



Together
(Scottish Alliance for
Children's Rights)

REPORT & FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the year ended
31st March 2022

Registered charity
number: SC029403
Registered company
number: SC199725

Registered Office:
The Melting Pot
15 Calton Road
Edinburgh
EH8 8DL

www.togetherscotland.org.uk
@together_sacr

CHAIR'S REPORT

The past year has been another deeply challenging one for children. Children whose rights were already most at risk felt the sharpest impact of a worsening cost-of-living crisis, continuing COVID-19 disruptions, efforts to undermine our Human Rights Act and remove migrants' rights. The UNCRC Bill, which would have enshrined their rights in law, was challenged in the Supreme Court delaying its implementation. In these turbulent times, Together has shown incredible passion and determination in driving forward its mission to ensure all children growing up in Scotland have their human rights respected, protected and fulfilled. Amid great challenges, Together's commitment and strength has shone more brightly than ever.

Together has expanded its impact locally, nationally and internationally. For example, the Rights Right Now! project supported children to have a say at the heart of Scottish Government; Together continued to press Scottish Government to deliver its promise to make children's human rights part of the law; Together supported local councils to better understand the impact of their decisions on children.

Together also empowered its members to influence the UK Government's engagement with the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child. Meanwhile, the State of Children's Rights Report 2022 offered guidance to all sectors to put children's rights into practice. At the international level, Together continued to learn from – and share experiences with – European and global networks.



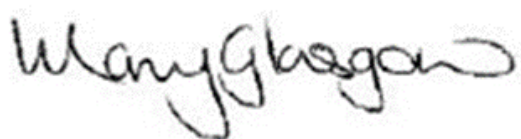
CHAIR'S REPORT

Together has taken steps to ensure an open and inclusive membership, including work towards becoming an anti-racist organisation. So far, this has involved staff and trustee training, internal conversations and reflection, a review of our recruitment practices and contact with members.

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.

We know that 2022-23 will bring a busy programme of work, with Scottish Parliament reconsidering the UNCRC Bill, development of a new Human Rights Bill and the UK's review by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child. We are confident that Together will rise to the challenges the year brings and look forward to reporting on progress in 2023.

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. I would like to thank those standing down in 2021 and give a warm welcome to new trustees.



Mary Glasgow
Chairperson



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Reference & Administrative Information

Charity Name:	Together (Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights)
Charity Registration Number:	SC029403
Company Number:	SC199725
Registered Office:	The Melting Pot 15 Calton Road Edinburgh EH8 8DL
	Telephone: 0131 5101565
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Trustees:

Chair	Mary Glasgow
Treasurer	Rozanne Chorlton
Vice Chair	Laura Paton
Board Members:	Rona Blackwood
	Susan Hunter (from September 2021)
	Kevin Kane
	Tracy Kirk
	Mohamed Omar
	Laura Pasternak
	Lucinda Rivers

Company Secretary: Juliet Harris

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

Independent Examiner: Philip Duncan

Volunteer Accountant: Ian J Douglas

About us

Together's vision is that all children growing up in Scotland have their human rights respected, protected and fulfilled.

Our journey began in 1996 when a group of children's organisations formed an informal alliance to promote children's human rights as set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

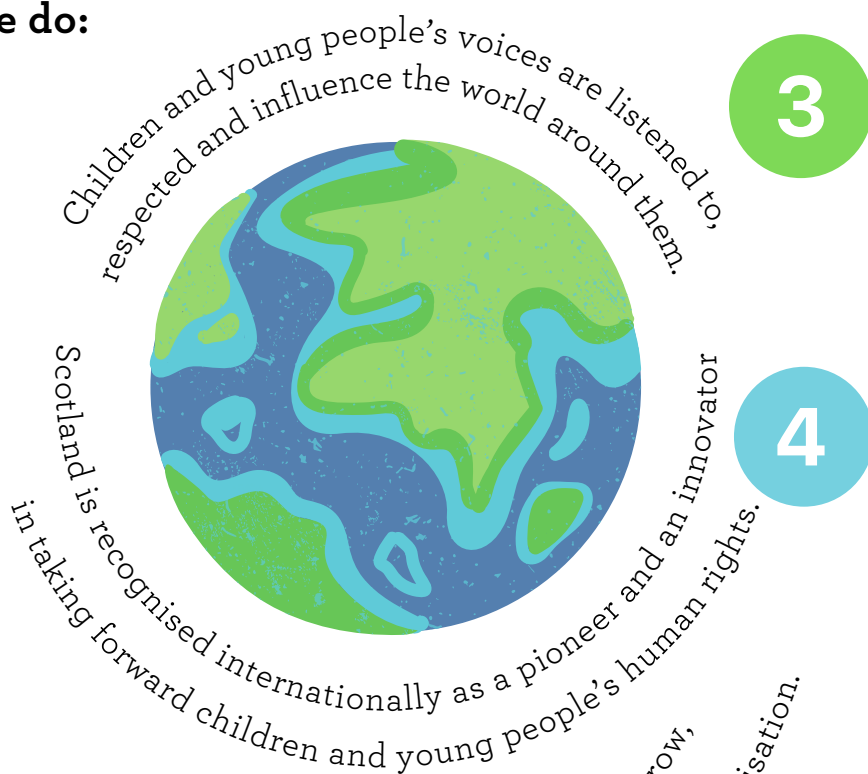
Together was formally incorporated as a company limited by guarantee on 8th September 1999.

Together has five core aims, as set out in our Strategic Plan 2019-24, which shape everything we do:



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



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

5



About us

Together relies on grants and membership payments to cover operating costs. Throughout 2021-22 we made progress towards our aims with funding from the Scottish Government Children's Rights Unit, Children and Young People Early Intervention Fund and other donations from our membership. We also received funding for short-term projects from Children's Parliament, University of Edinburgh and Parenting Across Scotland.

This funding enabled Together to continue employing three full-time staff (Director, Legal & Policy Manager, Policy and Communications Assistant) and two part-time staff (Business Support Officer and Membership Outreach Assistant). It also enabled us to create a new, full-time role of Development Manager, and create three internship positions across policy, communications and participation. Project funding for Rights Right Now! enabled Together to recruit a temporary Rights and Participation Lead (part-time) and engage the services of a Participation Consultant.



