



**Together**

**Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights**

**Report and Financial Statements  
for the Year Ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016**

Registered charity number: SC029403  
Registered company number: SC199725

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

[www.togetherscotland.org.uk](http://www.togetherscotland.org.uk)  
@together\_sacr

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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: Rosebery House  
9 Haymarket Terrace  
Edinburgh EH12 5EZ

Telephone: 0131 337 9015

Email: info@togetherscotland.org.uk

Website: www.togetherscotland.org.uk

Twitter: @together\_sacr

Trustees: Chair: Fiona Jones  
Treasurer: John Ryan  
Vice Chair: Susan Elsley (observer)

Board Members: Mark Ballard  
Susan Hunter  
Jordan Linden (to 10 May 2016)  
Chloe Riddell  
Chelsea Stinson  
Claire Telfer  
Samantha Whyte

Observers: Rozanne Chorlton (observer)  
Maria Galli (observer)  
Louise Hill (observer)

Company Secretary: Juliet Harris

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

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

Volunteer Accountant Ian J Douglas

## Chair's report

This has been an exciting year for Together, both in its development as an organisation and in its work towards its vision that all children in Scotland enjoy their rights according to the UNCRC.

We welcomed new expertise on to our board, with the addition of new board members Chloe Riddell, Susan Hunter and Jordan Linden, and observers Maria Galli and Louise Hill. Our membership increased substantially. In addition to NGOs and professionals working with and for children, a number of public bodies have become members, ensuring our membership reflects a broad cross section of services whose work impacts on children and young people.

In July 2015, we submitted the NGO alternative report for Scotland to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child. As well as reviewing progress and gaps in implementation of the UNCRC since the last review in 2008, our report made recommendations to influence the 2016 UK Concluding Observations, due in the summer of 2016, following the UN Committee's periodic review of the UK. As part of that review, we were delighted to be co-leaders of the visit to Scotland in September 2015 of Ms Amal Aldoseri, Vice-Chairperson of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child. Together played a central role across the nations of the UK in effectively and successfully co-ordinating the Pre-Sessional meeting of NGO alliances, children and young people, NHRIs and Children's Commissioners with the UN Committee.

Our expertise is being sought more widely than ever. We have been involved in the Working Group for the Guidance on the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 and the Advisory Group on the Minimum Age of Criminal Responsibility. Together has worked in close partnerships on the Scotland's National Action for Human Rights (SNAP), on advisory groups on Justice and Safety, and on International Obligations. We were closely involved in the development of a Child Rights Manifesto ahead of the 2016 Scottish Parliament elections.

We were delighted to have secured funding from the Castansa Trust and Foundation Scotland to host Together's State of Children's Rights seminars in 2016, which explored the extent to which children and young people across Scotland are able to realise their rights as enshrined in the UNCRC.

Outcomes from our work are increasingly evident. These include: a Scottish Government Consultation on recommending the raising of the Minimum Age of Criminal Responsibility; the introduction of the Child Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA) model at Scottish Government level; a recommendation from the UK Joint Committee on Human Rights that they conduct an assessment of the impact of devolution on human rights; and discussions with the UN Committee around areas of particular concern to our members, including children's rights human rights protections in law, incorporation of the UNCRC, child poverty, educational attainment, equal protection and mental health. We are looking forward to strong Concluding Observations by the UN Committee as a result of our engagement with them.

Funding remains a challenge, reflecting the experience and struggle of many of our members. Our Scottish Government grant has been frozen at its current level for 4 years. We are extremely

fortunate to have a dedicated and committed staff team who continue to deliver a very high quality of work in a challenging environment. None of this would be possible without the support of our members, supporters and partners across national and local government, and of course the office of the Children and Young People's Commissioner for Scotland, and the Scottish Human Rights Commission. We are most grateful to all of them.

We are looking forward to further big successes in 2016-17 and some key Children's Rights challenges being addressed, including working with Scottish Government in relation to taking forward the new Concluding Observations by the UN Committee and the implementation of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.

Fiona Jones, Chair

## Report of the Trustees 2015-16

The Trustees are pleased to present their annual Directors Report, together with the Financial Statements of the charity for the year ending 31 March 2016. These are also prepared to meet the requirements for a Directors' report and Accounts for Companies Act purposes.

