introduction

Not all children are born with an equal chance. Aberlour is there for Scotland’s hidden children, when others let them down. Because every child deserves the chance to flourish.

We listen

Our services are tailored to help each child, young person or family to be the very best they can be.

We support them to overcome significant challenges like growing up in and leaving care, living with a disability and dealing with the impact of drugs and alcohol on family life. We offer support at the earliest opportunity: giving children the best possible start in life is at the heart of everything we do.

Aberlour has a rich history of delivering vital services to vulnerable children, young people and their families. Since our inception as an orphanage in Speyside in 1875, we have developed a significant reputation for delivering high quality services. We work across Scotland, from the Borders to the Highlands.
what we do

We make life easier for families where a child has a disability
Our Options and Family Services help children, young people and the families that care for them, to get the most out of life, through a range of personalised support.

We give babies a brighter future by building confidence in parents
Our Family Support and Early Years services help families with young children to give them the best start in life through building their skills, confidence and resilience.

We offer a safe and loving place to live for children who have suffered abuse and trauma
We have more than 140 years of experience delivering specialist residential and fostering services and we’re still working with Scotland’s most vulnerable children and young people today.

We help families recover from drug and alcohol addiction so their children can thrive
We provide tailored support to children who are affected by parental drug misuse. We also work with families to overcome challenges and promote positive change.

We work with young people and their families to prevent their problems from spiralling out of control
We provide opportunities that engage young people and families, and inspire them to make positive choices.

our vision
To give every child the chance to flourish and, through this, contribute to building a fairer and more equal society.

our values

Respect
Acting in a way that shows we care about the feelings of one another, and that we listen to one another’s opinions.

Innovative
Finding new, efficient ways to do things.

Integrity
Doing the right thing, even when no-one else is watching.

Challenging
Testing ourselves and those around us and not accepting the status quo.
There have been many highlights this year for Aberlour and I would like to choose two in particular as they demonstrate, quite differently, the impact we have made in delivering high-quality services and the enduring level of support for Aberlour; with both demonstrating the need for Aberlour to continue with its activities.

The last year saw a continuation of a successful period for Aberlour within its 142 year history. We engaged proactively with our staff groups and held our Staff Conference in the autumn of 2016. This year also saw a very successful youth conference being held by Aberlour.

This conference was designed and supported by young people themselves and involved 50 young people coming together for a weekend to discuss important issues for them. Given the success of the first conference we have given a commitment to our young people that we will continue to support these events.

Our established services across residential care and disability continue to perform well with grading from inspection agencies consistently above the national average. Spot purchase and self-directed support demands within these services has grown and Aberlour will continue to build on this success as we move forward.

We have achieved considerable organisational boost from the success in being awarded a tender for the provision of residential care from the Highland Council. We continue to build our reputation for delivering high quality family support and early intervention. We have successfully delivered an innovative, capacity building approach to supporting women affected by poor mental health in the perinatal stage and have plans to develop this approach across Scotland in future years.

We have also successfully developed a service providing early intervention for young people who are on the “Edge of Care” and we were awarded two year funding from the STV Appeal to implement and develop this further in the Highlands.

We have continued to use our experience to help shape government policy to improve the experiences of a range of groups within the childcare environment including those with disabilities, looked after children, asylum seekers and refugees. During the year Aberlour has been represented on the Scottish Government’s Child Protection Improvement Programme and have an active role in advising the Systems Review Group on ways to enhance Scotland’s formal child protection arrangements, covering policy, practice, services and structures.

We look forward to continuing to deliver on our strategy and reaching yet more children and families over the course of the next year.

SallyAnn Kelly – Chief Executive
Because of the shock of my loss and the illness, I couldn’t keep on top of my house. When the health visitor came round after Neil died and saw the state of my house, the children were put on the at risk register. It was dirty, messy, a nightmare. I can’t remember it fully because I’ve blocked it out.

“My children have also struggled. Jessica was bullied, suffered anxiety and developed ME, forcing her to leave school. Erin wouldn’t speak to anyone apart from her mum and sisters and was diagnosed as selectively mute caused by stress. She and Charlie suffered night terrors.”

Aberlour Family Outreach got involved with the family, initially to provide some extra social opportunities and support for the girls, including equine therapy for Charlie.

“It’s like a magic wand. She came back and she was beaming. She gets to give a name to her horse. She called it Neil, after her dad. I get support too, from a family worker called David. He puts me in touch with people and agencies that can help me. I’m now working towards a degree in IT.”

Social services reversed their decision on the children after a few months and Wenna managed to stop drinking five years ago.

“Aberlour helped me to live without my husband and without alcohol. You grow a feeling within you of wanting to try harder, because you know there’s someone believing in you. Helping me means I can be better for my children.”

Russell was taken into foster care at 11 years old because his family were struggling to look after him. He has complex additional support needs. He was placed with two foster families, but the placements broke down as he struggled to be away from his family home.

Russell then came to Aberlour Options – Ayrshire in January 2011.

