



SCO 26072

BORDERS CHILDREN'S CHARITY

Chair's Annual Report

For the year ended 28 February 2011

Charitable purposes

The objective of Borders Children's Charity (BCC), as recorded in our Constitution, is to help children, up to 18 years of age and resident in the Scottish Borders, who are suffering from poverty or a disability, or who are in sickness or distress. Grants are made to alleviate such poverty, sickness or distress, as well as to advance education.

Change to the year end

We have changed the financial year end from the end of May to the end of February with effect this year. This was agreed by our governing body OSCR and finally by the BCC Committee in February. This year the accounts therefore relate to a nine month period as we bring them in align with this decision.

Change to Office Bearers

At the AGM in March 2011, Clare de Bolle was elected as the Chairperson of BCC, Mrs Isabel Fullerton as the Treasurer and Mrs Sarah Wilson was re-elected as Secretary. There are currently 11 members of the Committee, all of whom are volunteers and all of whom bring different strengths to the table. I would like to thank all members for their incredible commitment to BCC, both in time and effort.

Summary of Accounts, to year end, 28 February 2011

We have had an extraordinary nine months. We have built upon the successes of the previous year, both with an increase in grants and with developing awareness of this very worthwhile local charity. Earlier in the year we were delighted to announce the support of the Roxburghe Hotel and Golf Course and the Borders Book Festival when both organisations chose BCC as their annual charity. This is the first time that we have had such big sponsorship of the BCC. We were delighted with our recent presence at the Book Festival and hope that it will have generated a great deal of awareness of the work that we do and encourage others to raise funds for us during the next financial year. Meanwhile we are working with the Roxburghe and very much look forward to our joint 'Network and Play, Charity Golf Day' at the Roxburghe Hotel and Golf Course later in the year on 15th September which will be in collaboration with the Borders Chambers of Commerce.

Request Payments

The main aim of the BCC is to respond quickly and efficiently to requests to help children from across the Scottish Borders and our funds and reserves from last year have enabled us to fulfil this aim. This financial year (the nine month period) BCC has paid out a total of **£21,111.50** in grants responding to

125 requests. This compares to £22,450.65 for 112 requests the previous year (a period of 12 months). Therefore grants are up this year by just over 25% on an annualised basis and the need for greater awareness and continued donations are essential to the continued success of the BCC achieving its aim.

Sadly, the grants we issue continue to be largely for basics that no child should be without, such as clothes and shoes but this year we have seen a large increase in requests for beds and bedding as well as bedroom furniture, totalling over £10,000. We have also seen a further increase in requests to help with school trips (to £6130). We have also issued grants to help with specialist equipment, Christmas toys, books and other important items that children need. In addition we supported many courses and events as well as transport requirements that are essential in helping to build children's self esteem.

We are pleased that grants are being requested from all areas of the Borders, ensuring that our PR efforts also mean that the right people have heard of us to apply for grants for their patients and clients. We have had requests from Coldingham and Eyemouth to Biggar and Peebles, from Duns down to Yetholm. The most requests have been from Hawick and Galashiels and we continue to work closely with health centres and social workers in these areas to ensure that money is going where needed.

Expenses

BCC has no overheads and meets once a month courtesy of the Buccleuch Arms in St Boswells. The only expenses recorded to end of February related to the Justgiving monthly membership and totalled **£53.62**. However, £45 of this amount was reimbursed very kindly by Peebles Life and therefore our actual outgoings equated to **£8.62**. This means we can still be proud to announce that over 99.96% of money donated to BCC goes directly to the children. This is also due to the generosity of all BCC committee members as well as many companies and individuals who have supported us cost-free over the past nine months. Whilst we have many people to thank for this, a special mention must go to Kelso Graphics for providing the new BCC leaflets for free and to Pro Motif for supplying us with BCC T shirts.

