St Andrew's Children's Society

ADOPTION & FOSTER CARE

Annual Review **2020–21**

Report from our Director

Welcome to this year's Annual Review from St Andrew's Children's Society.

For all of us this year has been one of the most challenging we have ever faced. The impact of a pandemic that fundamentally changed our lives is still very much affecting how we live. As a voluntary agency, the impact on our services has been no less dramatic. From the beginning of this year we had closed our offices and hastily organised ourselves to work from home. We could not visit families or meet together and the world of Zoom™, that we had a fleeting relationship with prior to this, became our main vehicle to communicate with each other, our families and our colleagues in other agencies.

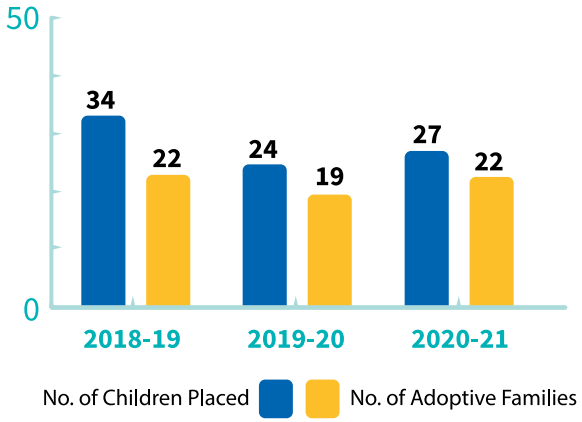
Every year, I make a special mention of our dedicated social workers and administrative staff, but this year it is an especially fulsome tribute I make to them. There was a very small number of us who were competent and confident in working with e-technology at the beginning of this year, and now virtual meetings and VPNs are a significant part of our working days. I think it is testament to all the staff that we have continued to work almost seamlessly, albeit differently, to respond to adoption and foster care enquiries, continue with preparation groups and supporting families with children in placement.

We have had an unprecedented level of interest shown by people wishing to adopt a child, and this has meant a lot more work to try and respond to all of these in a timely way. Staff have stepped up to the plate and managed this increased workload without complaint.

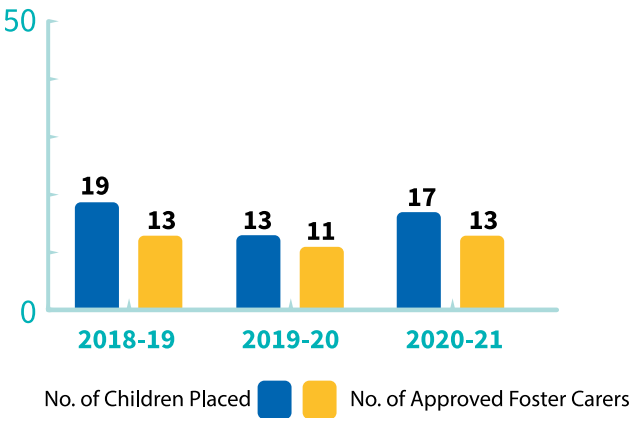
At the height of the uncertainty about how our business would be affected, the staff team and our Board of Trustees pulled together to provide the direction and service delivery needed to see us through this uncertainty. Even though we still face uncertain times, we know that we can adapt as necessary and remain focussed on the potential our actions have to impact positively on the lives of children who have had adverse early life experiences.

We have maintained a settled staff team again this year, although we did say goodbye to Anne Macleod in our Aberdeen office. Anne was one of the original social workers who helped set up the new service there in

Our office suites are awaiting to be used as more normality returns.



Adoption Placements over 3 years



Foster Care Placements over 3 years

2013. Her enthusiasm and dedication to the work is being missed by her colleagues. We wish her every success in whatever she decides to do in the future.

With the lack of clarity about our income during this year, we were again fortunate to have fundraisers like Dan and Karen Docwra from the Docwra Partnership. They managed to find money from funds that were specifically looking to disburse money to help the voluntary sector cope with the financial impact of the pandemic. We would not have finished the year in such good financial health without all the efforts they made on our behalf.

Thanks to Tara Macgregor, our Head of Marketing, we revamped and relaunched our website during this year and I am sure this has contributed to the rise in interest in our services.

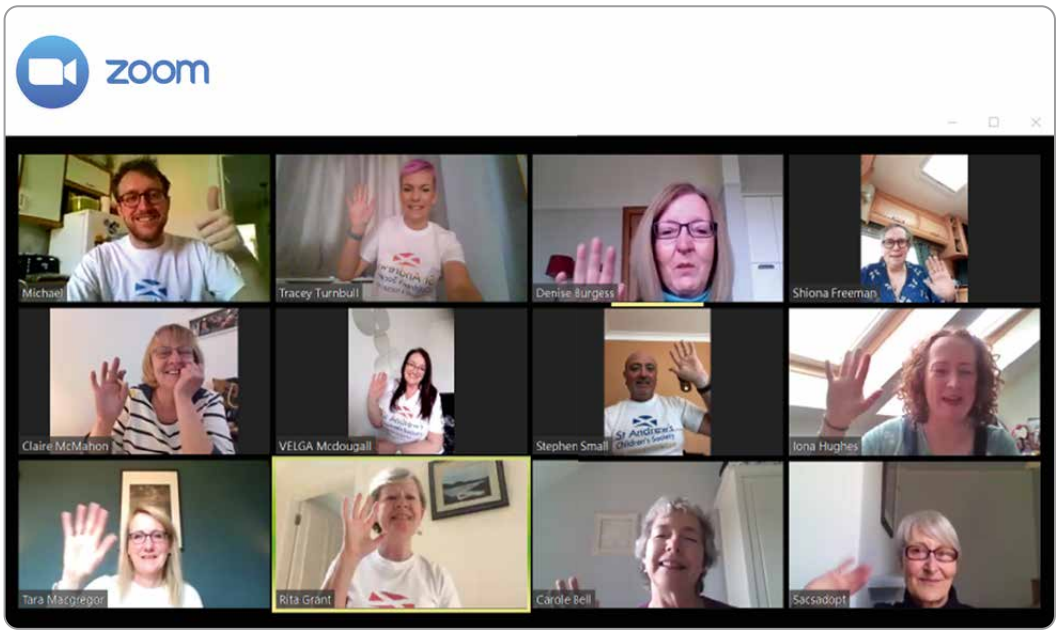
We know that Covid-19 is still with us as this year ended, and its impact is likely to affect us for some time to come, but we also know that we have the people in terms of staff and Trustees to ensure we are still providing services that are relevant to the children and families who need them.

