



Together

Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights

(limited by Guarantee)

Report and Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31st March 2013

Registered charity number: SC029403
Registered company number: SC199725

Registered Office:
Princes House
5 Shandwick Place
Edinburgh EH2 4RG

www.togetherscotland.org.uk

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Reference and Administrative Information

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

Charity Registration Number: SC029403

Company Number: SC199725

Registered Office: Princes House
5 Shandwick Place
Edinburgh
EH2 4RG

Telephone: 0131 229 3666

Email: info@togetherscotland.org.uk

Website: www.togetherscotland.org.uk

Trustees: Chair: Colin Morrison
Treasurer: Zoe Picton-Howell

Board Members: Alex Cole-Hamilton (Vice Chair)
Brian Donnelly (to March 2013)
Susan Elsley
Kate Higgins
Selwyn McCausland
Kate Sanford
Claire Telfer

Company Secretary: Juliet Harris

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

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

Volunteer Bookkeeper: David Simpson
Volunteer Accountant: Ian J Douglas

Report of the Trustees 2012-13

The Trustees submit their Report and Financial Statements for the period ended 31st March 2013.

1. Objectives and Activities

The Charity was incorporated as a company limited by guarantee on 8th September 1999, to further the education of the community on rights of children and young people as defined by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). Donations and membership payments have been received throughout the year from organisations and private individuals. The Charity's affairs are managed by regular meetings of the Trustees of the Company. Throughout 2012-13, the day to day activities of Together were carried out by a full time National Development Officer and part-time Administrator (up to November 2012). From November 2012, the role of Administrator was replaced by a temporary part-time Policy and Communications Assistant. The staff team were supported by four part-time interns, a volunteer bookkeeper and volunteer accountant. The Board of Trustees provided strategic direction and oversight to the charity.

2. Structure, Governance and Management

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

3. Reserves Policy

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

4. Risk Review

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

5. Review of Activities

As outlined in its 2012-14 Business Plan, Together's mission is to work towards all children in Scotland being able to enjoy their rights according to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and other human rights conventions. Throughout 2012-13, Together has worked towards this mission through three key aims:

1. Promoting awareness and understanding of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).
2. Monitor implementation of the UNCRC.
3. Report on progress on the implementation of the UNCRC and push for full implementation.

Together was able to take forward these aims with funding from the Scottish Government, continuing to employ a National Development Officer and part-time Administrator (up to November 2012) and Policy and Communications Assistant (from November 2012).

Together moved to a new office at Children in Scotland in January 2013, and is thankful to Save the Children for accommodating Together for the previous 3 years.

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

5.1. Promoting awareness and understanding of the UNCRC

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

Together members and supporters

Together has continued to promote membership at every opportunity. In the last year, we increased our number of members and supporters from 179 to 210. These members represented a range of special interest groups and ranged from international, national and local NGOs through to after-school clubs, child rights officers and academics. Throughout 2012-13, the National Development Officer consulted with members and supporters to explore how they could get more involved in the promotion and monitoring of the UNCRC in Scotland.

Together e-newsletter

Together's fortnightly e-newsletter has proved a success with members and supporters and now has over 870 subscribers (an increase of 70 on the previous year). News, resources, information and events, all with a child rights focus, are submitted by children's organisations across Scotland and occasionally internationally. The most well-read articles tend to be specific child-rights research and resources relating to Scotland.

Children & Young People Bill consultation (Summer 2012)

Together produced a briefing on the Children and Young People (Scotland) Bill that was distributed to all members and supporters, and uploaded onto the website. The National Development Officer presented an overview of the briefing at a number of seminars including through a working group convened in partnership with Children in Scotland.

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

Contribution to groups and networks

Together continues to contribute to the Cross Party Group for children and young people; the Children's Sector Forum and the informal Children's Policy Officer Network (CPON), by raising a child-rights perspective to Scottish policy issues. Together also contributed towards the strategic planning of the Children are Unbeatable! and has continued to work in partnership to explore legislative opportunities through which children could be given equal protection from assault.

Scotland's National Action Plan for Human Rights

Together published a briefing in March 2013 to inform responses to the Scottish Human Rights Commission consultation on Scotland's National Action Plan (SNAP) for human rights. The briefing specifically looked at consistent violations of children's rights in Scotland as identified through Together's annual *State of Children's Rights* reports. Collating information from a variety of sources, the briefing aimed to inform responses to the SNAP consultation (of which the deadline was the 29th March) in order to bring together the collective voice of the children's sector and mainstream children's rights within SNAP.

Together's SNAP briefing was used as a basis for discussion at the CELCIS roundtable event on 13th March 2013, which Together attended. Discussions and debates focused on the key issues facing looked after children, young people and care leavers in Scotland.

Conference and events

The National Development Officer participated as a key speaker at the '*Developing the Scottish Human Rights Agenda: Compliance, good practice and legal challenge*' conference. The theme of the presentation was "*Learning the lessons from Do the Right Thing - Scotland's UNCRC action plan*". Delegates at the conference were mainly local authority staff and those working in education and health. Together also participated in the Child Rights Connect AGM, with the National Development Officer providing a Scotland input to the NGO Group.