Promoting child rights-focused law



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



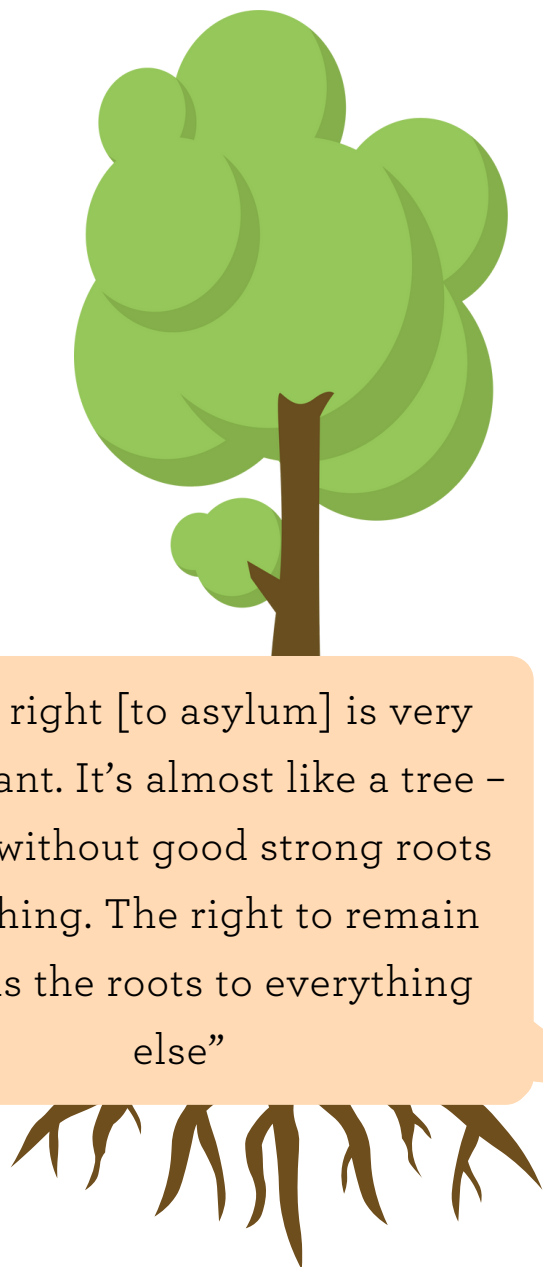
What have children said about promoting child rights-focused law?

"There's been enough debating, what are ministers actually going to do? Claims aren't always met - people's experiences needs to be put at the heart of all laws."

"[Incorporation] will help us make sure that they do what they say they're going to do instead of putting it in a manifesto and not delivering on it. It is important to hold people to account and make sure that they are keeping their promises."

"I think you should make children's rights law because it will keep a lot more children safe."

"This right [to asylum] is very important. It's almost like a tree - a tree without good strong roots is nothing. The right to remain here is the roots to everything else"



These quotes have come from the children who participated in Together's All Our Rights in Law consultation and Children's Parliament's consultation on incorporating the UNCRC into domestic law in Scotland.

HIGHLIGHTS OF 2021-22



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



Promoting child rights-focused law

To achieve this, we will:

- Advocate for the full incorporation of the UNCRC and other international human rights standards into Scots and UK law.
- 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.
- Influence and inform new legislation brought forward by the Scottish and UK Government to ensure it meets international human rights standards.

Promoting child rights-focused law

What did we do?

Campaign to make children's human rights the law

Together continued its passionate campaign to bring children's UNCRC rights into Scots law. We convened our Incorporation Strategy Group (ISG) to share information and coordinate advocacy efforts amongst our members. Together led the group's activities including joint letters, resources and briefings for MSPs.

In June 2021, the UK Supreme Court held a hearing to consider whether the UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Bill had gone beyond the powers of the Scottish Parliament. Together produced clear, plain language blogs to keep members up to date with developments. We also produced key messages for MSPs.

In October 2021, the UK Supreme Court found that the Bill had exceeded the Scottish Parliament's powers and would need amended before it could become law. Together campaigned for Scottish Government to work at pace to address these issues and reintroduce the Bill to the Scottish Parliament.

We worked with Martin Wishart MSP to table a motion on the one-year anniversary of the Bill being unanimously passed, calling on Scottish Government to provide a clear timeline on plans to address the judgment.



Promoting child rights-focused law

What did we do?

A New Human Rights Bill for Scotland

Alongside UNCRC incorporation, Together campaigned for additional human rights treaties to be brought into Scots law. We convened a group of members to inform our approach to the development of a new Human Rights Bill. Our Director communicated members' views directly to Scottish Government through her membership of the Human Rights Bill Governance and Engagement Advisory Board. A key call was that children must be included in the development of the Bill. Scottish Government accepted this recommendation and asked Together to submit a proposal for supporting children's engagement.

Defending migrants' rights

Together strongly condemned the UK Government's 'New Plan for Immigration' (launched 24th March 2021). Amongst other things, this sought to make children and families' right to seek asylum conditional upon how they had travelled to the UK. We highlighted the far-reaching and negative consequences of such changes – concerns which were echoed by very many of the 8509 responses to the UK Government's consultation. Despite these concerns, UK Government pressed ahead with its plan, introducing the Nationality and Borders Bill to the UK Parliament in July 2021. Together joined children's organisations across Scotland in strongly urging MSPs to withhold consent for the Bill. This campaign was successful, with MSPs withholding consent in March 2022. Unfortunately, however, this did not prevent MPs from passing the Bill.

Promoting child rights-focused law

What did we do?

Protecting the Human Rights Act (HRA)

In summer 2021, Together benefitted from the work of Siti Zaleha Binti Mohd Ali, an LLM candidate at the University of Edinburgh. Siti conducted research on the progression of children's rights protection through the Human Rights Act, key gaps and learning for Scotland as it moves to incorporate further human rights treaties.



In December 2021, the UK Government launched a consultation on replacing the HRA with a Bill of Rights. This proposal directly contradicted the findings of the independent review commissioned by UK Government, which concluded the HRA had been a success and there was no case for radical overhaul. Together rallied its members in support of the Human Rights Act. Through joint letters, consultation responses and briefings, Together drew on Siti's research to emphasise the HRA is a powerful and essential mechanism in upholding children's human rights, particularly in the absence of UNCRC incorporation at UK level. We worked with partners across the UK to raise awareness of the potential impact of repealing the HRA.