Our adoption support work does seem to be at a similar level year on year, although last year's figures for support to families was down, it has returned to the level of previous years. We have been unable to run Safebase Therapeutic Parenting courses this year, but have used the time caused by this hiatus to review the programme with a view to making it an integral part of our after placement services to all our families. This means that we have shortened the course from four to two days, but retained the Observed Family Assessment so that it is more accessible to families and reduces the costs of running it accordingly.

We know the year before that we had seen an upturn in enquiries and assessment of new adopters being undertaken and we hoped that this would be a sustained increase. This year has not only shown us that, but we have had a steep increase during the time Covid-19 was disrupting our lives most. We started this year with a target of 28 placements for the year but in June 2020 we decided to review this down to 24 placements in order to be better placed to manage the potential fall in income we were anticipating. As it turned out, we ended the year only one placement short of our original target pre-pandemic.

Our Concurrent Planning project continues to make a valuable contribution to the cause of early permanence for the small numbers of very young children who are at high risk of not being able to remain with their birth parents. We continue to look for opportunities to develop this service with other local authorities.

Adoption Support Services	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Adoption Counselling	16	20	11
Adoption Support to Families	131	80	135
Direct work with Children	16	14	15
Information Exchange	7	7	8
Families completed SafeBase (from 2010)	94	94	94



Zoom meetings:
Staff have become more conversant in the language of VPNs and other technological aspects of working from home.

We have seen a rise in the number of children placed in foster care this year that is as a result of a combination of children placed with our carers on a temporary basis while their permanent plan is decided upon and the placement of children with a concurrent carer on a fostering basis. Neither of these kinds of placements are what our recruitment drive for foster carers has been focussed on (those willing to care for older children, 8 plus, on a long term/permanent basis) and we continue to find these the most difficult kinds of foster carers to recruit.

St Andrew's Children's Society enjoys the strong backing of, and oversight by, a Board of Trustees which is committed to improving the lives of the children and their families. This year has been one of the toughest that our board has had to deal with, and they have been able to guide the agency through it safely and it has probably made for a stronger board as a result. Similarly, our professional standards are closely scrutinised by the volunteers who serve as Adoption and Foster Care Panel members, and we continue to be grateful to them for their insight and commitment. It has been remarkable how the Panel has moved to Zoom meetings with such ease and we have managed the same amount of business as in previous years.

Finally, our thanks must go out to those who come forward to offer themselves as adopters and foster carers for some of the most vulnerable children in Scotland. Our efforts to be the best we can be are only worthwhile because those families are committed to the well-being of these children.

Stephen Small
DIRECTOR

Duty of candour 2020/21

1. **How many incidents happened to which the duty of candour applies?**
   In the last year (1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021), there have been no incidents to which the duty of candour applied.
2. **Information about our policies and procedures**
   In the event of an incident occurring that triggers a duty of candour, our staff would report this to the Service Manager, who has responsibility for ensuring that the duty of candour procedure is followed. Where required, the Care Inspectorate will be notified. When an incident has occurred, we will ensure that subjects are informed, that we meet with them to discuss the incident and apologise. A learning review meeting will be convened to reflect on what has happened and to take actions to prevent any further event.

Report from the Chair of the board of Trustees

It is a privilege to chair the Board of Trustees for St Andrew's Children's Society. The Society has been in existence for nearly one hundred years during which time it has provided support to countless children and their families.

For a long time now it has been at the forefront of finding adoptive families for children in Scotland. It also provides a small fostering service and other services, including helping adopted people trace their birth families in a structured way. St Andrew's Children's Society is a leader in terms of the therapeutic support it provides to adoptive families. Key to the longevity and success of the agency is the quality of leadership and management, the skills and hard-working dedication of the workforce and the tenacity and commitment of the families we work with.

The period covered by this review has been a difficult one, not just for St Andrew's Children's Society but for many agencies working with vulnerable children. The Covid-19 pandemic struck at the beginning of the year and continued throughout. This threw up challenges about how core business would be conducted, how staff would be supported to continue with their important work and how income would be generated. It would be fair to say that these issues led to some difficult discussions within the Board, particularly in relation to the approach to be taken about the Government's Furlough scheme. Given the financial uncertainties arising from the possibility of fewer children being placed for adoption, directly and indirectly resulting from the pandemic, there were different views about how much use to make of furloughing, which would have eased financial pressures, but seriously affected the availability of staff to undertaken the recruitment and support of adoptive families. Ultimately the board chose to make modest use of furloughing and ensure that staff were kept in work to sustain services. In the event this meant that St Andrew's Children's Society was well-placed to respond to a very high level of adoption applications and was able to place children for adoption, achieving a healthy financial position at the end of the year. On behalf of the Board I would like to extend a huge thank you to all the staff who have played their role in getting the agency through these challenging times.

The challenges faced by the Board spurred us on to review St Andrew's Children's Society's Memorandum and Articles, and a revised version was agreed at an extraordinary meeting in 2021. The governance of St Andrew's Children's Society is more robust as a consequence. The membership of the Board fell to six during the review period, and the Board has now undertaken a skills audit of membership and will focus on the recruitment of new board members in the coming months. I would like to thank the board members for their time and efforts during this time and in particular to thank members of the Board who have stood down.

