	3,278	2,689	Includes payroll, recruitment, training, bank charges, subscriptions and volunteer expenses
	<hr/> 147,478	<hr/> 133,553	

16. Analysis of expenditure on governance

Expenditure on governance costs was £-583 (2019-20: £1,134). Of this, £nil was unrestricted (2019-20: £nil) and £-583 was restricted (2019-20: £1,134).

This comprised of the following costs:

Expenditure	2020-21	2019-20	
Board meetings	0	5	Subsistence
Trustee travel expenses	-583	1,129	Travel to trustee and subgroup meetings
	<hr/> -583	<hr/> 1,134	

No remuneration was paid to Trustees during the year. The refund of £583 reflects a cancelled travel plans to a Child Rights Connect Board Meeting as a result of COVID-19. Throughout the year, online conferencing has kept Trustee expenses to a minimum.

17. Analysis of expenditure on staff

Expenditure on staffing was £132,749 (2019-20: £106,707). Of this, £nil was unrestricted (2019-20: £nil) and £132,749 was restricted (2019-20: £106,707).

This comprised of the following costs:

	2020-21	2019-20
Salaries	120,220	96,611
Employer National Insurance	6,491	5,543
Pension	6,038	4,553
	<hr/> 132,749	<hr/> 106,707

No employees had emoluments in excess of £60,000 (2019-20: nil).

18. Staff numbers

The average monthly number of full-time equivalent employees (including paid interns) during the year was 3.9 (2019-20: 3.37).

19. Corporation Taxation

Together (Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights) is exempt from tax on income and gains falling within section 505 of the Taxes Act 1988 or section 252 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992 to the extent that these are applied to its charitable objectives.

20. Debtors

Debtor	2020-21	2019-20
Scottish Government	19,000	36,500
	<hr/> 19,000	<hr/> 36,500

21. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

Creditor	2020-21	2019-20
Scottish Government core	0	7,943
BREXIT Project	0	2,635
PAYE	2,766	1,922
Mastercard	1,477	883
Accruals (Aviva)	(2,591)	(2,642)
St James's Place (Pension)	297	0
NEST pension	417	1,024
Trade Creditors	1,997	376
	<hr/> 4,363	<hr/> 12,141