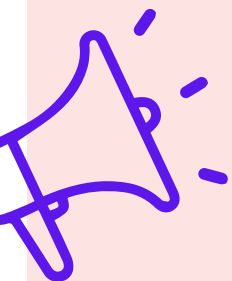
Human
rights are
here to stay!



PROTECT OUR
HUMAN RIGHTS!

Promoting child rights- focused law

What have our members said?



“Together's expert analysis and knowledge transfer approach has been one of the most useful tools available to me and to my organisation. Important at any time but particularly while we seek to understand the Supreme Court judgment and its implication for commencement of the UNCRC legislation.”

“Together has provided detailed updates with regards to legislative process and the legal challenges and what this means to children's rights. We have felt more confident in speaking about these issues to staff, partners and the people we support.”



Understanding children's rights and the UNCRC allows people to better identify whether a law is fully compliant with human rights standards or not. Ninety-four percent of respondents to our e-newsletter survey said the bulletin was helpful in developing their knowledge and understanding of children's rights and the UNCRC. As one subscriber noted:

“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!”



These quotes have come from those who responded to Together's 2022 Membership Survey or Together's 2022 e-newsletter Survey.

Supporting child rights practice



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

What have children said about supporting child rights practice?

Children recognise that making their rights part of the law is only the first step - lots of other things need to happen to make sure that their rights are met in practice.



"I think as with everything it would take a while for the culture to seep in, legislation is the first step. Once that's legalised - then it goes into popular culture- the more the effect of a thing being seen or experiences - LEAD TO CULTURE CHANGE"

"Most laws get forgotten as there are so many of them. Politicians also forget that they exist. Need to remind them that we're entitled to what is in these laws"

Children say everyone should be aware of children's rights and know how to put them into practice, this includes adults and children. Children have suggested a range of creative ways to bring about greater awareness and implementation of children's rights, including:

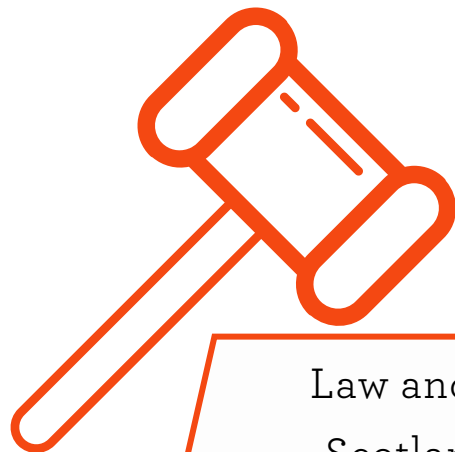
"an app, especially for children and young people with autism and other disabilities, easy to read and understand, and which also focuses on disability rights".

"There needs to be more about rights in the school curriculum and it should be included in PSE"

These quotes have come from the children who participated in Together's All Our Rights in Law consultation and LGBT Youth's consultation on incorporating the UNCRC.

HIGHLIGHTS OF 2021-22

Supporting child rights practice



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

To achieve this, we will:

- Work with our members to raise public and professional awareness and understanding of children and young people's human rights.
- Influence and build the capacity of our members and duty bearers to inform policy and direct practice.
- Undertake robust monitoring and reporting to support UN bodies to hold the Scottish and UK Government to account in implementing international human rights obligations.

Supporting child rights practice

What did we do?

State of Children's Rights Report 2022

Together's 2022 State of Children's Rights Report was developed as a practical guide to support public authorities, the third sector, organisations and individuals as we approach implementation of the UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Bill. It demonstrates the importance of children's participation in decision-making, inclusive communications, supporting children whose rights are most at risk, access to justice, raising awareness of rights, child rights budgeting and child rights impact assessments.



Supporting child rights practice

What did we do?

State of Children's Rights Report 2022

The report was the result of many months of engagement with our members and supporters - including a survey, webinar series and detailed interviews. Members identified some of the hurdles they face when implementing children's rights in their own work. For example, members noted:

- “lack of confidence is the main challenge as our role is to support others; others wanting to change is also a challenge”.
- “[We] do acknowledge the UNCRC. The challenge is linking it with practice and ensuring full understanding of why [we] do what [we] do and can demonstrate it with confidence.”

Drawing from the wealth of information provided, we identified common challenges and steps being taken across the above themes, case studies of promising practice, resources and practical suggestions. Our hope for the 2022 report is that it will serve as a roadmap for all levels of government, the Scottish Parliament and practitioners as we strive towards creating a ‘gold standard’ for children's rights in Scotland.

At the launch event we were joined by special guest, Professor Ann Skelton, member of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child. Professor Skelton pressed Scottish Government on the urgent need to make children's rights binding in law following the UK Supreme Court judgment.



Supporting child rights practice

What have we done?

UNCRC Introductory Guidance

Together supported Scottish Government to develop introductory guidance on how to embed a children's rights-based approach in public services. As a member of the UNCRC Guidance Reference Group, we sought to raise public authorities' awareness of children's rights, ensure clarity around their duty not to act incompatibly with the UNCRC and related reporting duties. We ensured the guidance reflected the core principles that underlie the UNCRC. The introductory guidance was launched on 20th November 2021 to mark Universal Children's Day. It is the first instalment in a phased approach to guidance with more to follow in 2022-23.

Reporting to the United Nations

Together supported its members to engage in UN processes to monitor how well children's human rights are being implemented in Scotland. We held dedicated webinars to build members' knowledge and capacity about the reporting system and provided information in our members' handbook. We kept members up-to-date with developments and shared our analysis of key UN and government reports, identifying any gaps. We facilitated discussions between our members and Scottish Government officials which sought to influence their input to the UK Government report. At the same time, we established new relationships with UK civil servants to provide multiple routes for members' input.