Whilst the financial outturn for the period of this review is very encouraging and indeed St Andrew's Children's Society has a healthy number of approved adopters and others undergoing preparation, there will continue to be challenges in the coming years and the agency needs to be prepared for these. We have a Risk Register that the Board reviews periodically and the management of risk is likely to be a major focus in the future. We need to continue to pioneer and develop innovative practice, such as concurrent placements, which mean children experience less disruption and have improved life chances. We need to continue to trumpet the excellent adoption support provided by St Andrew's Children's Society, particularly when the Adoption Barometer published by Adoption UK consistently shows that adoption support in Scotland is poorer than elsewhere in the UK. We need to continue to adapt to the changing world by responding to the shift in profile of children who need adoptive families, including older children, sibling groups and those who require contact with members of their birth families. (St Andrew's Children's Society already has an excellent record of achievements in these areas which we are well placed to build upon). We also need to explore other types of work with vulnerable children and families, for example by developing our fostering service and support to birth families.

The Board, the management and the staff team very much look forward to addressing these challenges.

Robert Swift
CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Adoption support

Adoption support in the past year has continued to be busy despite the restrictions we have all been living with.

Our workers have been creative in supporting families, using online platforms and many outside spaces to see our families and support them, as well as simply connecting on a very human level with parents and their children.

We delivered Friends and Family Training from autumn last year online, and boy did we have a huge response. People 'zoomed' in from all over Europe to avail of the training, and feedback has been very positive. As trainers, we have realised some training delivered online actually has such a wide reach (and reduces the need for travel/childcare etc.) that this will continue to be delivered online for the foreseeable future. It also helps with our collective responsibility regarding climate change (that is another conversation!). Parenting consultations online continue to be a source of support to parents who are navigating their children through the challenges of the restrictions, school returns, and the everyday challenges life throws at them. This space for the parents to simply talk through all they are feeling and worried about seems to meet a need for adopters. I think I have realised sometimes a listening ear is more important than trying to 'come to the rescue'.

We had our Christmas party online with Magic Gareth in December and it was so great to see the reactions and joy on the children's faces as Gareth delivered magic to us all on screen.

We have managed to deliver some life story work to some of our young people and are aware this is becoming an area of need earlier in some children's lives as they ask more about their birth family and try to understand their path to their adoption family.

We delivered the theory to Theraplay™ to parents early in the year, and then did an online Theraplay group with parents and children, which was very well received, and reminded parents of some of the activities they can use to reconnect and have some fun with their children. The beauty of this was that people from all over were able to participate from the comfort of their own homes.

We have had some adopted adults get in touch over the year, to find out more about their early life experiences and the reasons behind their adoption. Interestingly, the older the people who have done this, the less upset and distressed they have been. Perhaps that is because they have always known their adoption stories, and as some have said they felt 'special and chosen'.

Sadly the reality of children's stories these days are often more to do with reasons of safety/neglect, or birth parents who cannot care for their children in a way they would like to because of their own history of being parented. When working with the younger group of adopted children and young people, this is a difficult and sensitive area. Having to explain what Foetal Alcohol Syndrome is, why they may have Attention Deficit Disorder, or be on the autistic spectrum is a big ask for anyone, but most especially hard for the child to understand. We are in awe of how our adopters support and enable their children to learn new strategies to manage school life and life in general. As practitioners, we are constantly updating our knowledge and skills, and keen to share them with our families, many of whom reciprocate learning and tips to us. A real partnership.

Our links with nursery and schools continue to be busy. By way of trying to minimise the child's transition to a new environment, we aim to work closely with our families and colleagues in education, to help them understand the triggers the child may have, and recommend some strategies as to how they might respond to them.

In adoption support, we recognise the reality of how long it can take some children to adjust to their lives, as they get older and continue on the journey of integrating their birth and adoption identities into the person they are becoming. The strength of their parents to walk beside them is amazing – even when they are exhausted – they still walk beside them and are there for them to fall back on, as I have seen over this past year.

Across the two offices in Aberdeen and Edinburgh, the variety of adoption support continues to grow and respond to the needs we are presented with.

