St Andrew's Children's Society

ADOPTION & FOSTER CARE

100

A century of care

Annual Review **2021/22**

CEO report

We began this year feeling optimistic about our business and about how we were getting back to operating with more of a sense of normality than we have had since early 2020.

We were, however, cautious about how this year might turn out with regard to our core business - recruiting adopters and foster carers and through this finding new, secure and loving homes for as many children as possible. Our Chairperson has referred to the uncertainties about how children's permanency plans will progress post-pandemic. The numbers of children looking for adoptive homes in Scotland and across the UK has dropped significantly and while this has not yet affected our ability to make placements with our families too drastically, we have monitored this situation throughout this year. We still see a large number of children being referred to us looking for foster homes and it is clear that the looked after and accommodated services provided by our local authority colleagues are under great pressure.

All our social workers and administrative staff have continued to work with dedication and compassion, having managed to come to terms with different and sometimes challenging new ways of working. They also coped well with the upset and aftermath of a serious cyber attack that required them all to work to mitigate the effects on our service users. Particular mention needs to go to Stephen Buchan of Green Light Systems, our IT consultant, who along with Claire McMahon, Office Manager, worked tirelessly to ensure that such an IT breach could be avoided, as far as possible, in the future.

We have been able to fill gaps in our staffing this year while acknowledging how hard our team has worked to get us to the point where filling vacant posts was possible again. We welcomed three new members to our social work team in Edinburgh, Emma Quinn, Tim Rogerson and Julie Arbuckle. Eugenia Dorosz has also joined the Admin Team as well. They have all brought a freshness and enthusiasm that has been very welcome. However, we also saw three staff retire in this year, Carole Bell, Ruth Dolan and the longest serving member of staff in the agency's history, Denise Burgess. Denise's contribution to the work of St Andrew's Children's Society has been immense and the enthusiasm she brought to her work never diminished in her 34 years of service. Another member of staff, Michael Opitz, moved onto a new career in teaching. It is also worth recognising that both Tracey Turnbull in Edinburgh and Debbie McDonald in Aberdeen have joined the management team and have already made an important impact on our planning and direction.

I wish to give special mention to our fundraisers, Dan and Karen Docwra from The Docwra Partnership. The fundraising world has been significantly impacted by the effects of the pandemic and the uncertainties in the financial markets has made their work a great deal more challenging. Despite this, they continue to bring in voluntary funding that has helped us provide adoption support services in particular while contributing to our achievement of finishing the year in such good financial health.

Our Head of Marketing, Tara Macgregor, has continued to work tirelessly to ensure our name is out there promoting the needs of vulnerable children.

As the year came to an end, we were on the brink of moving to our new office in Aberdeen which is a crucial part of our strategy to ensure our services in the North of Scotland are secure and well organised.

Our adoption support work does remain a significant area of our work. The spike in family support last year may have been a reflection of the impact families experienced from Covid, and this year it has returned to a level similar to previous years. There is a noticeable increase in adoption counselling work (working with adoptees, birth family members) and this may reflect the high media profile that historical adoption practices have had. We have planned a programme to run the Safebase® Therapeutic Parenting courses next year. We used the period when we could not run the course to streamline it and reduce the time commitment from families so as to make it as accessible as possible to all our families once they have children placed. We have had a very generous grant from the Gallo Trust set up by one of our adopters, Anita Gallo, to allow us to subsidise this training and we have planned to run the course four times a year at no cost to families. This is an exciting new addition to our annual training programme for adopters.

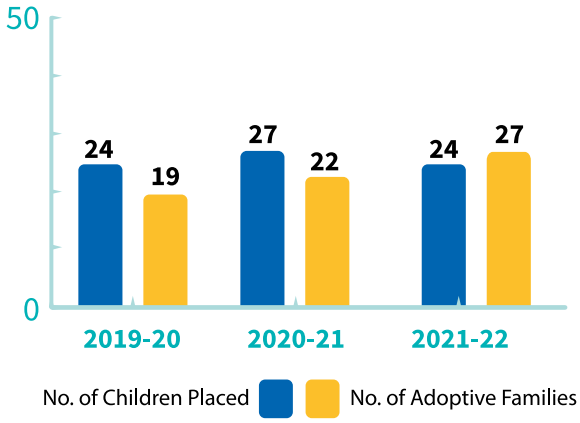
The recruitment of adopters has continued at a relatively high level with increases in numbers over the last three years. This means that we have a wide range of approved adopters who we hope will help meet the diverse needs of children looking for adoption. We started this year with a target of 30 placements, higher than the previous year, and although we fell short of that target we remain positive about our placement numbers since we would have met the target had some of the children we had matched not had their legal plans delayed.