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

### 1. Objectives and Activities

The Charity was incorporated as a company limited by guarantee on 8th September 1999, to further the education of the community on rights of children and young people as defined by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

The vision that shapes our strategic direction is that all children in Scotland enjoy their rights according to the UNCRC and other human rights conventions. Throughout 2015-16, Together has worked towards this vision through five strategic aims:

1. Ensure our members get value from Together and are able to be involved, consulted and influence our work to progress children's rights.
2. Progress the implementation of children's rights at a local and national level through the provision of support and expertise.
3. Provide robust monitoring of UNCRC implementation.
4. Be recognised by our membership, decision-makers and the wider media as the informed voice that advocates for children's rights in Scotland.
5. Continue to be an effective organisation which supports staff and volunteers and ensures quality and value for money.

Together relies on grants and membership payments to cover our operating costs throughout the year. Together was able to take forward its strategic aims with funding from the Scottish Government, Early Intervention Fund, Adopt an Intern, the Castansa Trust, Foundation Scotland and donations from its membership. Funding from the Scottish Government enabled Together to continue employing a Director and part-time Membership and Events Assistant. The Early Intervention Fund enabled Together to continue employing a Policy and Communications Officer. Together received funding from Adopt An Intern to employ a Development Intern for three months between July and September 2015.

## 2. Review of Activities

During this period, Together's strategic aims were taken forward through the following activities:

### 2.1. Ensure members get value from Together and are able to be involved, consulted and influence work to progress children's rights.

*Continue to increase membership base to make it broadly representative of the children's sector.*

Together has continued to promote membership at every opportunity. In the last year, 74 new members joined Together, including 13 NGOs, 26 public bodies and 35 professionals working with and for children and young people. The high number of public bodies reflects the work undertaken by Together to try to engage wider service providers whose work impacts on children and young people.

*Keep up-to-date and fulfil information needs of members.*

Our annual membership survey revealed that 98% of respondents believe that Together fulfils its aim of providing relevant and useful information on children's rights and the UNCRC either very well (60%) or well (38%).

Together aims to publish its consultation responses at least 2 weeks in advance of the deadline to meet the information needs of members and enable them to draw from Together's expertise in their own responses. In the past year, Together has published seven consultation responses to provide briefings to our members. The 2016 Membership Survey revealed that 54% of respondents access these briefings either monthly or more regularly. 85% of respondents stated that these briefings are very useful or useful in informing their own consultation responses.

Funding was secured from the Castansa Trust and Foundation Scotland to host Together's State of Children's Rights seminars in 2016. Two seminars took place during March 2016 in Aberdeen and Glasgow with a further seminar held in Edinburgh in April. These events were attended by over 180 professionals working with or for children and young people, including representatives from children's organisations and public bodies, and in areas such as health, education and social work. The seminar programme explored the extent to which children and young people across Scotland are able to realise their rights as enshrined in the UNCRC. A report of the findings from the discussion groups was produced for each seminar. These are being used to inform Together's 2016 State of Children's Rights report, due to be published in November 2016. The seminars received excellent feedback and encouraged a number of new members to join Together. Evaluations revealed that 73% of delegates rated the seminars as being 'excellent', with the remaining 27% stating that they were 'good'. There was no neutral or negative feedback from the events.

## **2.2. Progress the implementation of children's rights at a local and national level through the provision of support and expertise.**

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

In the past year, Together has provided a UNCRC-focussed input into the following Scottish Government/Scottish Parliament consultations:

- Pregnancy and Parenthood Strategy: Scottish Government consultation
- Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014: Consultation on Complaints Concerning Functions Relating to the Named Person and Child's Plan: Scottish Government consultation
- Draft Statutory Guidance for Parts 4, 5 and 18 (Section 96) and related draft orders of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014
- Carers (Scotland) Bill
- UNCRPD Draft Delivery Plan 2016-2020: Scottish Government consultation.
- Human Rights Inquiry: Scottish Parliament consultation

Furthermore, we have played a role in maximising the impact of the Children & Young People (Scotland) Act in terms of progressing children's UNCRC rights. Throughout the passage of the Bill through Parliament, Together took a key role advocating for strong child rights provisions and raising awareness and understanding of the UNCRC among our membership, parliamentarians and government officials. Although the final Act was not as strong as it could have been, it included vital provisions on public bodies and on Ministers to consider the views of children in line with UNCRC Article 12 and to raise awareness of the UNCRC in line with Article 42. The use of Child Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessments (CRWIA) at a national government level commenced in June 2015 and officials are receiving training on the UNCRC. Together played a key role in supporting the development of the CRWIA and has advised on the drafting of strong guidance for Part 1 and Part 3 of the Act for public bodies.