Adoption Support Team

Letterbox Support

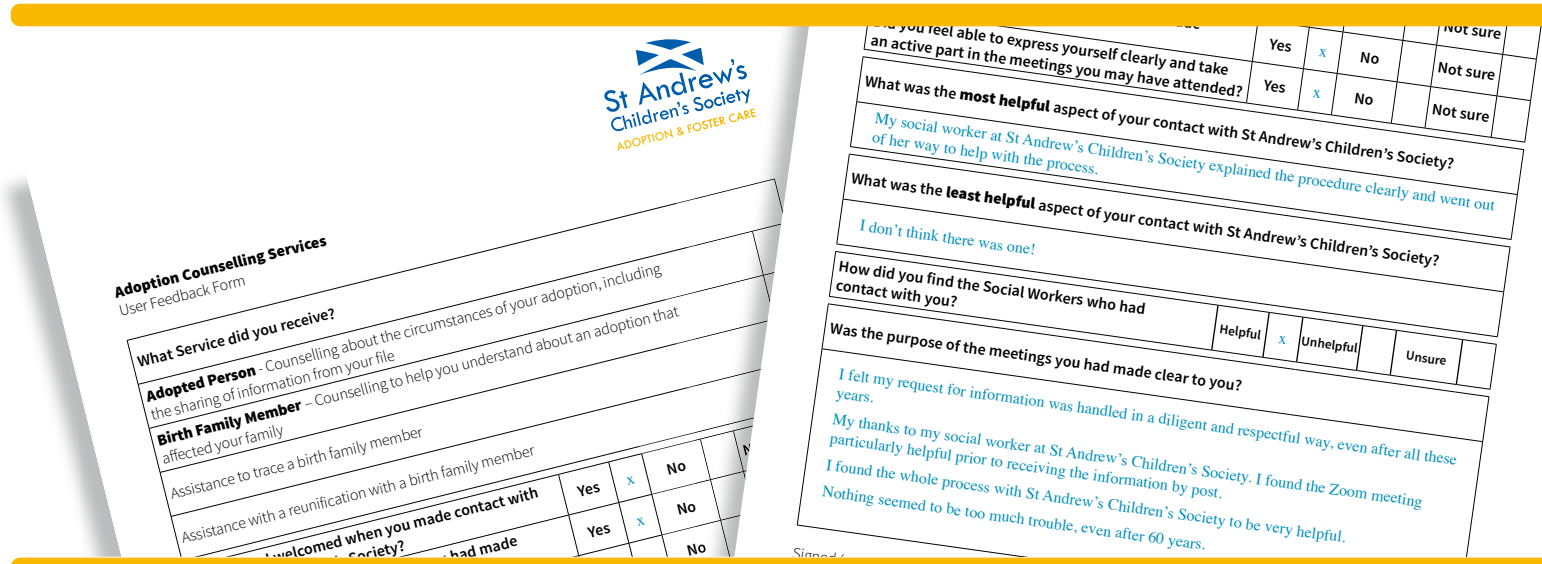
'M' and 'S' continue to have adoption support, particularly with regard to 'S' writing and sending gifts to her birth parents and receiving them. The adoption support worker from St Andrew's Children's Society is the person who facilitates this, and is able to assure the birth mother how well 'S' is doing, and assure 'S' that her birth parents are doing well (parents suffer with mental health issues). 'M', the adoptive mother is very open and is helping 'S' to understand her early past and two families.

Adopter ST ANDREW'S CHILDREN'S SOCIETY

Training Provided for St Andrew's Children's Society's families

from April 2020 to April 2021

Date	Training	Attendees: adults (children)
30 Sep 2020	Friends & Family Event	22
2 Dec 2020	Friends & Family Event	28
14 Dec 2020	Single Adopters Group	6
25 Jan 2021	Theory Update for Theraplay	7
27 Jan 2021	Theraplay Session	7 (8)
3 Feb 2021	Friends & Family Event	35
4 Feb 2021	Family Support Group	10



Friends & Family feedback: January 2021

Did you find the session helpful?

- Very useful and interesting. What a lot some children go through! I thought the video with the children speaking very powerful and sad.
- Very interesting and useful. We especially appreciated hearing about funnelling. Thank you.
- You are both very easy to listen to and your expertise and compassion are obvious. Thank you.
- Very helpful and very well presented.
- Thank you! It was very helpful and useful to understand how to support my friends. I found the video with the children talking extremely powerful.
- I think the adoption wall was very powerful information, quite upsetting but important.

How was of the pace and content of the presentation?

- Very manageable thank you.
- Thank you very much, very helpful and paced just right.
- Great pace, and felt very much like being part of a conversation.
- Pace was great and lovely to listen to you both.
- Really interesting and informative. Very helpful and well-paced.
- The pace was good - a lot of topics covered, but enough time for each one for the info to get through.
- Good pace. Time flew by!
- Whole talk and presentation done at a nice easy pace. Very well done.

Our Highland base is going from strength to strength!

Gill McHaffie, our Senior Practitioner based in Moray shares her experience of working for St Andrew's Children's Society over the last year.

One of my adoptive families was placed with two children on the day before national lockdown on 23 March 2020. It all happened so quickly as they were in the middle of introductions (these were cut short) and so I never got a chance to visit. We met on Zoom every week and so I was able to support the family entirely by Zoom from April 2020 and beyond. Rita Grant, out Adoption Support Manager, also provided each child with a six week block of Theraplay with their adoptive mum to support bonding and attachment. This was during the early months of lockdown from May to July 2020 and was delivered over Zoom too. It was truly amazing how much the children enjoyed the sessions and how effective this was! It was a lovely day when restrictions were finally relaxed and I was able to visit the children in their new home.

We expanded our service and made our first Highland placement in May 2020. The placement was made during the first national lockdown and was a long distance one, which meant travel through three countries, from the Highlands of Scotland through England and down into Wales at the height of Covid-19 restrictions. The adoptive parents were proud owners of a campervan and agreed to use this to reduce the risk of contact with other people and so they didn't need to use accommodation on the journey. They used the campervan all through introductions so their little girl became used to it, and then all three made their journey home together which was a bit of an adventure. Perhaps not what we would have planned in an ideal situation, but it just shows how innovative and imaginative social workers and our adoptive parents can be when it means keeping the needs of the child uppermost!

I think from these two experiences above, I can safely say we really do have the most resilient, adaptable, brave and enthusiastic adoptive parents at St Andrew's Children's Society!

The Highland placement was followed by additional enquiries from Highland region and two more Highland families were approved in 2020/2021.

We enjoyed daily teatime natters with our colleagues in the Edinburgh team, so we actually felt more connected than we had been previously!

Adapting to Zoom was strange and tiring to begin with, but it is now second nature and there are times it is proving very useful. Whereas I would have phoned before, we can now jump on Zoom with our adoptive and foster families and see each other, which is a much better quality of communication.

I carried out three home-study assessments over 2020/2021 resulting in approvals, all done almost entirely on Zoom.

I placed one child in May 2020 and another little boy in October 2020, so two children over 2020/2021.

Gill McHaffie SENIOR PRACTITIONER

Fundraising report

St Andrew's Children's Society has long been at the forefront in developing services in adoption and foster family preparation and support. In recent years, the introduction of the SafeBase Parenting Programme, Adoption Support, the introduction of services in the north-east of Scotland based in Aberdeen, Life Story Work and Concurrent Care are leading success stories. These developments have been, and continue to be, supported by generous funding from a wide variety of charitable trusts and donations from supporters.