While we are still recruiting concurrent carers, we are not seeing the children who might benefit from this form of early permanence being referred. We are working with West Lothian Council to try and understand this, and early indications are that we are having more problems getting Children's Hearings Scotland to see this as a potential permanency option. We have tried again to have dialogue with other local authorities in East Central Scotland to consider collaborating with us in trying to offer this option to more children and their families, however, in uncertain times it is often difficult to progress something new and innovative. We have the evidence to show how important a permanency route is for some children, so we will continue to try and grow this part of our service.

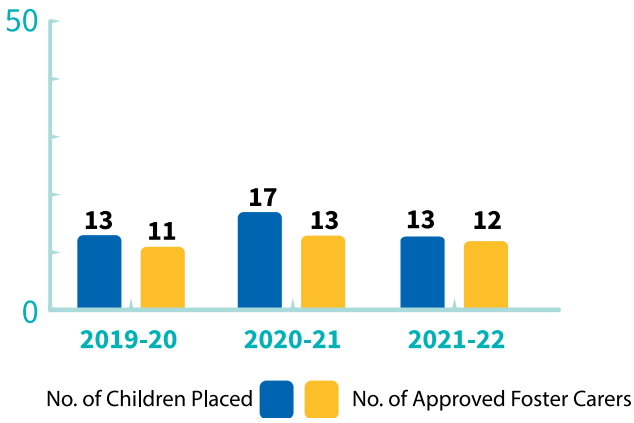
As the children with our foster carers reach adulthood our numbers obviously go down and given that most of our carers had their children for many years, they usually retire rather than consider other placements

Adoption Support Services	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Adoption Counselling	20	11	38
Adoption Support to Families	80	135	69
Direct work with Children	14	15	22
Information Exchange	7	8	8
Families completed SafeBase (from 2010)	94	94	94

New referrals for adoption support services



Adoption Placements over 3 years



Foster Care Placements over 3 years

when the foster children become more independent. This means that our numbers of carers have been gradually dropping over recent years. We have renewed our foster carer recruitment strategy and plan to hold foster carer open evenings and fostering drop-in slots and will work hard to recruit new foster carers for some of the older children in the care system who often have quite challenging and complex needs.

St Andrew's Children's Society continues to enjoy the strong backing of and oversight by a Board of Trustees which is committed to improving the lives of children and their families. The Board were able to 'steady the ship' during the uncertainties caused by the pandemic and are now engaged in looking forward and considering new ways to develop our services in the future. Similarly, our professional standards are closely scrutinised by the volunteers who serve as Adoption and Foster Care Panel members, and we remain grateful to them for their insight and commitment. We are ready to start gradually reintroducing face to face panels as we feel strongly that this is an important point of interface between adopters and foster carers and the agency.

In order to plan for the future it is vital that we have a sense of our past, so that we may learn from our experiences. We have an invaluable opportunity to do this in this year, as we start to celebrate our centenary year. We believe that we continue to contribute to our rich heritage of supporting children and families to achieve their full potential.

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
CEO

the promise scotland

The Promise Scotland is responsible for driving the work of change demanded by the findings of the Scottish Government's Independent Care Review.

It works with all kinds of organisations to support shifts in policy, practice and culture so Scotland can **#KeepThePromise** it made to care experienced infants, children, young people, adults and their families - that every child grows up loved, safe and respected, able to realise their full potential. A clear message came out of the Independent Care Review that adopted and care-experienced children wanted to be kept with their siblings.

Duty of candour 2021/22

1. **How many incidents happened to which the duty of candour applies?**
   In the last year (1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022), 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.

Chair of the Board of Trustees

It has been my pleasure to continue to chair the Board of Trustees for St Andrew's Children's Society over the past year. The year 2022 is an important milestone for St Andrew's Children's Society because it marks one hundred years since its inception.

We are marking this with a number of fundraising and celebratory events, including a concert, sponsored fundraising activities, a ceilidh and events involving dignitaries and adopted families and foster carers. There will also be blogs and publications featuring the history and work of St Andrew's Children's Society over the years. It is interesting to reflect on the changing nature of the work over the last century, from supporting pregnant young women to offering homes to children with complex needs through adoption and fostering and providing high quality support to the families caring for them. The Board is looking forward to the next one hundred years! We are confident that St Andrew's Children's Society will continue to play an important role in meeting the needs of vulnerable children and families and that we can continue to adjust to cultural and societal changes whilst still championing the need for children, who cannot stay with their birth families or kinship carers, to have life-long families through adoption and fostering.