Supporting child rights practice

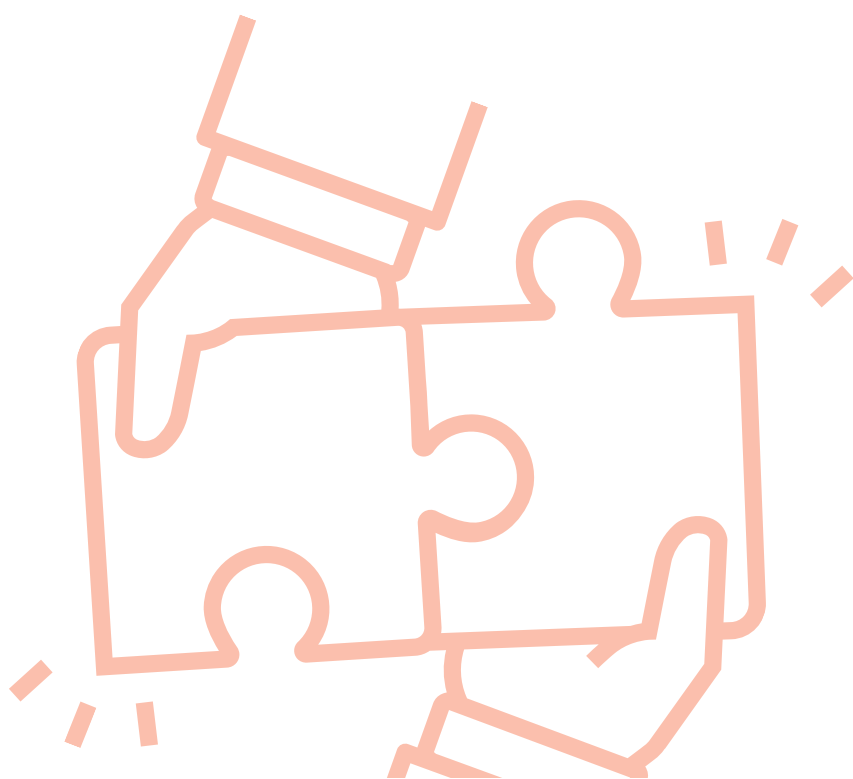
What did we do?

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, Children's Parliament 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.

Child Rights Impact Assessment & Evaluation project

Together worked in partnership with the Children's Parliament, East Lothian Council and the Observatory to explore how children could be better involved in child rights impact assessments and evaluations. 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.



Supporting child rights practice

What did we do?

Further work

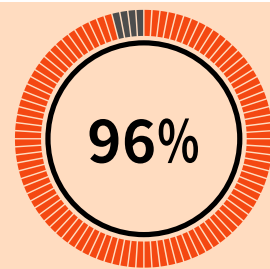
The above is just a small sample of our work to progress a children's rights based approach across Scotland in 2021-22. Some other highlights include:

- Together partnered with the Institute for Inspiring Children's Futures (University of Strathclyde) to host a special course on children's human rights. The course was taught by Professor Ann Skelton, a member of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child.
- Together partnered with the British Institute of Human Rights (BIHR) to produce a practical tool on Children's Rights Impact Assessments. The tool will be useful for members and duty bearers as they seek to understand the impact of their decisions on children's rights and identify any necessary adaptations.
- Together's online communications proved a continuing success. Our website, social media and e-newsletter offered an effective way of communicating our key calls, news, consultation responses and events. Our following across these channels continues to grow and grow.

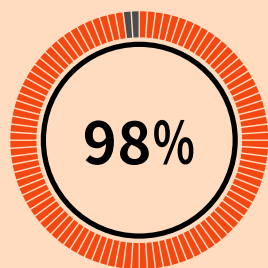


Supporting child rights practice

What have our members said?



Ninety-six percent (96%) of respondents to our e-newsletter survey said it enabled them to bring more of a child rights approach to their work. Ninety-eight percent (98%) of respondents to our membership survey said Together helped to influence and



build their capacity to inform policy and direct practice relating to children and young people. Comments included:

“[Membership of Together] has helped with our understanding and knowledge and has helped us look at our practice and highlight where we embed good practice and where we have things that we need to address and improve on. It has helped out [our] team with a general awareness and to think of our responsibilities around the UNCRC and how we improve our culture.”

“We were able to source Together to give a presentation to our staff, this presentation made it clear and accessible about what a rights based approach should be and helped develop our organisational plans on the matter.”

These quotes have come from those who responded to Together's 2022 Membership Survey or the Partner Evaluation for Rights Right Now!



Supporting child rights practice

What have our members said?

Our State of Children's Rights Report 2022 sought to build members' confidence around implementing children's rights and share examples of promising practice. Members said:

"I came across the Together Report for Children's Rights which was extremely helpful and informative. I became a member after reading it and all the emails and updates are very helpful"

"It's always helpful to learn from fellow members about the approaches they're taking and for Together to keep us fully up to date on latest evidence and practice."



Organisations involved in our Rights Right Now! project reflected on children's experience of the project, and the role Together played in supporting government officials' understanding of children's rights:

"The [Strategic Implementation Board's] understanding of children and young people's experience and views has grown. We think Together staff will have helped them to understand what quality ongoing participation looks and feels like."

"[The children] enjoyed the project, felt included and listened to. They felt that they knew what to expect in the meetings and enjoyed the discussion. For some, it made them think even deeper about these issues"

Working with children

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



What have children said about working with children?

Children have emphasised the importance of knowing their rights and being actively included in efforts to raise awareness:

“It’s important that children know about their rights so if someone disrespects them, they can stand up for them”

“[Children] need to be involved in developing resources and training about rights”

They are clear that they have a right to be heard in decisions that affect their lives, but that some adults seem resistant:

“Children shouldn’t have to speak in a way that adults do just to have their views heard”

“Everyone should be heard and kids also have a creative side so you may get some new ideas.”

To support their participation, children need clear, accessible information and child-friendly environments in which to share their views:

“Make it simple to read and if there’s a hard word, explain it and shorten the sentences.”

“Don’t overword things, just say what needs to be said but not in a mean way.”

They have criticised occasions where participation has been tokenistic, such as when adults meet with children but don’t follow up afterwards to let children know what they have done with children’s ideas:

“Children need to hear back from adults making decisions since they have a right to know what is happening.”

These quotes have come from the children who took part in the 2021 Cabinet Meeting, YELLO! and Children's Parliament's Climate Changemakers' work.

HIGHLIGHTS OF 2021-22

Working with children

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



To achieve this, we will:

- 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

Working with children

What did we do?