The greatest challenge during the year was to adapt our ways of working and service delivery during the Covid-19 pandemic and resulting lockdown. The Scottish and Westminster governments made funding streams available for Scottish charities to help them to adapt to meet specific needs. Charitable trusts and foundations also adapted their funding processes and criteria to assist charities. We benefited from several of these streams of funding, particularly to enhance our ability to reach families online and to enable all staff and some service users to have access to Zoom capable computers and laptops.

When Covid-19 reared its ugly face, the 2020 Edinburgh Kiltwalk was cancelled, but replaced by the 2020 Edinburgh Virtual Kiltwalk. Rather than a walk with thousands along a prepared route, our supporters chose a walk they wished and walked it over the September weekend. As with 2018, our supporters didn't let us down, raising an amazing £11,554 including matched funding from The Hunter Foundation. Some of our wonderful walkers are shown here.

Dan Docwra FUNDRAISER

kiltwalk

Royal Bank of Scotland · Arnold Clark · The Hunter Foundation

Our special thanks go to:

Foundation Scotland Community Response, Recovery and Resilience Fund, The Kuenssberg Charitable Foundation, The National Lottery Community Fund and The Inspiring Scotland Wellbeing Fund, for their special funding this year.

Continuing support for our core services plus SafeBase and Concurrent Care came from the fifth year of funding of £40,500 from the Scottish Government Children, Young People and Families Early Intervention Fund.

A list of all trusts and foundations supporting us in 2020/21 is in the 'Financial review' section.

From our Blog: Adopting children during a pandemic

‘Mummy, where do you buy a ball?’
‘Err, is this question or a joke?’
‘A joke.’
‘Right. I don’t know, where do you buy a ball?’
‘A shop!’

Have you ever tried teaching a 5-year-old the intricacies of a joke? Sometimes it feels like we sit at a table talking to two Alice Tinkers from *The Vicar of Dibley*. At some point, I hope, a joke worthy of the *Funniest Joke of The Fringe* may occur but, on the other hand, one indisputable point is that this year has been unprecedented, and I don’t just mean that big pandemic thing that everyone seems to be talking about.

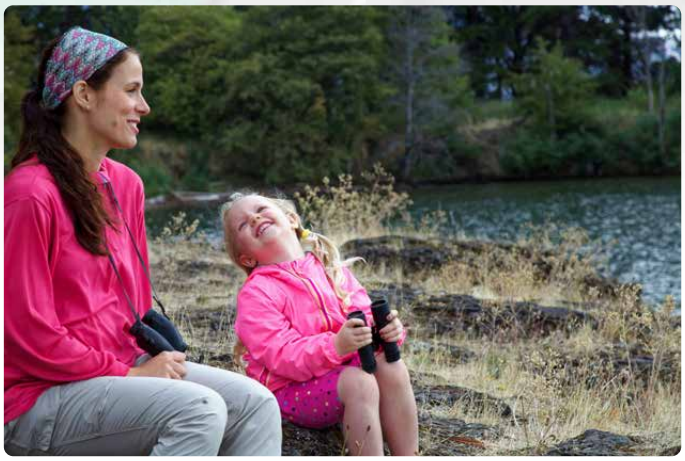
We adopted our children during the pandemic

The day before the first lockdown due to the pandemic we brought two children into our home who we had adopted through St Andrew’s Children’s Society.

I feel that is a standalone paragraph for, despite the amazing support we received on the lead up to meeting our new family, we were suddenly locked in our house with a 4-year-old girl and a 5-year-old boy. Thank goodness for Zoom and our wonderful social worker!

Humour was our superpower

All of a sudden we realised what all the lead up to being approved to become adopters was about; why the questions about how we cope individually and as a couple, our ideas of being parents, support networks, general ideals and the reason for prep groups on separation and trauma. What we, as a couple, realised through the process was that we have a sense of humour. As we welcomed our family into our home our sense of humour turned into our superpower (yes, we even gave it a theme tune).



We were told by the lovely folk at St Andrew’s Children’s Society that ‘the first year will be hard’ and ‘there will be a honeymoon period and then the children will try and push boundaries’. Yes, they were right. It was tough and every day seemed a challenge. But with that, every day was just a wee bit easier. We had not had time to learn our children’s likes, dislikes and routines in their foster home, as the introduction period had needed to be reduced, in order to get the kids to us before the national lockdown. Everything was new to them. Everything was new to us. Routine (and humour) was our saving grace. We even wrote a daily schedule. Colour coded. It was fancy.

The lack of school hit the kids hard

In the introduction books we had sent them, there were pictures of the primary and nursery schools they would have been attending, but it was months before they could go, by which time nursery was off the cards. We would drive to the school car park and sit and look at it, sharing an apple, talking about the things they would do and friends they would meet.

Focus on the small things

Instead of the larger things we focused on the small. My husband is a vet. He really likes cows. Every hour, on the hour we set up an alarm; an alarm that went 'moo'. This became our hug alarm. That meant every hour, on the hour, we all stopped what we were doing and had a nice big hug. It helped to structure our day and kept us on that fancy colour coded schedule.

It's OK to get some things wrong when you adopt

There are some things the kids got wrong. There are some things the adults got wrong. Main thing is to learn from the mistake and remember tomorrow is a new day. In the immortal words of Kelly Clarkson 'what doesn't kill you makes you stronger'.

'Don't forget wee ones, it doesn't matter what they look like so long as they are kind.'

Sometime later…

'Wow, that's an old tractor! What make is it?'
Boy: 'Massey Ferguson!'
Girl: 'It doesn't matter what is looks like, so long as it's a tractor.'