The past year has posed a number of challenges for St Andrew's Children's Society. The continued impact of the pandemic has meant that much of the core work has been undertaken remotely, including the training and assessment of families, the operation of the adoption and fostering panel and meetings of the Board. Staff have continued to work from home to a large extent. Despite these challenges the quality of work has remained extremely high, with very good feedback from those who use our services. Credit is due to the staff and managers who have adapted to these working arrangements, and to the families we work with, who have been understanding and flexible. The recruitment of adoptive families has remained buoyant and we have succeeded in almost achieving our target for adoption placements. This is despite a fall in the number of children being referred to Scotland's Adoption Register, probably as a result of delays in planning for individual children because of the pandemic, but also because of evolving social work practice in the light of the National Care Review and The Promise Scotland. We are seeking to embed the principles of The Promise Scotland in our work, to incorporate any changes needed into our strategic and operational plans.

During the course of the past year we have recruited a number of new trustees to the Board and between them they bring an impressive range of talent and skills. We currently have nine Board members and continue to review our skill set and recruit other trustees accordingly. The Board has overseen a healthy financial out-turn for the year and has been able to support the recruitment of staff to fill gaps in management, practice and administrative support. Our positive financial position has meant that we have been able to look to purchase office accommodation in Aberdeen and the search for somewhere suitable is ongoing. We have been able to increase staff salaries in line with local and national trends and have strengthened IT security in response to issues identified.

The Board looks to the future with confidence. There are a number of uncertainties about the future shape of adoption and fostering in Scotland, as illustrated by the fall in numbers of children being referred to the Adoption Registers in the UK. We will continue to champion adoption as a positive option for children who cannot be brought up by their birth families and will work to demonstrate the positive outcomes such children have through St Andrew's Children's Society. We will continue to lobby for better support for adoptive families in Scotland, which still lags behind other parts of the UK, and we will continue to provide such support direct to families and to strive for innovative and creative interventions with children and families.

I hope you will find this annual review interesting and informative. Many thanks for all your support.

Robert Swift
CHAIR OF THE BOARD
OF TRUSTEES

Adoption support

For many of us, it feels like we are coming back 'to normal service' after such a long period of restrictions and caution – for good reason of course.

However, here we are at the end of another year, reflecting back on what we have been doing and what else we would like to do as part of our adoption support service to our families.

It is pleasing to say that as a team we are back in the office and seeing families face to face again and it feels good. Zoom® meetings are great and efficient, but for much of our work you can't beat the experience of being in the same room/space as one another.

The training and workshops we have offered over the past year continue to be well received, with Friends and Family Training online proving to be a big winner – 183 people attended this training between April 2021 and January 2022! Amazing. Feedback from the attendees include comments such as 'Very helpful, thank you very much. The timings and presentation was great'… ' Very interesting as an adopted child myself. Thank you'…'A fascinating insight on how to help loved ones in the adoption process. It makes so much sense – especially the funnelling. Thank you so much'.

Listening to newly approved adopters and those who have had children placed with them they have commented on how helpful this has been to them – the fact that their parents/supporters now really get what they are talking about with regards to their child's needs.

In December we had the virtual Christmas Party with Magic Gareth – a lot of fun. We expect to have our Christmas Party in person this year, so watch out for the announcement for both Edinburgh and Aberdeen!

In January we restarted the Single Adopters Group and made it open to single adopters from all of the Edinburgh adoption agencies and single adopters living in Edinburgh, Mid, East and West Lothian. The first meeting was held online but since then we have had an in-person meeting too. Julie Arbuckle, who helps facilitate the group with Emma Quinn, baked scones when the group met in person and plans to bake them again for the next meeting, making it even more of a date for the diary!

We are continuing to deliver the Introduction to using Theraplay™ principles with our families and they are well attended. This workshop gives the adopters and foster carers the opportunity to experience what Theraplay can feel like for their child, who will have missed some of the early attachment and bonding experiences in their early years (or not have got enough of them).

It seems this year we have had a lot of requests for tracing and life story work from our families and adoptees. I am aware this can unsettle people, especially adopters, who are so attached and committed to their child, yet can experience a sense of panic or potential loss when their child/teenager asks for more information about their early childhood/birth family. This work requires a steady hand for everyone involved, the young person and his/her parents. Though it can feel scary (especially for the parents) it can result in really positive outcomes for all.

Providing a workshop on Adolescence and Identity gives parents the chance to understand what their teenagers are facing or going through and to talk about how it is affecting them as parents. The teenage years are seldom a 'walk in the park' – we have all gone through them!

St Andrew's Children's Society changed our lives for the better 25 years ago. *They offered us strength and support when we were very sad and hopeless. We have never looked back and our two wonderful children aged 16 and 22 make us happy every day. Cannot thank the whole team for everything they have done for us all. Best decision we have ever made was making our family through adoption.*

One of the nicest bits of our work is when requests come in for references for college/ university grants – in talking to parents/ young people about what they are going on to do we have the chance to celebrate their achievement.

In August, we had our annual Picnic and Storytelling event. The marvellous 'Mrs Mash the Storytelling Cook' came into entertain us with her fun songs. Everyone at the office commented on the sounds of children and chatter in the garden and the big room.