At a UK level, Together has submitted evidence on the implementation of children's rights in Scotland to the UK Joint Committee on Human Rights (JCHR) Inquiry into UK UNCRC compliance. As a result, the JCHR recommended that the new Committee conduct an assessment of the impact of devolution on human rights. Furthermore, Together was invited to meet with the JCHR on their visit to Scotland in January 2016 to inform them on Together's members experiences of UNCRC implementation in Scotland and give their views on the potential Bill of Rights. The UK Minister for Justice also requested a meeting with Together's Director, at which she stressed Together's members view that any repeal of the Human Rights Act would be damaging to children's rights protection in law and that there should be a strengthening of children's rights in law, rather than a regression.

Together has been secretariat to Scotland's Children's Rights Implementation monitoring group throughout the year, convening two meetings: one in June 2015 and one in January 2016. This is a three-way meeting including Together, the Scottish Government and the Children and Young



People's Commissioner for Scotland. The meetings are chaired by Together's Chair and minuted by the Policy and Communications Officer. Meetings have taken forward actions relating to the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014: commencement and guidance; UK examination by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child; May 2016 Concluding Observations; SCRIMG Terms of Reference and reporting to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child. Together has ensured that members are kept up-to-date and informed of discussions by publishing the agenda, minutes and a one-page summary of each meeting on the website and highlighting the latest developments in it e-newsletter.

***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***

In the year to date, Together staff have led a number of presentations and workshops to promote and monitor the implementation of the UNCRC in Scotland. These have taken place at the following conferences, seminars and roundtables:

*Scotland's National Action Plan (SNAP) for Human Rights seminar: reporting and implementation of international human rights obligations – 21st April*

A session to provide an overview of the Scottish Government's current approach towards implementing and reporting on international equality and human rights treaties, in relation to SNAP commitments about establishing more effective cross-governmental coordination of international treaty reporting and implementation and building the capacity of civil society to engage in the treaty review process. Together presented at the session to provide an overview of monitoring and reporting on children's rights and the UNCRC.

*Scottish Women's Aid Participation Network launch – 22nd May*

Together's Director presented on the UNCRC Article 12 in the context of domestic abuse and took part in a lively question and answer session on a panel with Women's Aid workers.

*Education Scotland's Political Literacy conversation day – 28th August*

Together's Policy & Communications Officer presented the key themes from Together's NGO report to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, outlining how the UNCRC can be used as a framework to assess political literacy and the development of professional learning resources. Delegates included staff from Education Scotland as well as range of professionals working in the areas of education, media and politics.

*Royal Caledonian Education Trust – 7th September*

Together's Policy & Communications Officer was invited to present to the Board of the Royal Caledonian Education Trust to discuss opportunities for working in partnership to further the rights of children with family in the armed forces. This followed on from a successful connection made at a Together seminar which resulted in children with family in the armed forces being included in the report to the UN Committee for the first time.

#### *Scottish Child Law Centre – 11th September*

Together's Policy & Communications Officer deputised for the Director to speak on children's rights and the youth justice system at the annual Scottish Child Law Centre conference. Delegates were mainly lawyers but also included children and young people and policy professionals.

#### *Strategic litigation network – 21st September*

Together's Director made a presentation on the key children's rights issues in Scotland, as highlighted in Together's alternative report to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child.

#### *Aberdeen City Council Integrated Children's Services conference – 29th September*

Together hosted three workshops focussing on the public bodies reporting duties in the Children & Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 and a self-reflection activity on how practitioners can take forward the UNCRC General Principles in their work.

#### *Scottish Youth Parliament – 23rd October*

Together's Director presented at the launch of the Scottish Youth Parliament's report, 'It's not a choice: An analysis of young people's perceptions of poverty and rights'. This followed on from ongoing support from Together to the Scottish Youth Parliament in researching and compiling the report. The Director's presentation focussed on how the report can be used to challenge policy and legislation at the Westminster level and ensure that young people's voices are heard.