We were all learning

Watching the wee ones grow as little people has been truly amazing. Watching how they slowly learned to trust us. Our son has found it easy to express his needs and fears. Working with his school, social workers and Rita, the Adoption Support Manager at St Andrew's Children's Society (who provided Theraplay via Zoom in the early days) meant that we could get his needs met quickly; that the school could understand where certain behaviours came from. We were all learning, only he knew what was going on in his head, and we just had to remind him how well he was doing and how loved he is.

How songs helped us

Family songs? Yes, we have them too. I have a playlist that is, at best, eclectic. The current favourite is *High Enough* by Marvin Gaye – 'Ain't no mountain high enough, Ain't no valley low enough, Ain't no river wide enough, To keep me from getting to you, baby.' Funny how a song can help a child understand just how much you would do for them.

Life Story work

It is amazing how life story work can be fitted into every day. We took on three ex-battery hens; they went from their birth family (farm) into foster (the trust that saved them) and to their forever family (our home). We have seen dogs in the park on leads that are hackles up and this has let us discuss how we might show we are scared, feeling the need to hit out, run away or climb high. I have 'cried' over dead woodlice to help show empathy, we have read books about 'how we wished for you' (then I actually did cry). I've even explained in great detail how my tummy feels stretched to help the children understand how a full stomach feels.

'The Report Card'

We often fell back on our superpower. In fact, my husband and I started a notebook, which we named 'The Report Card'. Everything that was funny, done or said, went into it. That way we had a good laugh at the end of every day.

When your adopted child says those three little words

Adopting kids is not easy. No one ever said it would be. I would not change anything for the world. Well , maybe the pandemic could have been at a more convenient time. I have heard that when a mum first looks at the face of her newborn baby her world changes. Well, the first time you hear your adopted child say, and mean, 'I love you' there is nothing in the world you wouldn't do for them.

'BOOOOOMMM!'
'That's a bit loud wee man!'
'It had to be loud Mummy.'
'Why?'
'It was a sonic boom of love.'

This blog post was written by a couple who adopted two children through St Andrew's Children's Society the day before the first lockdown in 2020 and appeared on St Andrew's Children's Society's website on 23 March 2021, the anniversary of the first lockdown in the UK.

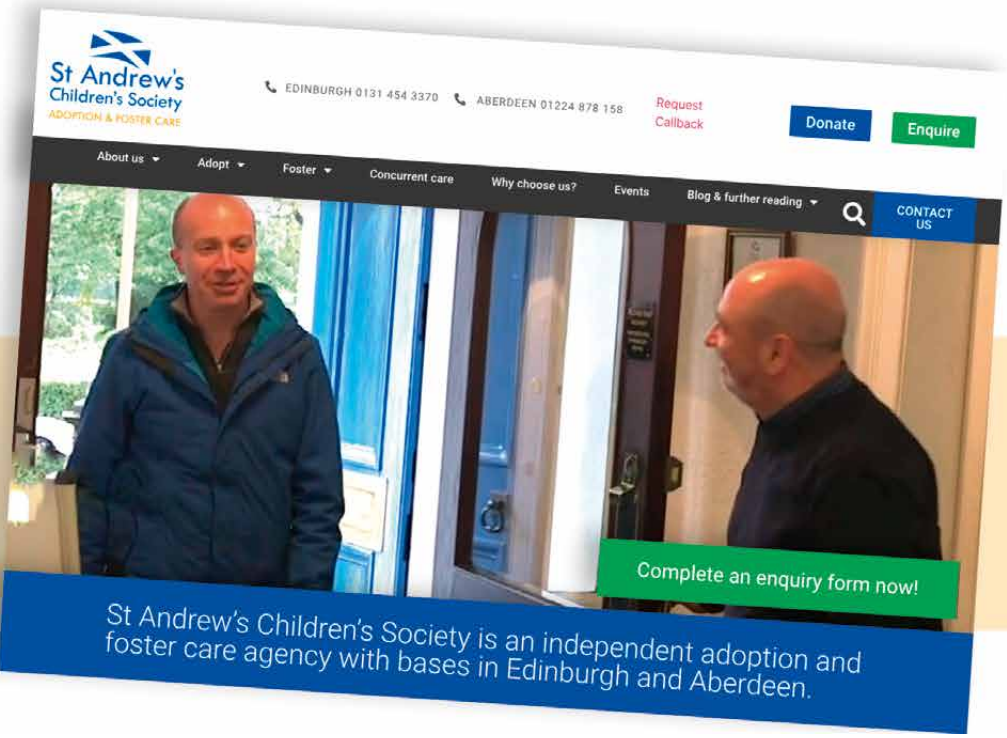
Marketing activities **2020-2021**

We are pleased to confirm that the marketing activities of St Andrew's Children's Society were certainly not held back by Covid-19.

We organised our first ever Virtual Adoption Information Evening using Zoom soon after everyone was required to work from home due to the nationwide lockdown. It was a tremendous success. Shortly afterwards we held a Virtual Fostering Information Evening as part of Foster Care Fortnight in May 2020 as well as another Virtual Adoption Information Evening the same month due to the outstanding response we received to the first virtual adoption event. Later in the year we held another Virtual Adoption Information Evening as part of Adoption Week Scotland in November 2020. Then we held a Virtual Adoption and Fostering Information Evening as part of LGBT+ Adoption & Fostering Week in March 2021. All our events were extremely well attended.

[above] **Thomas, one of our single adopters, featured on *Our Lives with Michelle McManus*.**

Our new website was launched at the AGM in January 2021. It is user-friendly and contains lots of information which we hope will be of interest to prospective and current adopters and foster carers, including a blog which has proved to be very popular. There is also a new mailing list to enable people to keep up to date with our activities and news. We would like to give special thanks to Charles Macintosh, our consultant website designer and Tom Swift, the videographer who produced the video on the homepage following strict Covid-19 guidelines.