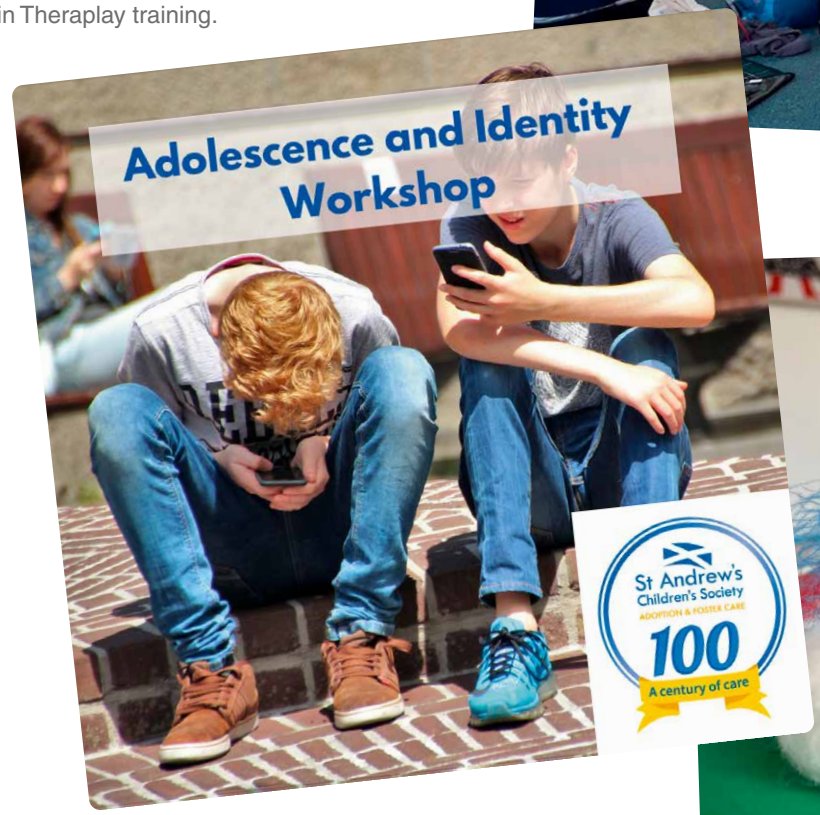
Now on the run up to the autumn we are planning our training calendar for next year – if you have any ideas and want to share them do let us know.

Adoption Support Team

[right] Mrs Mash's storytelling event.

[below] Social media marketing for our Adolescence and Identity Workshop.

(below right) A small selection of items used in Theraplay training.



Aberdeen

[left-right] Aberdeen City Park and County Rangers childrens' activities at Duthie Woods and Collieston Beach.

It has been a busy and challenging time for the Aberdeen team as we moved back from home-based to office-based working. As the world slowly opened up once more, we could return to planning events and groups, but uncertainty loomed over us all. Individuals and staff were never quite sure how far to plan in advance due to ever changing restrictions and health advice!

From April 2021 through to the end of March 2022, we have had ten families approved as adoptive families and seven children placed with their adoptive families. The children ranged from babies up to the age of five years old. Some of these children are part of sibling groups which will help ensure that brothers and sisters are given the opportunity to grow up together. As well as this being best practice and what every worker would strive for anyway – wherever possible – it is also part of The Promise Scotland (see page 4).

The challenges of the last year have meant us often having to be creative in our assessment visits; some took place online; some in people's homes; some even took place in gardens with warm blankets and an umbrella! Every worker and the family being assessed had to balance the need for a thorough assessment against what they felt comfortable with in terms of personal contact in their own individual circumstance. We got there in the end though!

In summer, I took on the role of acting service manager for a period of one year. This is a role I have loved as it challenges me but also allows me to still work with families. My first task was to try and identify suitable office accommodation which we could purchase. Although our rented office had served us well for the last six years or so, we had outgrown it; so in August we looked at a building in Dee Street. This saga will be continued in next year's annual review!

In October last year we welcomed a new member of staff into our team into her first-ever post as a qualified social worker. However, she felt quite quickly that this was not the job for her and left after six months, finding employment which is much more local to her. We wish her well in her new role. The other change to staffing is that Shiona has now reduced her hours by one day per week and now works four days a week.