#### *YouthLink Scotland annual conference – 4th November*

Together hosted an interactive workshop titled 'Children's Rights and Youthwork: Going Beyond Article 12' which set out how practitioners could take forward a child rights approach to their work.

#### *PINS conference - 'What Does Inclusion Mean in 2015?' – 12th November*

Together's Director made a presentation and took questions and answers on why educational inclusion is a children's rights issue. Delegates were primarily teachers and those working in an early years setting.

#### *Scotland's National Action Plan for Human Rights: UN Treaties Workshop - 17th November*

Together's Director made a presentation at this workshop for NGOs and civil society to share experience and expertise in UN reporting and to develop partnerships with organisations focusing on specific UN Treaties such as CEDAW and ICESCR. This will help to ensure that children's human rights are taken into account across the range of UN treaty reporting mechanisms in Scotland.

#### *Cross Party Group for Children and Young People - 18th November*

Together's Director made a presentation to launch the Child Rights Manifesto. This included an introduction to the Manifesto; the political and social context of implementing children's rights in Scotland and how MSPs can apply a child rights-based approach to ensure that children's rights are protected, respected and fulfilled.

### *Scottish National Action Plan Human Rights Innovation Forum – 9th December*

Together's Director presented at, and led a workshop on, incorporation of international treaties into law as part of the annual SNAP conference at Dynamic Earth. In this workshop, the Director worked with the Welsh Government and other civil society organisations to compare progress towards incorporation between different UK nations and across treaty bodies.

### *Attendance and contribution to other seminars*

In addition to taking a lead role at these events, Together's staff have attended and contributed to seminars and conferences including the What Next for Human Rights? conference, SCVO Human Rights roundtable, Scottish Recovery Network's Rights for Life Declaration and Agenda for Change, Glasgow Human Rights Network, UN Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination roundtable consultation, Education Scotland's Recognising and Realising Children's Rights evaluation roundtable and Education Scotland's political literacy roundtable discussion.

### *Membership of working groups*

Together's staff team are also active members of the Cross Party Group for Children and Young People, Children's Sector Forum, A Richer Understanding of Article 31 working group, Children are Unbeatable and on the steering group of for Scotland's Disabled Children. Together's Director sits on two action groups for Scotland's National Action Plan for Human Rights (SNAP): the Justice and Safety advisory group and the International Obligations advisory group. In the past year, this involvement has prompted a focus on matters including incorporation of international treaties, developing links between different treaty reporting bodies, and has ensured Together's members have been represented at roundtables covering themes such as access to justice, trafficking, juvenile justice and hate crime. She is also the Chair of the Rights of the Child UK coalition, which draws together children's organisations across the UK to share expertise and developments to progress the implementation of the UNCRC and sits on the Strategic Litigation Network.

### *Scottish Government working groups*

Together's Director has also played a role in the development of guidance for the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, contributing to working groups on Parts 1 and 3 of the guidance and adding additional support to the development of the guidance for Parts 4, 5 and 18 of the Act following the initial consultation. Furthermore, she has taken a key role in bringing a rights-based focus to the Advisory Group on the Minimum Age of Criminal Responsibility, leading - alongside the Children's Commissioner for Scotland - on a Child Rights and Wellbeing Assessment that has strongly influenced the Advisory Group's report. Together's Director was also involved in the scoping study on a proposed 'centre for excellence for a child's wellbeing in Scotland', meeting with the Scottish Government-commissioned consultant and following up by sharing information on similar European-level initiatives.

Together's Director provides an annual lecture to the University of Edinburgh's Childhood Studies postgraduate Masters on children's rights in Scotland. The excellent feedback from this lecture has reinforced the close relationship between the University of Edinburgh and Together, through which students are made aware of Together's internship opportunities.