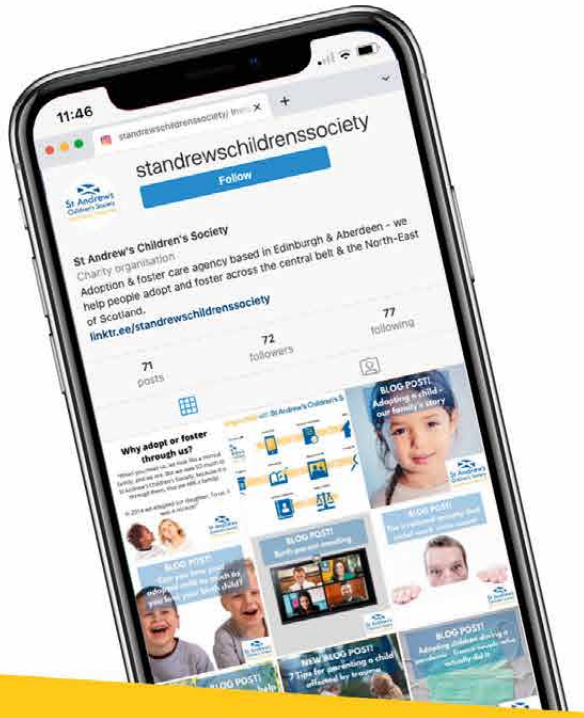


[left & below] **Our new website, including our new Blog.**

We produced two eight page newsletters during the course of this year, and we would like to thank Tim Griffiths, our consultant graphic designer, for his continued expertise and dedication in helping to make these much enjoyed newsletters happen.

Social media has continued to play an important role in our effort to engage with our existing families as well as helping us to connect with prospective adopters and foster carers. In addition to already being on Facebook and Twitter, we are now also on Instagram and LinkedIn, where we are steadily growing our presence.

Tara Macgregor HEAD OF MARKETING



Christmas

(and the parents are ge

It looks like it is going to be a very diff Christmas for everyone this year with subject to various Covid restrictions* our adopted children it may well be s can turn to our advantage.

We've adjusted to the new 'Normal'

For all of us the world has changed immeasurably and unexpectedly since we last sent out a newsletter to you with what we hope are interesting articles and developments for St Andrew's Children's Society.

What we have been very keen to let people know is that, despite our personal and work commitments being significantly restricted since the end of March, we are still very much in business. However, our 'business' needs to be funded and, like all charities, we don't know when we will get back to normal and earn the money we need to provide our services to families. St Andrew's Children's Society has had to take steps to safeguard our finances during this pandemic and we are confident that these steps will mean we are in a strong financial position to 'hit the ground running' again.

Since we closed our offices in Edinburgh and Aberdeen on the 23rd of March our staff have worked tirelessly to get themselves set up to work from home so that they can continue to assess those interested in adoption and foster care and to support the families we have already placed children with. You will be able to read in more details how we are trying to keep connected with families in the interesting Adoption Support section

Continued on Page 2

www.sacsadopt.scot info@standrews-children.org.uk @StAndrewsChildrensSociety @sacsadopt
7 John's Place, Edinburgh EH6 7EL T: 0131 454 3370
St Andrew's Children's Society Scottish Charity No. SC005754
West Lodge, Greenwell Road, Aberdeen AB12 3AX T: 01224 878158

www.sacsadopt.scot info@standrews-children.org.uk
St Andrew's Children's Society
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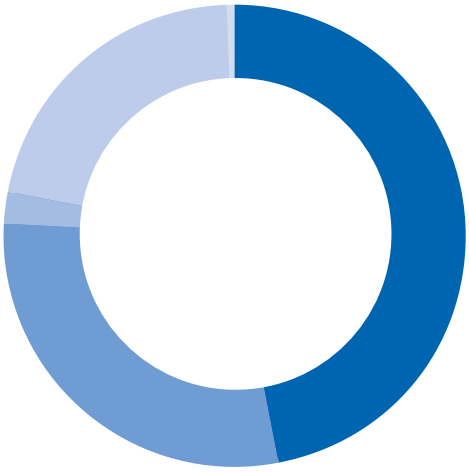
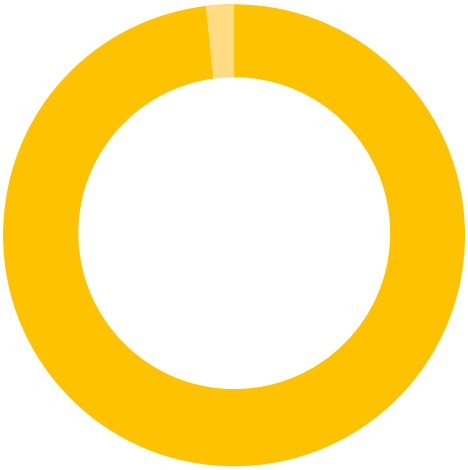
Financial activities: For the year ending 31st March 2021

Income

Charitable activities (Adoption)	£830,719
Charitable activities (Fostering)	£357,798
Covid -19 Awards	£77,846
Training income	£6,140
Voluntary grants and donations	£139,615
Investment income	£ 10,661
Other income	£720
Total income	**£ 1,423,499**





Expenditure

£1,431,889	Charitable expenditure
£27,428	Costs of generating funds
£1,459,317	**Total expenditure**

A full copy of the **audited 2020/21 Accounts and Annual Report** can be requested from our Edinburgh office.

We just wanted to say thank you so much to Musicares for E's music lessons … The virtual lessons worked really well. Her tutor Kim was so professional, knowledgeable and patient. E has thoroughly enjoyed learning the guitar and keyboard and it has been a fantastic opportunity!