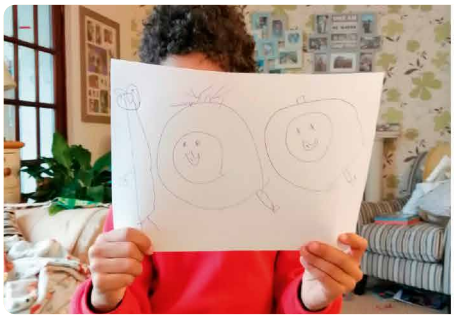
October was also the month that Grampian Pride was able to be held again; having been cancelled in 2020. Due to restrictions, this was still a smaller event, but it was well attended and our new member of staff attended, along with myself and Shiona. The event was a good opportunity to promote adoption and fostering among the LGBT+ community. We do feel that in the north east of Scotland our message of embracing diversity is now being heard; of the ten families approved to adopt, 50% of them were same sex couples this year; 20% of families were practising Christians and 10% were from an ethnic minorities background. Some of those families already have children placed with them; some are in the matching process and some are still in the family-finding stage.

In February 2022 we ran a fundraising challenge in celebration of our centenary year. One of our families raised £251 by completing a reading challenge with her six year old son, while another family raised £25, when their ten year old daughter made and sold her home-made strawberry lip balm. I carry one in my handbag and I have to say it is delicious!

February was also the month we held our first group in over two years. We would like to thank the Aberdeen City Park Rangers for facilitating this for us, when we ran a minibeast class at Duthie Park. This was attended by eleven children ranging from five to thirteen years of age. Then in March we had fun at Collieston Beach pond-dipping with Aberdeen City Country Rangers, and would like to thank all involved. We had thirteen children attend, ranging from five years right up to fifteen. We have further classes arranged with them.

Debbie McDonald ACTING SERVICE MANAGER

Fundraising report



At the beginning of 2021/22, the affects of Covid-19 were still being strongly felt in all areas of our lives. We were just one of many charities that had undergone lots of changes during lockdown, and it was time to look to the immediate future and decide what was required to ensure full recovery and the needs of staff, to ensure that they had the support and resources needed to speed that recovery.

At the height of the pandemic, 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.

One such funder was Adapt and Thrive, a communities recovery fund by a partnership of several major Scottish organisations and companies. We were very fortunate to receive a grant of £75,000 towards our own identified recovery needs, especially growing our team to meet the growing need for our services.

Throughout the year, our fundraising concentrated on ensuring recovery continued, so the additional £34,250 from trusts and foundations was directed towards the core costs of St Andrew's Children's Society. Later in the year, additional funding to support the re-development of our SafeBase Parenting Programme was received from the Edinburgh-based Ryvoan Trust – £15,000 per year for three years. Added to this was £10,000 over two years from The Hugh Fraser Foundation.

For the past five years, we have received £40,500 each year towards our core costs from the Scottish Governments, Children, Young People and Families Early Intervention Fund. The year ended with the announcement of a further year's funding for 2022/23.

As we entered 2022, so began our plans to celebrate our centenary year with events for celebration, participation or contribution, starting with the Family February FUNdraiser – inviting families and supporters to come up with 100 ways to raise £100 from 100 people.

Jill Ritchie led Team Ritchie to an amazing £455. Claire Fitzsimmons encouraged folk to enter the 100 Book Challenge, with 'Read All About It' raising £251. Kelly Rossbender 'Walked This Way' to a fantastic £530, and then, slightly delayed to ensure everything was prepared, Antony Swift, son of our Chair, sang his way into our hearts with some of Elvis's biggest hits and raised a staggering £586. And finally, our own wonderful staff, Tim Rogerson, Julie Arbuckle and Emma Quinn donned their swimming gear for a bit of wild swimming in February –'brrr' – raising a brilliant £151.

The H Family have been selling home-made lip balm. So far they have raised £25 for us. The H Family have always been very supportive of our organisation and have often gifted us financial support.

By the end of March, we had raised £1,972 towards our target for the year of £10,000.

In addition to all the supporters mentioned, we would like to add our grateful thanks to the following organisations for their generosity:

The Hobson Charity, The Ryvoan Trust, The Sir Jules Thorne Charitable Trust, The W A Cargill Charitable Trust, Souter Charitable Trust, The Arnold Clark Community Fund, The Meikle Foundation, The Swinton Paterson Trust, The John Gordon Charitable Trust, The PF Charitable Trust, Thistledown Trust, The Ward Family Charitable Trust.

Dan & Karen Docwra FUNDRAISING CONSULTANTS

Our centenary

St Andrew's Children's Society celebrates its centenary this year. This adoption and fostering agency has helped vulnerable children ever since a group of Catholic women, under the leadership of Lady Margaret Kerr, was formed in 1922 to offer support to unmarried pregnant women and their babies.

We've offered a variety of services

Over the years the scope of their work has varied, including among others:

- foster care and adoption
- holidays for children in residential care
- marriage guidance
- material support to struggling families

Our name has changed but our commitment hasn't. The name of the group also changed. It has been known as:

- The Catholic Enquiry Office
- Catholic Social Services
- St Andrew's Children's Society (since 1983)

The work, however, has never stopped and has always been in response to the needs of the vulnerable in our country.