Rights Right Now!

Together supported a group of 14 children, aged 10-17, to share their views at the heart of Scottish Government. The pilot project aimed to support meaningful and inclusive participation of children as Scotland moves to incorporate the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Rights Right Now! worked to influence Scottish Government's UNCRC Implementation Programme and the work of the Strategic Implementation Board. Core to the development of the project was that children should be involved throughout and given clear feedback about how their views had been used to influence Scottish Government's work. The project was supported by Professor Laura Lundy from Queens University Belfast, an expert in rights-based approaches to children's participation.



Working with children

What did we do?

Rights Right Now!

Through the project, children shared how they would like to be involved in ongoing work to implement the UNCRC. They shared their experiences and advice about what worked, what didn't and what Scottish Government might want to try when it came to engaging with other children. The children's recommendations will help shape a new Children and Young People's Consortium to be established by Scottish Government.

Ongoing evaluation of the project enabled Together to continuously adapt to the needs of the children involved. It allowed us to reflect deeply on how we can better support children's participation through all strands of our work. Many children shared positive feedback that Together will seek to build upon:

"Everyone was supportive – everyone listened – no one talked over anyone, and we all got opinions heard. You didn't feel guilty because you didn't forget what you wanted to say because no one jumped in"

"In the middle of the big meetings, we went into little breakout rooms, so it is easier to say how we feel."

"I definitely think [we were listened to] as so as there were decision makers on the calls and they seemed very interested in what we had to say, as well as participating in our discussions."

"All the adults were really nice and welcoming. They were really conscious they didn't want to be intimidating and were really good"

Working with children

What did we do?

Rights Right Now!

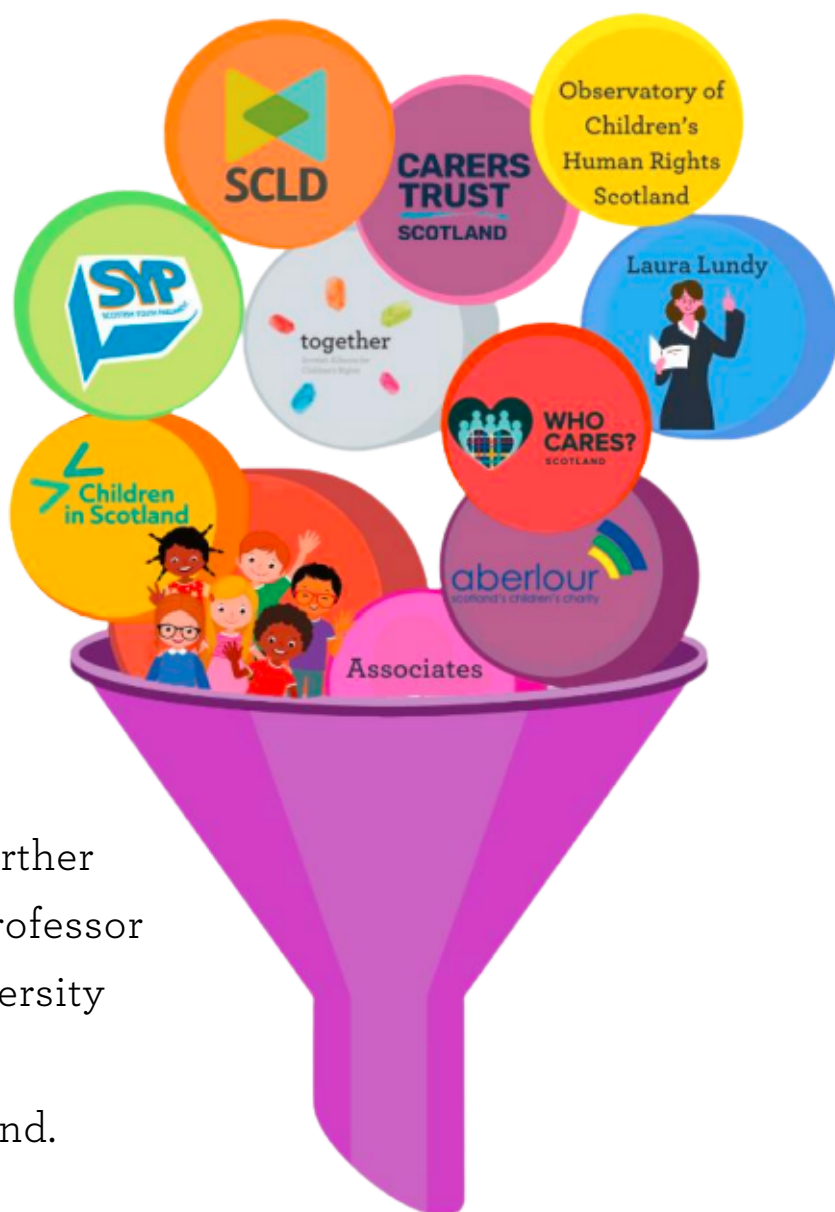
Equally, children highlighted what we could have done better. We are currently designing our next project (The Rights Detectives) with this feedback in mind, so we can better support the children involved:

"there is a lot that I would change...Development wise it did not work like it should have been".

"Feel like we could have gotten to know each other better first before diving into doing stuff"

The Rights Right Now! project ran from September 2021 until April 2022. It was led by Together in partnership with Aberlour, Carers Trust Scotland, Children in Scotland, Scottish Commission for Learning Disability, Scottish Youth Parliament and Who Cares? Scotland.

The pilot was supported by 17 further Together members, alongside Professor Laura Lundy from Queen's University Belfast and the Observatory of Children's Human Rights Scotland.



RIGHTS RIGHT NOW!

Working with children

What did we do?

The Rights Detectives

As 2021-22 drew to a close, Together secured Scottish Government funding for an exciting new project with children. The 'Rights Detectives', will conduct special missions to help shape a new Human Rights Bill for Scotland. These missions will involve investigative research with other children to help make sure what matters to children is put into the new law. We look forward to reporting on this project in our 2022-23 report.