### 2.3. Provide robust monitoring of UNCRC implementation.

#### ***Identify and tackle key obstacles/levers of change to improve implementation of the UNCRC***

Together submitted the NGO report for Scotland to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child on the 1<sup>st</sup> July 2015. This report reviews progress and gaps in implementation of the UNCRC since the last review in 2008, and provides suggested recommendations to influence the 2016 UK Concluding Observations. It was developed using discussion notes from Together's 2015 regional seminars, desk research and with reference to Together's annual *State of Children's Rights* reports. In addition, Together hosted a number of thematic meetings to inform and review specific sections of the 2015 report to the UN Committee. These were attended by members advocating for specific vulnerable groups such as disabled children, asylum-seeking children, ethnic minority children and children with additional support needs.

Furthermore, Together chaired a number of conference calls with organisations in England, Wales and Northern Ireland to coordinate reporting to the UN Committee. As a result, Together drafted and led on the submission of a common list of issues report between England, Wales and Scotland. Together's Director also worked closely with the Children and Young People's Commissioner for Scotland and the Scottish Youth Parliament to coordinate feedback to the Scottish Government on their response to the UN Committee's List of Issues in December 2015.

A Development Intern was recruited to work with Together for three months to develop a proposal for a training programme that will build the capacity of public bodies under duty by the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 to report on the steps they have taken to implement the UNCRC in Scotland. The proposed training programme would also support other organisations in the children's sector to assist public bodies in fulfilling this duty. Whilst a strong and in-depth proposal was produced, further effort needs to be put into securing funding for the project.

#### ***Hold UK and Scottish Governments and other duty-bearers to account on their implementation of the UNCRC.***

Together played an instrumental role in setting up and contributing to a sub-group of members of the Cross Party Group for children and young people to assist in the development of a Child Rights Manifesto ahead of the 2016 Scottish Parliament elections. The Manifesto reflects the voices of over 3,500 children and young people in Scotland and outlines the ways in which they expect decision-makers to act, in order for them to enjoy their rights as set out in the UNCRC. The manifesto does not include specific policy asks; rather, it outlines the key values that children expect MSPs to have when making decisions that affect them. It has been produced to help ensure that the rights of children are central to discussions in the run-up to the 2016 elections and to accelerate the culture change needed to ensure full implementation of the UNCRC. At the end of March 2016, 25 MSPs and 5 candidate MSPs have signed the Manifesto and pledged to be a #ChildRightsChamp. These contacts will be key to ensuring the Scottish Parliament is held to account in implementing the UNCRC.

Together's Director is Chair of the ROCK coalition, a group of voluntary organisations and individuals from across the UK pushing for the full incorporation of the UNCRC into domestic law. Together has also provided administrative support to the coalition which has included updating the ROCK website.

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

Together co-led the visit of Ms. Amal Aldoseri, Vice-Chairperson of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child to Scotland, as part of the UN Committee's periodic review of the UK. This included setting up visits to a number of projects run by Together's members and providing opportunities for children and young people to speak directly to Ms Aldoseri about their experiences. Issues discussed included the minimum age of criminal responsibility, child poverty, the impact of counterterrorism measures, access to justice and participation.

Together's Director also played a key role in the Pre-Sessional meeting with the UN Committee in October 2015, and, in partnership with the office of the Children's Commissioner for Wales, took a lead role in coordinating the Pre-Sessional meeting with the UN Committee and ensuring that issues were raised across jurisdictions and thematic areas. Together's staff team played a key role in this meeting in a number of ways. Together's Director led the collaboration of NGO alliances, children and young people, NHRIs and Children's Commissioners, which ensured that the meeting ran extremely smoothly and effectively. Together also led on the development of a GB NGO List of Issues (LOI) briefing which was circulated to members of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child. This had a strong impact on the UN Committee's UK List of Issues report. It was clear that the UN Committee had taken the NGO LOI briefing into strong consideration and the key issues that Together helped to raise feature prominently.

Together worked closely with the Scottish Youth Parliament to prepare a report (funded by the office of the Children and Young People's Commissioner for Scotland) to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child as part of the pre-session in October. This included providing expert advice as to how to present key issues in the report that were raised through the visit of the Committee's Vice Chair to Scotland to some of Together's members. The resulting report was presented to the Committee by MSYPs and was also successful in informing the Committee's List of Issues to the UK.

Together attended the 9<sup>th</sup> European Forum on the Rights of the Child which offered the opportunity to learn from others in their efforts to protect and promote children's rights and to share good practice and areas for development in Scotland.