We've moved a lot!

St Andrew's Children's Society has had many homes in the last 100 years. Various sites in Edinburgh, including:

- Victoria Street
- Brandon Street
- Gillis Centre
- John's Place (since 2003)

Also, for several years in the 70s, an office in Dundee, and since 2013 an office in Aberdeen.

How I became involved with St Andrew's Children's Society

I have been involved with St Andrew's Children's Society for 55 of the 100 years, since my husband and I applied to adopt a baby in 1967.

After several meetings with our social worker, Jo Landgrebe, we were accepted as adopters and welcomed our first daughter in 1968. Over the next ten years we adopted another four children and have never regretted our decision, although as all parents know, there can be days when you question your sanity in ever having children!

The important role of the Adoption Panel

In 1982 I was asked to join the Adoption Panel, which advises on the suitability of adoption applicants. Like my husband and I, most, but not all, applicants apply to adopt because they are having problems conceiving a birth child. As an adopter myself, I understand the great longing to parent a child, but the Adoption Panel must always put the needs of children first, and occasionally must advise that prospective adopters may not be able to meet the extra needs an adoptive child brings to a family.

Adapting to changing needs in society

Before the commencement of the Abortion Act 1967 most children placed for adoption were very young babies, whose single mothers did not have support to keep their child. After April 1968 the number of children being placed for adoption fell gradually, and St Andrew's Children's Society had to consider its future role. We continued to support a number of pregnant girls who did not wish to terminate their pregnancies, and we were aware that, while there were very few babies needing a new family, there were hundreds of children in the care of local authorities who needed new permanent families.

The decision was taken to continue working to support these children and the families who adopted or fostered them. The Adoption Agencies Regulations 1983 meant all adoption agencies had to be registered, inspected and employ qualified social work staff, and at that point St Andrew's Children's Society was formally registered as St Andrew's Children's Society Ltd.

St Andrew's Children's Society prepares and supports families who adopt

We know that children who are taken into the care of Local Authorities have suffered neglect and abuse, and can find it very hard to trust adults. The preparation of adoptive parents nowadays is therefore longer and more intensive, and support after a child is placed can be needed for many years afterwards. Knowing that these children have suffered so much, we do all we can to ensure they have a happier safer future, and this means that adoptive parents must feel comfortable in asking for support from St Andrew's Children's Society and other therapeutic professionals. St Andrew's Children's Society has developed lots of supports so that families can turn for help whenever it is needed. I have the greatest admiration for those families who adopt children who have experienced trauma in their early lives and who are willing to help their healing over many years.

They understand the importance of child development

There is so much more understanding of child development nowadays and of the therapeutic work which can help alleviate damage children have suffered, and on a personal level I have benefitted so much from my involvement with St Andrew's Children's Society.

Child development was not as well understood in the 1970s…

Healthy early life attachments weren't understood

The importance of a child making healthy attachments was not understood in the 1970s, and so we struggled to understand the insecurities of our child who spent his first year in a children's home, with no secure attachments to anyone. Within a few months of his joining our family we moved house and then he had a further change when we went on holiday. For years later he dreaded holidays and really acted up before we went, enjoyed a few days of holiday then started worrying about moving back home again. And we really did not know why!

Children with learning difficulties weren't as well understood

Our youngest child has learning difficulties and lived in several places before we adopted him at two and a half. Again, we went on holiday a few weeks after he joined us! He spent that holiday clinging to me, as the strongest link to his foster carers, and I was too proud to admit how difficult I found this needy little boy. As it was, our friends thought we were mad to be adopting a fifth child. Only later, with my involvement with St Andrew's Children's Society, did I begin to understand some of the issues he had and still suffers.

A person's cultural heritage wasn't given importance

One of our children has a parent from Asia, and again, there was little understanding of how important a person's roots are. We thought that with our love and support we could give security, but more involvement with her cultural heritage would have given her more confidence when she experienced racial abuse outside our home.

St Andrew's Children's Society will always be there for you

Preparation of families is so much more informed nowadays and can take longer, but despite the impatience to move in the process, most adoptive parents really appreciate this preparation time especially after a child is placed with them. What really matters is knowing that families can ask for help, no matter how many years have passed since a child was placed – I have done it 50 years later!

Our special 'Baby Story'

One thing my husband and I did get right was being honest with our children about their journey to our family and telling them often how much we loved them. We had the 'Baby Story' which was repeated countless times. It began with us, a couple who wanted to share their love with children but no baby came, and it followed with the story of each child joining the family. We had been advised to tell our children of their adoption, but had not realised how often that telling would be. We found that at various times – about the time they started school, then about age 9 or 10, and again in early teens the story was needed again and again, and with five children that was lots of times. Hopefully it provided some of the security we did not know how to provide in other ways.