Public bodies discussion event

In June 2012, Together hosted a small discussion group for heads of public bodies in Scotland around the Children and Young People (Scotland) Bill consultation. The discussion group explored the issues raised by public bodies (and surrounding public bodies) in the responses to the Scottish Government's consultation on the Rights of Children and Young People bill and included a range of representatives from ADSW, ACPOS, Education Scotland and the NHS. The event considered the

issues that emerged from responses to the consultation and key points were used to inform Together's response to the Bill consultation.

Incorporation of the UNCRC - legal discussion group

Together hosted a discussion group to explore the legal arguments made in the responses to the Scottish Government's consultation on the Rights of Children and Young People bill. Submissions to consultation from legal experts highlighted a range of views on the proposed content of the Bill. The aim of the discussion was to clarify some of the key issues identified in the consultation responses and explore the legal concerns raised. The discussion group explored the various pathways through which the Scottish Government could most effectively realise the rights in the UNCRC for children in Scotland.

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

Children and Young People (Scotland) Bill

In September 2012, Together made its formal response to the Scottish Government's Children and Young People Bill consultation. The response was based on the views of Together members gathered through a series of meetings, events and seminars. Together's response broadly welcomed the proposals made in the Bill and stated that incorporation of the UNCRC would best achieve its aim to 'make rights real' for children and young people. It encouraged stronger duties on Ministers and public bodies and the definition of 'wellbeing' to be contained within the overarching framework of children's rights, amongst other recommendations.

National Parenting Strategy

Together worked with the Scottish Government on the final draft of the National Parenting Strategy to ensure it clearly reflected its relationship with children's rights and the UNCRC. The strategy was launched in October 2012 and clearly provides examples of how the UNCRC recognises and supports parents. Together provided input to Scotland's Children's Sector Forum to consider examples of how the strategy is implemented in practice.

5.2. Promote and monitor implementation of the UNCRC across local and national government

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

State of Children's Rights report

In September 2012, Together launched its third *State of Children's Rights* report, providing a non-government perspective on the extent to which children in Scotland are able to enjoy the rights enshrined in the UNCRC. It reflected on the progress made over the previous year since the publication of Together's 2011 *State of Children's Rights* report, and discussed what progress has been made and where further efforts are needed. The report drew from evidence gathered through desk research, through Together's *State of Children's Rights* seminars and from an online survey

completed by 79 children's organisations working across a wide range of issues including looked after children, children of prisoners and additional support needs. The report highlighted that children's organisations welcomed the clear commitment from the Scottish Government to enable children to realise their rights under the UNCRC and to improve its implementation across Scotland. However, the report continued to identify a gap between policy and practice. Issues that were highlighted included patchy implementation of the UNCRC across professions and public bodies; little evidence to show how Scottish Government legislation is delivering real outcomes for children and the need to develop a comprehensive strategy to increase knowledge and understanding of the UNCRC throughout society so that its principles are known to and practised by all. Recommendations included in the report have been brought to the Scottish Government through the Scottish Children's Rights Implementation Monitoring Group (SCRIMG) meetings (see 5.3).

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

www.togetherscotland.org.uk

Together's website provides a growing online resource library which contains a wide range of resources related to children's rights on a local, national and international level, provided by Together's members and partners. This includes the latest research, training materials, news and best practice on children's rights. In the past year, additional features have been added at the request of Together members, including a page dedicated to the Universal Periodic Review (containing an overview of the process, briefings and submissions). On average, the number of visitors to the website has remained constant over the past year at approximately 215 every week, which is an increase of 45 visitors per week since the previous year. The length of time that visitors spend on the website has remained consistent at around 3 minutes.

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

Together has worked alongside IPA, Play Scotland, Creative Scotland and Scottish Out of School Care Network to maximise the impact of the forthcoming General Comment on Article 31 for children in Scotland. This has involved supporting the organisation of 'A Richer Understanding of Article 31' conference, held in March 2013, at which the National Development Officer hosted a plenary session on policy and implementation of Article 31.

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

State of Children's Rights seminars

Together consulted widely with its membership through a series of *State of Children's Rights* seminars. These included over 100 professionals working with and for children and were held in Dundee, Glasgow and Dumfries. Feedback from the seminars indicated that 97% of delegates rated the overall impression of the event as excellent or good, and 88% of delegates felt that in relation to their job, they would find what they learned from the seminar extremely, or very useful. Together used learning from the seminar programme to inform its 2012 *State of Children's Rights* report.