#### **2.4. Be recognised by membership, decision-makers and the wider media as the informed voice that advocates for children's rights in Scotland.**

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

Our 2016 annual membership survey revealed that 89% of respondents feel that Together has raised their awareness and understanding of children's rights and the UNCRC, either 'a lot' (49%) or 'a bit' (40%).

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. The membership survey revealed that 85% of respondents use the Together website at least once every month. However, the number of weekly visitors to the website has remained static at an average of 192 unique visitors (2014-15: 188), with 300 separate sessions (2014-15: 296), and 700 page visits (2014-15: 746). The website is now over 6 years old and the technology used for its development is increasingly outdated. This means that the resource library does not function fully on tablets or mobiles. This is likely to affect readership in the future as more people move to mobile technology. Together is prioritising funding applications to ensure that the website can be brought up-to-date and navigation improved to ensure it remains an essential hub of information and resources on children's rights that can be drawn from widely across Scotland.

The fortnightly e-newsletter has proved a continued success with members and supporters, and now has over 1200 subscribers (2014-15: 1141). News, resources, information and events, all with a child rights focus, are submitted by Together's members across Scotland on an increasing basis and occasionally internationally. The most well-read articles continue to be specific child-rights research and resources relating to Scotland. Our average open rate is well above industry average at 23% (industry average is 14%) and the average click rate is 8.6% (industry average is 2.5%). The 2016 e-newsletter survey revealed that 87% of respondents feel that the e-newsletter enables them to bring more of a child rights approach to their work (2014-16: 84%). 85% of membership survey respondents read the e-newsletter at least once every month. Feedback has indicated a range of applications for the e-newsletter including filtering information to colleagues and children and young people, supporting members to keep their work focussed on the rights of children, or updating websites with additional information found in the e-newsletter. Comments of particular note include:

*“Helps to keep the child at the focus when analysing assessments of need and risk within families.”*

*“I include the views and rights of the Young people I work with in planning, reviewing and evaluation of all my work.”*

*“The culture of engagement with children's rights issues together with the level of understanding in relation to them, is too limited. Your newsletter is helping to redress this problem and is therefore a vital resource during this time of austerity.”*

*“I include mention of Children's Rights and Together in some of my training events it does keep me more focussed and up to date.”*

It is clear from this that the e-newsletter plays a major role in informing the children's sector on rights based approaches.

Together's Twitter feed has continued to gain popularity and now has 1,100 followers (2014-15: 637). Twitter is becoming an increasingly popular means through which Together is able to communicate with its membership with Tweet impressions increasing from 16.9k in March 2015 to 40.0k in March 2016.

Together's blog has been gaining in popularity and is enabling members to share good practice and raise awareness of specific children's rights issues. In the past year, articles have included subjects as diverse as children of prisoners, children's emotional wellbeing and involving children and young people in reporting to the United Nations. Although there have been almost 450 unique readers of the blog throughout the year, we are keen to extend its reach considerably and build up a regular and frequent readership. In the coming year, steps will be taken including increasing the regularity of content and number of contributors, making the blog itself look more attractive and accessible via Together's website homepage, promoting posts on Twitter and asking Together's followers to retweet or share on Facebook and emphasising blog posts more via the fortnightly e-newsletter.

## **2.5. Continue to be an effective organisation which supports staff and volunteers and ensures quality and value for money.**

Together's Board of Trustees work to meet Companies House and OSCR requirements. 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. At the September 2015 AGM, Susan Hunter of Youthlink, Chloe Riddell of Children 1<sup>st</sup> and Jordan Linden of the Scottish Youth Parliament were elected to the Board of Trustees. Louise Hill of CELCIS and Maria Galli, a children's rights lawyer, were appointed as observers. Fiona Jones was re-elected as Chair and Susan Elsley (observer) as Vice-Chair. John Ryan was elected to continue as Treasurer. The Board brings a range of skills and expertise, offering valuable strategic oversight to the organisation. Board meetings are held approximately every two months, and subgroups have been established when needed to help focus expertise on certain issues. There is an ongoing

Finance sub-group led by the Treasurer which has met regularly throughout the year to oversee the production of the monthly management accounts and propose budgetary and spending decisions to the Board of Trustees. Together has invested in the training and development of its staff, with the Director being part-funded to study for a LLM in Human Rights Law.