I can only say that with our five children and nine grandchildren, I feel very blessed to have contacted St Andrew's Children's Society 55 years ago.

Maureen McEvoy MBE

Former Chairperson & Agency Decision Maker at St Andrew's Children's Society who worked for the adoption and fostering agency on a voluntary basis for 50 years.

This article originally appeared on our website in January 2022: **sacsadopt.scot**/blog/st-andrews-childrens-societys-centenary

Marketing

Due to the pandemic we were still working from home during the Fostering Network's Foster Care Fortnight® in May 2021 and so we held a Virtual Fostering Evening in order to raise awareness about fostering. Similarly, we held a Virtual Adoption Information Evening during Adoption Week Scotland in November 2021 to raise awareness about adoption.

We attended Grampian Pride 2021 which was lovely after the previous two events had been online.

As we had started to move back into the office we held an in person LGBT+ Adoption & Fostering Information Evening in our Edinburgh office and a LGBT+ Adoption & Fostering Open Day in our Aberdeen office during New Family Social's LGBT+ Adoption & Fostering Week in February 2022. These two events were our first in person Adoption and Fostering Information events since the start of the pandemic.

Stephen Small, our CEO, talked on KingdomFM and Original 106 FM about legislation announced by the Scottish Government to keep siblings together. He was also interviewed with Stephen, one of our adopters, for a BBC Sounds *Clever About Cash* podcast in which they talked about the consideration potential adopters or foster carers should give to money matters if they adopt or foster. It was also aired on BBC Radio Scotland. We would like to give special thanks to our adopter for doing the interview.

We are continuing to publish our blog post on a regular basis and would like to thank all our families and members of staff who have contributed so far. Their blog posts make for a very interesting read!

To mark the start of our Centenary in January 2022, Maureen McEvoy, MBE, explored the many changes we have gone through in the last 100 years and gave a personal account of how she first became involved with our adoption and fostering agency 55 years ago in her blog post which is included in this annual review.

Our Edinburgh office has been fitted out with eye-catching branded blinds which were installed in time for us all moving back into the office to work. Aberdeen will be next!

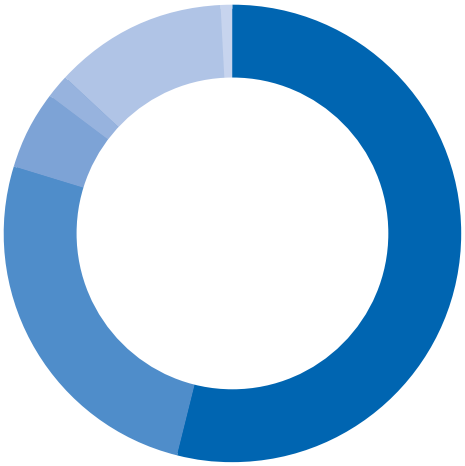
Finally, we would like to thank Tim Griffiths, our consultant designer who has helped us with numerous projects this year including our biannual eight page newsletter, our annual review, our Centenary logo, our Centenary T-shirts, our QR code cards and more! Special thanks go too to Charles Macintosh, our consultant website designer who readied our website for the Centenary, and has worked with us on many different website related projects. We are grateful for their continued commitment to St Andrew's Children's Society as well as their experience and expertise.

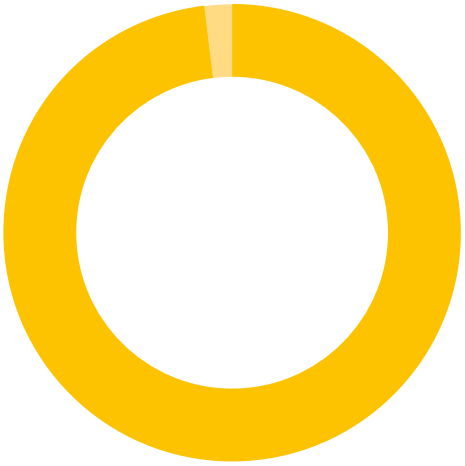
Tara Macgregor HEAD OF MARKETING

Financial activities: For the year ending 31st March 2022

Income

Charitable activities (Adoption)	£715,153
Charitable activities (Fostering)	£342,030
Covid -19 Awards	£75,000
Training income	£23,250
Voluntary grants and donations	£161,148
Investment income	£8,575
Other income	£0
Total income	**£ 1,325,156**





Expenditure

£1,455,403	Charitable expenditure
£27,790	Costs of generating funds
£1,483,193	**Total expenditure**

A full copy of the **audited 2021/22 Accounts and Annual Report** can be requested from our Edinburgh office.