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

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

Scottish Children's Rights Implementation Monitoring group

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

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

In 2012-13, there were 3 meetings of SCRIMG. These meetings drew the attention of the Scottish Government to specific issues raised through Together's *State of Children's Rights* reports including: gypsy traveller site management; child trafficking; age assessment of asylum seeking children; participation and advocacy and banning mosquito devices. In addition, the meetings discussed the Scottish Government's approach to the next reporting round to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child. Together and SCCYP highlighted the need for the Scottish Government to explore children's experiences of realising their rights. As a result, the Scottish Government commissioned desk research to look at children and young people's experiences of issues relating to the implementation of the UNCRC. This was published in June 2013 and will be used to inform the Scottish Government's report to the UK government on UNCRC implementation.

Rights of the Child UK (ROCK)

The National Development Officer is Vice-Chair of the ROCK coalition, a group of voluntary organisations and individuals from across the UK pushing for the full incorporation of the UNCRC into domestic law. Work undertaken in the last year by the coalition has included drawing together learning from across the UK to respond to the Children and Young People (Scotland) Bill consultation and the Scottish Human Rights Commission's consultation on a National Human Rights Action Plan for Scotland.

UNCRC reporting

Together has begun work with partner child rights alliances across the UK to begin planning for the next reporting round to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child. To date, this work has involved considering how to coordinate work across the UK and how children and young people can be meaningfully involved.

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

Universal Periodic Review (UPR)

Together produced a briefing to inform its members of the UPR process and how to get involved in Together's efforts to raise children's rights at the UK review in May 2012. Working in collaboration with members (including Save the Children and Families Outside) Together produced specific briefings on children of prisoners, child poverty and incorporation of the UNCRC into law. These briefings were successfully used to ensure recommendations were made to the UK Government in these areas during the UK UPR review. Following these recommendations, Together organised a meeting between key member organisations and the Scottish Government to discuss how progress could be made to implement the recommendations. Together wrote to Roseanna Cunningham (on behalf of the Children are Unbeatable! alliance) to express disappointment that the UPR recommendation from four states to end the corporal punishment of children was not accepted. Together has been working in partnership with its members during the first quarter of 2013, to assess progress towards the UPR recommendations in preparation for the Scottish submission to the UK's mid-term UPR report in 2013.

5.4. Establish & maintain functional governance structure

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

Trustees

Kate Higgins of Children 1st was elected to the Board of Together in September 2012. The former Chair, Elizabeth Morrison, alongside former Board member Kelly Bayes, were invited by the incoming Board to return as Observers. Together's board brings a range of skills and expertise ranging from academics to policy officers and Directors of national NGOs. Board meetings are held every two months, and subgroups have been established when needed to help focus expertise on certain issues. Together has an ongoing Finance Subgroup to monitor finance and an interim Strategy Subgroup to advise the Board on business planning and broader strategic issues.

Policies and procedures

Throughout the year, staff and the Together Board have continued to draft and revise organisational policies and procedures to ensure best practice in the day-to-day and overall governance of the charity are followed. New policies introduced throughout the year include a maternity leave policy, maternity rights and pay and a communications sign off procedure.

6. Responsibilities of the Trustees

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

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

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

Basis of accounting

For the year ending 31 March 2013 the company was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

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

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

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

By order of the Board



**Colin Morrison, Chair
September 2013**

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

I report on the accounts of the company for the year ended 31st March 2013, which are set out on pages 14 and 15.

Respective responsibilities of Trustees and examiner

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

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

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

Basis of independent examiner's report

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

Independent examiner's statement

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

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



Mairi McReynolds FCCA
September 2013

Statement of Financial Activity as at 31st March 2013

	Unrestricted Funds 2013	Restricted Funds 2013	Total fund 2013	Total funds 2012
Incoming Resources				
Incoming Resources from generated income:				
Voluntary Income	1350	78,012	79,362	66,800
Investment Income	0	0	0	0
Other incoming resources		0	0	0
Total Incoming Resources	1,350	78,012	79,362	66,800
Resources Expended				
Charitable activities	0	76,068	76,068	64,806
Governance costs	0	0	0	0
Total Resources Expended	0	76,068	76,068	64,806
Net Incoming/Outgoing Resources	1,350	1,944	3,294	1,994
Transfer between Funds	0	0	0	0
Net Movement in Funds	1,350	1,944	3,294	1,994
Total Funds @ 31 March 2012	7,533	1,870	9,403	7,409
Total Funds @ 31 March 2013	8,883	3,814	12,697	9,403



Mairi McReynolds FCCA

Notes:

No remuneration was paid to Directors during the year.

No expenses were paid to Directors during the year.

Together

Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights

Balance Sheet as at 31st March 2013

	2013	2012
Fixed Assets		
Tangible Fixed Assets	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
	-	-
Current Assets		
Debtors		
Cash at Bank and in hand	<u>14,248</u>	<u>10,396</u>
	14,248	10,396
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	<u>1,551</u>	<u>993</u>
Net Current Assets	<u>12,697</u>	<u>9,403</u>
Total Net Assets	<u>12,697</u>	<u>9,403</u>
Funds		
Restricted Funds	3,814	1,870
Unrestricted funds	<u>8,883</u>	<u>7,533</u>
Total Funds	12,697	9,403

Mairi McReynolds

Mairi McReynolds FCCA