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

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

### **4. Appointment of Trustees**

The Trustees are elected or re-elected by the members at the Annual General Meeting. The number of Trustees shall not exceed 10 persons. All Trustees are appointed for an initial 3-year term after which they can be re-elected for a further 3 years. The Trustees hold regular board meetings and monitor the financial situation of the Charity closely. None of the Trustees receive remuneration or other benefit from their work with the Charity.

### **5. Organisation**

The Charity's affairs are managed by regular meetings of the Trustees of the Company. Throughout 2015-16, the day-to-day activities of Together were carried out by a full time Director and Policy & Communications Officer with a part-time Membership & Events Assistant (part-time from May 2015, full-time in February and March 2016). The staff team was also supported by a part-time intern, and volunteers including an accountant, administrator, IT manager and policy researcher. The Board of Trustees provided strategic direction and oversight to the charity.

### **6. 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.

### **7. Risk Management**

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.



## **8. Responsibilities of the Trustees**

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

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

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

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

## **9. Statement as to disclosure to our Independent Examiner**

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

- there is no relevant information, being information needed by the Independent Examiner in connection with preparing their report, of which the Independent Examiner is unaware; and
- the trustees, having made enquiries of fellow directors and the Independent Examiner that they ought to have individually taken, have each taken all steps that he/she is obliged to take as a director in order to make themselves aware of any relevant information and to establish that the Independent Examiner is aware of that information.

By order of the board of trustees

**Fiona Jones, Chair**  
**September 2016**

## **10. Basis of independent examiner's report**

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

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

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements
  - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 386 of the Companies Act 2006 and section 44(1)(a) of the 2005 Act; and
  - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records, comply with the accounting requirements of the Companies Act 2006, section 44(1)(b) of the 2005 Act and Regulation 8 of the 2006 Accounts Regulations; and
  - which are consistent with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by 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 2016**

**Charity Statement of Financial Activities  
(including income and expenditure account)  
for year ending 31 March 2016**

	Note	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds 2016	Total Funds 2015
<b>Income:</b>					
Donations	13	7,090	107,694	114,784	106,512
Investments	14	0	0	0	0
Other income		460	0	460	0
<b>Total income:</b>		<b>7,550</b>	<b>107,694</b>	<b>115,244</b>	<b>106,512</b>
<b>Expenditure:</b>					
Charitable activities	15,17,18	0	105,104	105,104	101,961
Governance costs	16	0	357	357	189
<b>Total expenditure:</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>105,461</b>	<b>105,461</b>	<b>102,150</b>
<b>Net income/(expenditure) and net movement in funds for the year</b>		<b>7,550</b>	<b>2,233</b>	<b>9,783</b>	<b>4,362</b>
<b>Reconciliation of funds</b>					
Total funds brought forward		16,488	7,201	23,689	19,327
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>		<b>24,038</b>	<b>9,434</b>	<b>33,472</b>	<b>23,689</b>

# Together

Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights

## Balance Sheet as at 31st March 2016

	Note	2016	2015
<b>Fixed Assets</b>			
Tangible fixed assets		<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
		-	-
<b>Current Assets</b>			
Debtors	20	19,000	738
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>20,887</u>	<u>28,445</u>
		39,887	29,183
<b>Creditors: amounts falling due within one year</b>	21	<u>6,415</u>	<u>5,494</u>
<b>Net Current Assets</b>		<u>33,472</u>	<u>23,689</u>
<b>Total Net Assets</b>		<u>33,472</u>	<u>23,689</u>
<b>Funds</b>			
Restricted funds		9,434	7,201
Unrestricted funds		<u>24,038</u>	<u>16,488</u>
<b>Total Funds</b>		<u>33,472</u>	<u>23,689</u>

## Notes on the accounts

### 1. Accounting Policies

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

### 2. Basis of preparation

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

### 3. Preparation of the accounts on an ongoing concern basis

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

### 4. Interest receivable

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

### 5. Fund accounting

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

### 6. Expenditure and irrecoverable VAT

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

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

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

### 7. Support costs

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

## 8. Debtors

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

## 9. Cash in bank and in hand

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

## 10. Creditors

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

## 11. Pensions

Together (Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights) does not currently provide access to a stakeholder pension scheme but, during the employee's term of employment with Together (Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights), will contribute 6% of basic salary each month to an individual pension scheme that the employee may have. The Finance Subgroup are currently considering the steps that must be taken to ensure Together (Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights) will meet the automatic enrolment requirements of the Pensions Act 2008.