Financial review: For the year ending 31st March 2022

As shown in the financial activities, there was a net expenditure for the year of £141,548 (2021: £6,383) before the actuarial movement on the pension scheme, comprising deficits of £173,561 in unrestricted funds and surpluses of £32,013 in restricted funds.

Despite Covid-19 the results have been encouraging with adoption placement numbers increasing to 24 (2021: 27). Fostering and respite fees have also declined to £337,878 (2021: £355,861). The employment of a part-time fundraiser continued during the year at a cost of £24,000 (2021: £24,000) and total grants and donations of £161,148 (2021: £139,615) were received. A further £75,000 (2021: £77,846) of Covid-19 specific awards was also received in the year.

The net movement in funds highlights a £45,452 increase compared to £300,383 in the previous year. This results in total funds carried forward of £1,783,796 (2021: £1,738,344) of which £1,722,173 (2021: £1,708,734) is unrestricted and £61,623 (2021: £29,610) is restricted.

Principal risks and uncertainties

While we are emerging from the Covid-19 crisis in good financial health, it is still clear that permanency plans for children, that were stalled as a result of working practices being affected by the Pandemic, are not being progressed as quickly as they should. This can result in adoption placements taking longer to achieve and this has a knock-on effect on our income potential.

We are also wary of the ongoing impact of Brexit on the economy and the future financial blow that may result from the war in Europe. While none of these things have a direct impact on our work, how it affects the lives of people who may be interested in adopting or fostering could have a bearing on our finances.

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:

Our friends and families who have entered in to the spirit of our Centenary Year fundraising campaign. Adapt and Thrive Fund, The Hugh Fraser Foundation, The Hobson Charity, The Ryvoan Trust, The Sir Jules Thorne Charitable Trust, The W A Cargill Charitable Trust, Souter Charitable Trust, The Arnold Clark Community Fund, The Meikle Foundation, The Swinton Paterson Trust, The John Gordon Charitable Trust, The PF Charitable Trust, Thistledown Trust, The Ward Family Charitable Trust.

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

Who we are

Board of Trustees

Robert Swift
Social Work Consultant
Chair/Trustee

Innes Ledingham
Chartered Accountant
Vice Chair

Kirsty Fergusson
Accountant
Treasurer

Kay Barton [from Mar 2022]
Retired Civil Servant
Trustee

Celia Borland
Resource Team Manager, East Lothian Council
Trustee

Donald Canavan [from Nov 2021]
Architect & Adoptee
Trustee

Anne Hampton
Independent Social Worker
Trustee

Sheriff Roderick MacLeod
Sheriff
Trustee

Keith Saddler [from Nov 2021]
Finance Director
Trustee

Management Team

Stephen Small
CEO

Charlie Egan
Service Manager

Rita Grant
Adoption Support Manager

Claire McMahon
Office Manager

Edinburgh Staff Team

Tracey Turnbull
Acting Service Manager [from May 2021]

Julie Arbuckle [from Nov 2021]
Senior Practitioner

Carole Bell [left Jul 2021]
Senior Practitioner

Denise Burgess [left Mar 2022]
Senior Practitioner

Katie Delap
Senior Practitioner

Ruth Dolan [left Jun 2021]
Senior Practitioner

Iona Hughes
Senior Practitioner

Lorna MacFarlane
Senior Practitioner

Michael Opitz [left Jul 2021]
Senior Practitioner

Cathryn Thompson
Senior Practitioner

Emma Quinn [from Sep 2021]
Social Worker

Tim Rogerson [from Aug 2021]
Social Worker

Carolyn Smith
Administrator

Sandra Williams
Administrator

Eugenia Dorosz [from Mar 2022]
Reception/Administration Assistant

Tara Macgregor
Head of Marketing

Aberdeen Staff Team

Debbie McDonald
Acting Service Manager [from Aug 2021]

Shiona Freeman
Senior Practitioner

Gillian McHaffie
Senior Practitioner

Carla Hume [from Oct 2021]
Social Worker

Velga McDougall
Administrator

Consultants

Stephen Buchan
IT Consultant

Dan & Karen Docwra
Fundraising Consultants

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

David Johnson
Policy Officer, Scottish Government
Chair

Marion Wood
Retired Social Worker
Depute Chair

Ian Fraser
Medical Advisor & Panel Member

Celia Borland
Resource Team Manager, East Lothian Council
Panel Member

Lesley Hunter
Social Worker, West Lothian Council
Panel Member

Sarah Mathews
Adoptive Parent
Panel Member

Maureen McEvoy MBE
Adoptive Parent
Panel Member

Steven McFarlane
Adoptive Parent
Panel Member

Jen McNabb
Social Worker, City of Edinburgh Council
Panel Member

John Robertson
Adoptive Parent
Panel Member

Claire Smith
Adoptee
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**

Scan me to visit our site to find out more

sacsadopt.scot **info@standrews-children.org.uk**

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