Child-friendly resources

Together heightened its efforts to publish information in accessible and child-friendly formats. We made a commitment to produce child-friendly versions of key reports, such as our State of Children's Rights Reports and project reports, and to seek children's views on key issues as well as those of our members. As a result, we published child-friendly and Easy Read versions of our State of Children's Rights Report 2022 alongside a series of short, accessible videos to summarise the key findings. We worked with members to share these resources with the children they support and revised them accordingly.

We also developed a children's version of the Rights Right Now! report and created children's versions of key information-gathering surveys for reports to the UN. We look forward to building upon these developments in 2022-23.



Working with children

What have our members said?

“We have been inspired by what Together are doing to produce more child-friendly versions of our work.”



“The infographics are particularly useful for us and really help to make the key issues accessible to a wider audience (including younger people).”

At Together, we're always keen to hear feedback from children and from our members about what we could be doing better. This has resulted in us changing how we approach resources and events – for example, we started producing Easy Read agendas for events following a suggestion from one of our members. This was later incorporated in projects such as Rights Right Now! Partner organisations involved in Rights Right Now! said:

“Staff worked hard with the children and young people to work out what works best for them in the online meetings, such as less adults and more breakout spaces”

“Young people told us they felt in control of the meetings and that they enjoyed the prep meetings with us, which were guided by the very useful ‘info/activities’ documents.”

“They enjoyed the project, felt included and listened to. They felt that they knew what to expect in the meetings and enjoyed the discussion. For some, it made them think even deeper about these issues”

These quotes have come from those who responded to Together's 2022 Membership Survey or the Partner Evaluation for Rights Right Now!

Where Scotland meets the world



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

HIGHLIGHTS OF 2021-22

Where Scotland meets
the world



To achieve this, we will:

- 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.


What have children said about where Scotland meets the world?

Children are clear that their rights are universal – every single child in the world has human rights. As such, countries should work together and learn from one another in order to respect, protect and fulfil children’s rights to the fullest extent:

“If the UNCRC makes rights that are international, everyone should use those rather than alternative versions for different countries”

“[The UN Committee] are rights experts and international communication is important. We are sure what they’re saying will fit in Scotland.”

“Heading out to Geneva with the youth parliament to talk to international decision-makers and asking them about their experiences with incorporation – that was really useful because we can bring back that knowledge to Scotland.”



“If we make good decisions [about how we incorporate the UNCRC], then other countries might look to us”

“This is a good opportunity to learn from and have strong ties to many other countries and look at different possible solutions-the more opinions and less bias, the better.”

These quotes have come from the children and young people who participated in Scottish Youth Parliament and Children's Parliament's consultations on incorporating the UNCRC.

Where Scotland meets the world

What did we do?

Eurochild

Together's Legal & Policy Manager participated in Eurochild's General Assembly in April 2021 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 participated in Child Rights Connect's General Assembly in May 2021, to learn from international partner organisations and bring examples of good practice from Scotland.

What have our members said?

"International stories about e.g. UN developments that affect UK/Scotland are helpful. So are stories that look at good practice abroad that we could learn from."

(E-newsletter Survey 2021)



Continuing to thrive & grow

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



What have children said about continuing to thrive and grow?

A clear thread running through many of Together and our members' projects in 2021-22 was children's recognition that some of their peers are at increased risk of not having their rights met. Children expressed frustration and the urgent need for adults to ensure all children have their rights upheld.

A frequent theme was the importance of individuals and organisations becoming anti-racist. Together has and continues to take steps to become an anti-racist organisation and to create inclusivity and diversity amongst its practice and membership.

"Racism hurts children and adults, and it happens too much today."

"When you learn about people who had their rights removed it deepens your understanding."

"Children want to be happy and want everyone to be treated equally."

"It's really important that Scotland be honest about what they've done to other people. Sometimes it seems as if Scotland hasn't done anything wrong in history, when they have, and especially for a lot of students they might know this but feel like since it isn't being talked about it's not important."

These quotes have come from the children and young people who have worked with Children's Parliament.

HIGHLIGHTS OF 2021-22

Continuing to thrive
and grow



To achieve this, we will:

- Ensure operational compliance and good governance in all we do.
- Develop our staff, volunteers, interns and trustees to ensure there is a strong foundation from which we can progress our mission.
- Assess and measure our impact to ensure we learn from successes and challenges and develop our approaches and strategies.



Continuing to thrive and grow

What did we do?

Impact and reach

Together continued to promote membership at every opportunity. Between 2021-22, we conducted a membership audit and removed inactive members. At the end of March 2022, Together had 467 members, including NGOs and professionals working with and for children and young people. The high number of members reflects work by Together's Membership Outreach Assistant 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 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 2021-22 surveys showed high levels of satisfaction and offered ideas on how the membership offer could be further improved. As a result, we are in the process of redesigning our e-newsletter and expect to launch this in 2022-23. 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.



Continuing to thrive and grow

What did we do?

Board of Trustees

Together's Board of Trustees oversees Together's work to ensure we meet Companies House and OSCR requirements. Throughout the year, staff and the Together Board continued to draft, implement and improve organisational policies and procedures to ensure best practice in the day-to-day and overall governance of the charity are followed.

One new trustee was elected at the 2021 AGM: Susan Hunter. Mary Glasgow was re-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 subgroup 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.

Fifty-seven percent of respondents to our 2022 Membership Survey said they would consider or possibly consider running to become a Trustee on Together's Board. We received feedback on how we could improve information about these roles and advertising. We are actioning these suggestions as we approach our next AGM.

Continuing to thrive and grow

What did we do?

Membership Taskgroup

Our Membership Taskgroup offered support in reviewing Together's membership policies and structure. The group consists of Together's Director, Development Manager, representatives from the Board and our Membership Outreach Officer prior to their departure. A review of Together's Memorandum and Articles of Association (MARTS) led to further research being conducted into the different structures which could be suitable for Together. This included exploring the possibility of becoming a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO). Together becoming a SCIO would mean that we will remain a charity registered with the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR), but will no longer be a charitable company registered with Companies House. This ensures that Together continues to be regulated as a Scottish Charity, but reduces our administrative work as we will no longer have to report to each Regulator in the different formats required. The final proposal will 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.



Continuing to thrive and grow

What did we do?