Donations

As mentioned above, this year has seen a big increase in awareness of BCC and a desire by people across the Borders to support us in our efforts to help local children. More and more donations and fundraising efforts have come from schools and health centres, churches and individuals who have heard about our work or who have benefited from the grants we have allocated. Whether large or small, these donations have therefore formed the core of our fundraising efforts this year and have raised **£4,427.56**. This amount is much lower than last year because of the one off donations we received in 2009/10 from 2 trusts/companies totalling £9000 but we were delighted to receive the continued support of one charitable trust who generously donated a further £1000. Overall, donations have been very encouraging and we very much hope that this trend will continue through the next year so that we can continue to meet the increased number of requests from across the Borders.

Websites

New initiatives have also been put into place such as a BCC link to easyfundraising.co.uk and money raised by purchasing goods through this site has totalled **£261.44**. We have also joined 2 fundraising sites, Justgiving and Virgin Money Giving, both of which we hope will encourage people to sponsor us and donate more. Whilst the Justgiving membership is paid for by BCC most of the amount, and all from March this year, is covered by an invaluable donation by Peebles Life whom we wish to thank in this report. In the year to come, we will be updating our website to bring it in line with our leaflet and making it much more live with forthcoming events and reports. It will continue to provide the main outlet to download the application forms for grants. (www.borderschildrenscharity.org.uk)

Fundraising

The Committee has continued to carry out individual fundraisers (for example holding local lunches, or dinners or organising a sponsored pram push, to name a few). Over £670 was raised in the organised BCC bus tour in September – a great amount but nothing compared with the excellent publicity and increased awareness for BCC on the day. The total fundraising this year amounts to **£2,343.33**. This figure is lower than previous years both because of the shorter timescale but also because our main fundraiser in December (wine man's bluff) was postponed due to snow. However, this was rescheduled for May and thanks to Corney and Barrow and everyone who supported us, raised over £2000 towards next year's accounts. The new leaflet published this last financial year, gifted by Kelso Graphics, has been a tremendous asset to the way we market ourselves and we have continued to issue press releases and radio announcements with every new event or fundraiser.

Grants

BCC was very fortunate to receive an increase in our annual grant from Children in Need, receiving **£7040** in June last year. This grant is invaluable to BCC and provides the core of our reserves to respond to the increasing number of requests BCC receives. It was particularly important too, because this year GB Telecom announced a postponement of grant giving for the time being and so no further grants have been forthcoming to BCC this financial year. We continue to source other grant opportunities and websites which might be able to support BCC further. We can now announce that Children in Need have once again granted us £7040 for 2011/12 for which we are hugely grateful.

Surplus/Deficit

This year, for the first time, there is a deficit of -£13,416.30 recorded in the year ending 28 February. This deficit should, however, be viewed in perspective and does not mean that BCC is in financial straits. There are a number of factors to take into account. First the financial year is shorter by 3 months following the constitutional change to move to a year/end of 28th February. Second, and as a result of the first, we have had to change the way we do the accounting to take into account the fact that the Children in Need grant was not due (and, importantly, is never certain) until June and we could not budget for that in the accounts as in previous years. Thirdly, we have seen an increasing number of grants paid out as opposed to money coming in. In the past 2 years we have received exceptional one off payments from Spifox and other charitable trusts which accounted for the unusually high income in those years. Such large donations have ensured that we have had a solid base of reserves, which in turn has enabled us to respond to all requests we have received relative to the BCC remit. We continue to have a healthy balance in our bank account, which will mean that we are not left short this coming year. However, it does mean that we need to move forward with caution and ensure that we continue to raise awareness and consider how we can continue to ensure that we have a safety cushion each year as the number of requests increase.

The committee will continue to work hard to generate funding for BCC and encourage as many people, organisations and companies to support us as possible. We will continue to look at ways to streamline our application process to ensure we are as effective as possible and make us as paper free as possible. We are currently putting together a database of former members ahead of our 45th and then 50th anniversaries and are beginning to create a database of 'friends of BCC' for those wishing to be kept informed of events and news.

Clare de Bolle
Chairperson