Musicares feedback • JULY 2020

Financial review: For the year ending 31st March 2021

As shown in the financial activities, there was a net gain on resources of £6,383 during the year before the actuarial movement on the pension scheme, comprising an increase of £17,595 in unrestricted funds offset with a decrease of £11,012 in restricted funds.

Overall, the results have been encouraging with a slight increase in adoption placements to 27 (2019–20: 24), although there has been a decrease in total income to £1,423,499 (2019–20 £1,766,319). Adoption fees decreased to £830,719 (2019–20 £953,309) coupled with fostering and respite fees of £357,798 (2019–20 £429,645). The employment of a part-time fundraiser continued during the year at a cost of £24,000 contributing to the total grants and donations of £217,461 (£77,846 relating to a Covid-19 award).

The net movement in funds highlights a £300,383 surplus (primarily due to an actuarial gain from the defined benefit scheme (£294,000). This results in total funds carried forward of £1,738,344 of which £1,708,734 is unrestricted and £29,610 is restricted.

Following on from the previous year, the impact of Covid-19 has led to the Board, in conjunction with the Management Team, to continue to routinely scrutinise St Andrew's Children's Society's financial position, especially cashflow. The financial forecast for 2021–22 looks promising.

Kirsty Fergusson TREASURER

We wish to acknowledge the generosity of the many charitable trusts, foundations and individuals who have made donations or have undertaken sponsorship events on our behalf. Without this support, many of our services just would not be available as widely as they are.

Thank you to: The St Andrew's Children's Society KiltWalkers – their sponsors and The Hunter Foundation, The John Gordon Charitable Trust, The Robertson Trust, The Garfield Weston Foundation, The Sir Jules Thorne Charitable Trust, Foundation Scotland Community Response, Recovery and Resilience Fund, The Kuenssberg Charitable Foundation, The National Lottery Community Fund, The Inspiring Scotland Wellbeing Fund, The James Weir Foundation, The de Brye Charitable Trust, The Miss Isabel Ferguson Harvey Charitable Trust, The James Wood Bequest Fund, The Lady Marian Gibson Trust, The Micah Fund, The Thistledown Trust, The Murdoch Forrest Charitable Trust, The Grand Masonic Lodge of Scotland, The D C R Allen Charitable Trust, The W M Mann Foundation, The PF Charitable Trust, The WCH Trust for Children, The Grace Trust.

And finally, the Scottish Government's Children, Young People and Families Early Intervention Fund, administered by The Corra Foundation.

Thanks for today, we all really enjoyed it. At first I wasn't sure how much our son was taking in but after talking to him he said he enjoyed playing the games that the ladies on the TV showed him. The online session actually worked really well.

Theraplay feedback • JAN 2021

Who we are

Board of Trustees

Robert Swift
Social Work Consultant
Chair [from 26 Jan 2021]/Trustee

Fergus Christie [resigned July 2020]
Solicitor
Chairperson/Legal Adviser

Innes Ledingham
Chartered Accountant
Vice Chair

Kirsty Fergusson
Accountant
Treasurer

Anne Hampton
Independent Social Worker
Trustee

Jackie Pringle [resigned July 2020]
Solicitor
Trustee

Sheriff Roderick MacLeod
Sheriff
Trustee

Celia Borland
Resource Team Manager, East Lothian Council
Trustee

Management Team

Stephen Small
Director

Charlie Egan
Service Manager

Rita Grant
Adoption Support Manager

Claire McMahon
Office Manager

Edinburgh Staff Team

Carole Bell
Senior Practitioner

Denise Burgess
Senior Practitioner

Katie Delap
Senior Practitioner

Ruth Dolan
Senior Practitioner

Iona Hughes
Senior Practitioner

Lorna MacFarlane
Senior Practitioner

Michael Opitz
Senior Practitioner

Cathryn Thompson
Senior Practitioner

Tracey Turnbull
Senior Practitioner

Carolyn Smith
Administration Assistant

Sandra Williams
Administration Assistant

Tara Macgregor
Head of Marketing

Aberdeen Staff Team

Shiona Freeman
Senior Practitioner

Anne MacLeod [left August 2020]
Senior Practitioner

Debbie McDonald
Senior Practitioner

Gillian McHaffie
Senior Practitioner

Velga McDougall
Administrator

Consultants

Stephen Buchan
IT Consultant

Dan Docwra
Fundraising

Dr Ian Fraser
Medical Adviser

Tim Griffiths
Graphic Designer

Alan Lodge
Accounts & Finance

Charles Macintosh
Web Designer

Burness Paull – charity law

SKO Family Law – adoption matters
Legal firms

Adoption & Fostering Panel

Robert Swift
Adoption Advisor
Agency Decision Maker

Anne Hampton
Adoption Advisor
Depute Decision Maker & Panel Member

Willie Hunter [withdrew October 2020]
Retired Social Work Manager
Depute Chair

David Johnson
Policy Officer, Scottish Government
Chair

Marion Wood
Retired Social Worker
Depute Chair

Maureen McEvoy
Adoptive Parent
Panel Member

Ian Fraser
Medical Advisor & Panel Member

Celia Borland
Resource Team Manager, East Lothian Council
Panel Member

Jen McNabb
Social Worker, City of Edinburgh Council
Panel Member

Lesley Hunter
Social Worker, West Lothian Council
Panel Member

John Robertson
Adoptive Parent
Panel Member

Bob McKinney
Adoptive Parent
Aberdeen Panel Member

Shona Grimmer
Adoptive Parent
Aberdeen Panel Member

Sarah Mathews
Adoptive Parent
Panel Member

Steven McFarlane
Adoptive Parent
Panel Member

Claire Smith
Adoptee
Prospective Panel Member

St Andrew's Children's Society

Call: Edinburgh **0131 454 3370**
Aberdeen **01224 878158**
or email **info@standrews-children.org.uk**

Find out more at **www.sacsadopt.scot**

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