Staff team changes

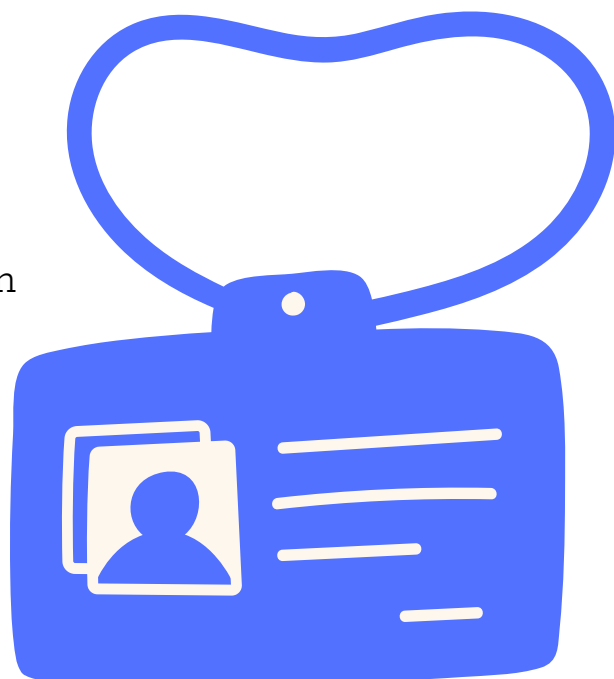
There have been several changes to the Together staff team between April 2021 and March 2022:

- In January 2022, Helen Schwittay resigned from her role as part-time Communications Intern.
- From July 2021, Sarah McDermott joined as full-time Development Manager.
- From August – December 2021, Mercy Tochukwu Christopher joined as a full-time Policy and Research Intern.
- From August 2021 – January 2022, Marianiki Vlachou joined as a part-time Participation Intern.
- From December 2021 – March 2022, Siti Zaleha Binti Mohd Ali joined as a full-time Policy and Research Intern.
- From September 2021, Jane Miller joined on secondment as a part-time Rights and Participation Lead.

Over summer 2021, Together also benefitted from the work of Siti Zaleha Binti Mohd Ali as part of her LLM in Human Rights at the University of Edinburgh.

From September 2021, Together benefitted from the services of Jacqui Dunbar, Participation Consultant.

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



Continuing to thrive and grow

What did we do?

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.
- SCVO communications and marketing training – Policy & Communications Assistant and Membership Outreach Assistant.
- Anti-racism training with IYS – all staff and some trustees.
- Anti-racism training with AREYC – all staff and some trustees.



Continuing to thrive and grow

What did we do?

Together's journey to becoming an anti-racist organisation



“

Encountering racism and hearing about racism against others had a clear negative impact on many of the children and young people's mental health. This manifested in various ways, including feelings of isolation, hurt, anger, loss of motivation; constant worrying; hypervigilance; unsettlement; and self-doubt. ”

The presence of structural racism means some children are more likely to experience breaches of their human rights. Together has embarked on a journey to challenge this and become an anti-racist organisation.

Together has created an Anti-racism Action Plan, which has been guided by our learning and experts from Black and People of Colour-led organisations. The Action Plan sets out different policies and procedures to address racist processes in recruitment, events, resources, board meetings and more. By taking this approach, Together hopes to encourage action on structural issues and institutional processes preventing racial equity from being realised. In doing so, we hope all children grow up healthy, happy and safe.

Continuing to thrive and grow

What have our members said?

Eighty-nine percent of respondents to our 2022 Membership Survey felt that Together engages sufficiently with its members. These engagement activities take place via various channels such as seminars, evidence gathering and partnership work. Some comments included:

“We are very grateful for the hard work and dedication of the Together team. The impact of your work is far reaching.”

“We are proud to be part of Together and what it is aiming to achieve. This is an important alliance if we are to achieve our children's rights-based goals.”

“Together is a valuable organisation that helps bring about positive change. And that the staff are very friendly, welcoming and accommodating to requests of help etc. Keep up the good work.”

“We think Together is amazing! You do fantastic work to progress children's rights in Scotland and seem to be able to work at so many levels. Thank you for all you do!”

“I really enjoy working with Together, who are an excellent, collaborative and inclusive organisation. I think Together's engagement is great and have really appreciated pieces of work like the state of children's rights report which I think is great publication.”



Structure, governance & management



STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE & MANAGEMENT



Legal structure

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.



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.



Organisation

The Charity's affairs are managed by regular meetings of the Trustees of the Company. Throughout 2021-22, the day-to-day activities of Together were carried out by the staff team. The staff team was also supported by a placement students, four interns, and a volunteer accountant.

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

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE & MANAGEMENT



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.

In 2021-2022 a minor deficit of £472 was taken from reserves. Together retains enough reserves to cover the three months essential operating costs as approved by the Trustees.



STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE & MANAGEMENT



Risk management

A comprehensive Risk Register has been created and forms a standing item for the Board of Trustees. 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.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE & MANAGEMENT



Good governance structures and boards:

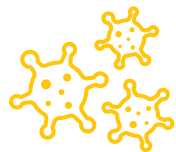
Trustees are attentive to relevant communications and scrutinise all Board papers. Board meetings are held quarterly Board meetings with accurate information provided by Together's Director to inform quality decision making. The Executive and Finance Subgroups meet 3 monthly at a minimum with at least 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 part-time 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 regular check-ins and 1-1s between staff and Director with relevant issues explored. The Trustees conduct a three-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. Every step is taken to ensure that training and support meets the needs of the role.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE & MANAGEMENT



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.



STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE & MANAGEMENT

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.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE & MANAGEMENT

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.