The Options service normally offers short break care that gives families a rest from their caring role. However, the service fought to give Russell a permanent home.

“I am about to complete my first year at Ayrshire college where I have been studying a course called Connect to Enterprise. I have already been accepted into my second year; Connect to Learning.

“I work at a charity shop. The thing I enjoy most is being given the opportunity to be responsible for myself and show people what I can do and how hard I am willing to work. I love learning new things and if I find something in the shop that I cannot do I am straight in the manager’s ear asking her to teach me. I also love when it comes to the end of the day; finding out how much money we have made as it makes me really happy knowing that this is going to help care for people who need it most.

“I went to Scouts since I was about 12 all the way through until my 18th birthday. I was very sad at the thought of leaving Scouts as it has been in my life for so long now so I was delighted when they asked me to apply to become a Cubs leader especially as it has always been a dream of mine to work with young kids and care for them the way my workers cared for me growing up.

“I initially wanted to become a volunteer as I wanted some work experience and to build up my CV so that I had a better chance of getting a good job in the future. Now that I have been doing it for a while I find it really enjoyable and love being able to help others.

“I hope to stay at college for another few years yet but would like to eventually get out into the world and start earning some money so that I can treat myself a bit more. My dream job would either be to work as a carer or to be an ambulance/paramedic assistant. I like the idea of being able to work with children who are in the same situation as I was a few years ago and being able to tell them that it will be all right in the end and that there is a light at the end of the tunnel – just look at me!”
Aberlour Family Outreach Dundee helps parents and children who are struggling to cope as a result of drug and alcohol use in the family.

We worked with a young mum who became a secret heroin addict, aged 30.

Lynne* began taking drugs to cope when her two children’s disruptive behaviour started causing problems at school. It took several years for her son and his young sister to be diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder and, in the meantime, she had plunged into addiction.

Lynne said: “It seems crazy looking back, a woman of my age starting to take heroin. At the time, though, it felt like an escape from everything that was going on. I knew my son wasn’t just behaving badly. I knew there was something else going on from when he was wee but I just couldn’t get him help. I was going up the wall. Then my sister died and my grandparents died and I just reached the end of my rope.

“Where I lived there were dealers everywhere and I just started taking it. I felt like I was banging my head off the wall trying to get help for my kids. I felt like I was drowning. I was struggling to manage my kids but I never neglected them. They were always washed and dressed and off to school but, in the space of a few months, without anyone knowing, I became a heroin addict. I started going downhill, getting faster all the time.”

“I got put in touch with Aberlour Outreach Dundee. They helped my children in school, providing me with support with what ADHD is and how to live with it, and they supported me at home as I fought to get clean of drugs. Finally, finally, I got myself on the straight and narrow but my kids had still not been diagnosed.

“I was terrified they were going to be forced to leave school and would never get back into mainstream education. But when they were diagnosed with ADHD, it seemed everything started fitting into place. They’re doing great now.

“Since my daughter’s been on her medication, it’s like night and day. She’s a different wee person. Aberlour have been great with her. She has a befriender, a student who sees her every week for one to one support. It helps her but helps me too. Because of the stress and the drugs, I had isolated myself, cut myself off from everyone. Just knowing Aberlour was there for me, to call on, like a friend, made a huge difference.

“I could talk to them and ask for advice on things that I would find difficult to talk to anyone else about. They encourage me to lead a normal life again and help me take small steps. They’re only small steps but every one is taking me and my kids back to a normal life.”

*Lynne’s name has been changed
**aberlour income**

**2016/17**

- **Resources from charitable activities** £13,707,000
- **Restricted donations** £1,035,000
- **Unrestricted donations** £684,000
- **Legacies** £389,000
- **Total** £16,283,000

**expenditure**

**2016/17**

- **Charitable activities** £16,247,000
- **Costs of generating funds** £622,000
- **Total** £16,869,000
thank you

...to our Board of Directors.

Valerie Surgenor
Chair of the board & Chair of Nominations and Succession Committee

David Elder
Vice Chair

Professor Joyce Lishman
Chair of Improvement, Audit & Risk Committee

Andrew McFarlane
Robert Lindsay
Tony Sinclair
Chair of Finance Committee

Allison Crawford

Elizabeth Jane Morgan
Chair of Improvement, Audit & Risk Committee (appointed 14th September 2015)

Gary Tanner

...to our generous supporters, including the many individuals, companies and community groups who continue to give so much.

we believe that every child deserves the chance to flourish Do you?

Help us reach more children, young people and families through fundraising for Aberlour. There are lots of ways you can support our life-changing work.

Are you a thrill-seeker? Join Team Aberlour and sign up for one of our great challenge events.

Put the fun into fundraising by organising an activity with your club or group.

A charity partnership with your workplace can bring lots of rewards for you and your team.

Show your commitment to Scotland’s children of the future by leaving a gift in your Will.

Make a life-changing donation or give a regular gift on our website.

www.aberlour.org.uk