## 12. Legal status of the charity

Together (Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights) is a company limited by guarantee and has no share capital. The liability of each Trustee in the event of winding-up is limited to £5.

## 13. Income from donations

The income from donations was £114,784 (2014-15: £106,512). Of this, £7,090 was unrestricted (2014-15: £2,985). Together is particularly grateful for the ongoing support of the Scottish Government's Rights & Wellbeing Team which provides core funding for its activities, as well as its growing number of supporters among trusts and foundations.

<b>Donations</b>	<b>2015-16</b>	<b>2014-15</b>	
Membership donations	7,090	2,985	Unrestricted income
Scottish Government	70,000	70,000	Core funding from the Rights & Wellbeing Team
Children & Young People's Early Intervention Fund	31,560	31,460	Final year of a 3-year funding for the Policy & Communications Officer post
Foundation Scotland	2,000	0	To fund State of Children's Rights seminars 2016
Castansa Trust	2,000	0	To fund State of Children's Rights seminars 2016
Adopt an Intern	2,134	2,067	To fund 3-month Development Internship
	<b>114,784</b>	<b>106,512</b>	

Together (Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights) benefits enormously from the ongoing commitment and enthusiastic support of its many volunteers working across finance, administration and policy. More details of their work is given in our annual report. In accordance with accounting standards, the economic contribution of these volunteers is not measured in the accounts.

## 14. Investment income

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

## 15. Analysis of expenditure on charitable activities

Expenditure on charitable activities was £105,104 (2014-15: £101,961). Of this, £nil was unrestricted (2014-15: £nil) and £105,104 was restricted (2014-15: 101,961).

<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>2015-16</b>	<b>2014-15</b>	
Marketing & promotion	696	6541	Includes website, e-newsletter & printing of reports
Office costs	6821	8151	Includes rent, repairs, telephone, stationery and PCs
Professional fees	513	504	Includes insurance
Travel	4504	2923	Includes all staff travel & subsistence
Events	2897	1535	Includes venue hire & refreshments
Staff costs	86,280	78,666	Includes salaries, employers NI and pension
Support costs	3394	3640	Includes payroll, recruitment, training & volunteer expenses
	<b>105,104</b>	<b>101,961</b>	

## 16. Analysis of expenditure on governance

Expenditure on governance costs was £357 (2014-15: £189). This comprised of the following costs:

<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>2015-16</b>	<b>2014-15</b>	
Board meetings	13		Refreshments
Trustee travel expenses	344	189	Travel to trustee and subgroup meetings
	<b>357</b>	<b>189</b>	

No remuneration was paid to Trustees during the year. One Trustee received £344 in travel costs to enable her to attend Board meetings and the Finance Subgroup. Where possible, online conferencing and Skype has been used to keep Trustee expenses to a minimum.

## 17. Analysis of expenditure on staff

Expenditure on staffing was £86,280 (2014-15: £78,665). This comprised of the following costs:

<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>2015-16</b>	<b>2014-15</b>
Salaries	76,783	70,431
Employer National Insurance	4,794	4,442
Pension	4,703	3,792
	<b>86,280</b>	<b>78,665</b>

No employees had emoluments in excess of £60,000 (2014-15: nil).

## 18. Staff numbers

The average monthly number of full-time equivalent employees (including paid interns) during the year was 2.9 (2014-15: 2.7).

## 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

<b>Debtor</b>	<b>2015-16</b>	<b>2014-15</b>	
Scottish Government	19,000		Quarter 4 payment from Rights & Wellbeing Core Grant
Bike to Work		738	
	<hr/>	<hr/>	
	19,000	738	

## 21. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

<b>Creditor</b>	<b>2015-16</b>	<b>2014-15</b>	
PAYE	1,903	1,715	
Mastercard	1,006	992	
Purchase ledger	2,062	2,787	
Accruals	1,377	0	
Bike to Work	67		
	<hr/>	<hr/>	
	6,415	5,494	