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

September 2022

Mary Glasgow
Chairperson

Financial reports & accounts



INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT & FINANCES

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. 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

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,

Monifieth

Dundee DD5 4NE

Charity Statement of Financial Activities (including income and expenditure account) for year ending 31 March 2022					
	Note	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds 2022	Total Funds 2021
Income:					
Donation	14	12,699	275,478	288,177	153,290
Investments	12	0	0	0	0
Other income		0	0	0	175
Total income:		12,699	275,478	288,177	153,465
Expenditure:					
Charitable activities	15,17,18	13,171	275,478	288,649	147,478
Governance Costs	16	0	0	0	(583)
Total expenditure:		13,171	275,478	288,649	146,895
Net income/(expenditure) and net movement in funds for the year		(472)	0	(472)	6,570
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward		72,304	0	72,304	65,734
Total funds carried forward		71,832	0	71,832	72,304

Balance Sheet as at 31st March 2022					
	Note		2022		2021
Fixed Assets					
Tangible fixed assets			0		0
			0		0
Current Assets					
Debtors	20			19,000	
Cash at bank and in hand		83,239		57,667	
		83,239		76,667	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	21	11,407		4,363	
Net Current Assets			71,832		72,304
Total Net Assets			71,832		72,304
Funds					
Restricted funds			0		0
Unrestricted funds			71,832		72,304
Total Funds			71,832		72,304

NOTES ON 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

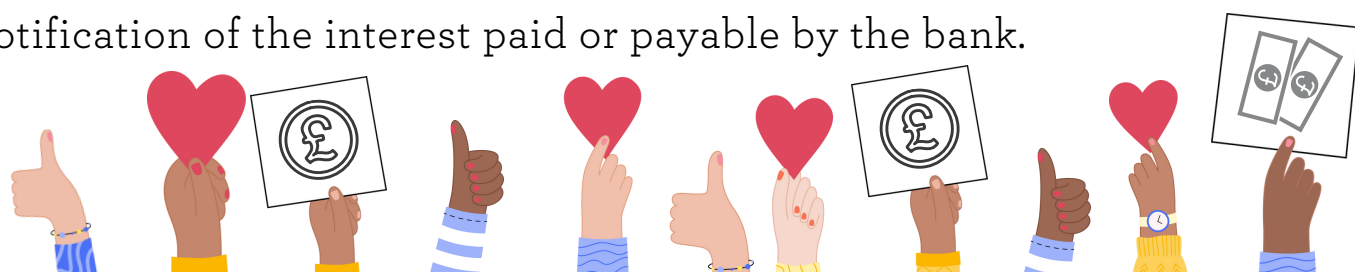
The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities published on 16th July 2014, the Financial 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.



NOTES ON ACCOUNTS

5 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.

NOTES ON ACCOUNTS

6 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.

7 Debtors

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

8 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.

9 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.



NOTES ON ACCOUNTS

10 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.

11 Legal status of 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.

12 Investment income

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

13 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.



NOTES ON ACCOUNTS

14 Income from donations

The income from donations was £288,177 (2020-21: 153,290). Of this, £12,699 was unrestricted (2020-21: £14,467). 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	2021-22	2020-21	
Membership donations	12,699	14,467	Unrestricted income
Scottish Government (Core)	137,00	77,943	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
Scottish Government (Consortium)	78,689	0	Project funding for the Children & Young People's Interim Consortium (pilot)
Children's Parliament	4,704	0	Project funding to support Children's Parliament's Education Reform consultation with children and young people for Scottish Government
University of Edinburgh	5,485	0	Project funding to support Observatory on Children's Human Rights UNCRC Theory of Change project.
Parenting Across Scotland	1,100	0	Consultancy for research briefings on the UNCRC and parentings
Brexit Project	0	5,270	Children's Panel on Europe in partnership with Children in Scotland (funded by Scottish Government)
Scottish Government Human Rights Taskforce	0	2,200	Project funding for hosting webinars and creating consultation resources for children and young people
EHRiC	0	450	Project funding to support production of child friendly consultation for UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Bill
Children and Young People Commissioner Scotland	0	3,200	Project funding for Child Rights Impact Evaluation work with East Lothian Council and Children's Parliament
Edinburgh University	0	1,260	2022-21 Internships
	288,177	153,290	

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.

NOTES ON ACCOUNTS

15 Analysis of expenditure on charitable activities

Expenditure on charitable activities was £288,649 (2020-21: £147,478).

Of this, £13,171 was unrestricted (2020-21: £8,072) and £275,478 was restricted (2020-21: £139,406).

Expenditure	2021-22	2020-21	
Marketing & promotions	2,805	1,028	Includes website and printing of reports
Office costs	4,468	9,970	Includes rent, telephone, stationery, postage, and IT equipment and furniture for all staff
Professional fees	554	542	Includes insurance
Travel	1,674	-263	Includes all staff travel and subsistence, as well as refunds due to COVID
Events	20,124	174	2020-21 includes cost for translations at online webinars 2021-22 includes speaker fees and Consortium related expenses including remuneration of children and partners
Staff costs	243,521	132,749	Includes salaries, employer's NI and pension, and working from home allowance 2021-22 includes consultancy charges
Support costs	15,503	3,278	Includes payroll, recruitment, training, bank charges, subscriptions and volunteer expenses
	228,649	147,478	

NOTES ON ACCOUNTS

16 Analysis of expenditure on governance

Expenditure on governance costs was £nil (2020-21: £-583). Of this, £nil was unrestricted (2020-21: £nil) and £nil was restricted (2020-21: £-583). This comprised of the following costs:

Expenditure	2021-22	2020-21	
Trustee travel expenses	0	(583)	Travel to trustee and subgroup meetings
	0	(583)	

No remuneration was paid to Trustees during the year. Throughout the year, online conferencing has kept Trustee expenses to a minimum.

17 Analysis of expenditure on staff

Expenditure on staffing was £243,521 (2020-21: £132,749). Of this, £nil was unrestricted (2020-21: £nil) and £243,521 was restricted (2020-21: £132,749).

	2021-22	2020-21
Salaries	221,211	120,220
Employer National Insurance	12,487	6,491
Pension	9,823	6,038
	243,521	132,749

NOTES ON ACCOUNTS

18 Staff numbers

The average monthly number of full-time equivalent employees (including paid interns) during the year was 6.7 (2020-21: 3.9).

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	2021-22	2020-21
Scottish Government	0	19,000
	0	19,000

21 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

Creditor	2021-22	2020-21
Accruals	5,909	0
PAYE	4,519	2,767
Mastercard	1,106	1,478
Accruals (Aviva)	-2,591	-2,591
St James’s Place (Pension)	0	297
NEST pension	763	417
Trade Creditors	1,701	1,997
	11,407	4,365



THANK YOU!

A huge thank you to all the members, supporters and individuals who have supported Together throughout this period to achieve so much.

Thank you to the pupils of Sciennes Primary School, Edinburgh and Children's Parliament for creating the artwork found within this report.