



SCO 26072



Borders Children's Charity

Chair's Report for the AGM

Wednesday, 29th May 2019 - Buccleuch Arms Hotel, St Boswells

For a review of the financial position of the charity, this report may be read in conjunction with the Treasurer's report on the financial year to the end of February 2019.

In summary, March 2018 – February 2019:

- Grants considered: 196 of which 167 awards made
- Children supported: 232
- Grants awarded: £33,276
 - o 24% - 50 beds plus bedding, bedroom furniture
 - o 16% - clothing, shoes, essential items such as white goods (63 children)
 - o 21% - additional and special needs items
 - o 39% - school trips (59 children), activities and holidays (35 children)
- Total receipts: £20,304
- Year opening balance: £65,144
- Year end bank balance: £51,597

From the Chair, June 2018 – May 2019

With a dedicated and hard-working team on board, Chairing the Borders Children's Charity committee this year has been a highly rewarding and enjoyable task. Our committed team of volunteers, along with our many dynamic supporters enable the charity to continue in strength and keep up the important work it started over 50 years ago.

In the Autumn we gave our thanks to Nicky Richardson for all that she had contributed during her time on the committee and in January we welcomed our newest member, Anne-Marie Bready, a former head teacher, who very soon was demonstrating her enthusiasm, willingness and kindness.

I would like to express my gratitude to Victoria Tweedie, our Treasurer of two years, and as our longest standing trustee, for sharing her wisdom in the ways of the charity and for advising the rest of us when in unfamiliar territory. In this role Victoria has helped inform our decision making and when October brings the end of her 5 year tenure on the committee, we will miss Victoria and her continued guidance.

My thanks to Alison Curtis, as Secretary for keeping us all informed with the monthly agenda and minutes and for communicating our gratitude to donors through a steady stream of thank you letters.

Our Requests this year have been handled by Julia Bruce in the most efficient and well-prepared way, facilitating the smooth-running of our monthly meetings as we jointly hear and discuss each application. My thanks also go to Joyce Thewlis who kindly stepped in to assist in the role during Julia's trip overseas.

Diana Miers has been active in raising awareness of our work by developing communications with the press and social media. As a result, we were delighted with the Southern Reporter's publicity of our charity, reporting in February on the official opening of a basket-swing we funded at Leader Valley Primary School and also on our sell-out fundraising event featuring The Batch Lady's live cookery demonstration in May. We are hugely grateful to Suzanne Mulholland for dedicating her time and skill to this event as both committee member and The Batch Lady herself - certainly our time-management guru.

As well as keeping the BCC's social media channels up to date with regular posts on all our news and increasing our follower numbers, Chris Jackson organised our fundraising day at Kelso Races tea rooms on 23rd March 2019 as a new initiative. While Julia, being a professional cook, took on the lion's share of the catering, it was a fantastic opportunity for the whole committee to work together as a team beyond our regular meeting room, which is generously provided by The Buccleuch Arms.

Elaine Auld has really rolled up her sleeves, reviewing our grant database this year to assess funding possibilities and was rewarded with a successful application to the Finn Family Fund, to whom we are most grateful. We are equally grateful for the grants we received from: The Mainhouse Charitable Trust; The Peter Vardy Foundation; Caledonian Trust, from the Royal Caledonian Ball; The Mistletoe Ball; and The Rank Foundation, with special thanks to Cindy Onslow for nominating the BCC.

Sharing a little of what each trustee above has contributed over the last year gives a flavour of the life of the Borders Children's Charity. Much more has happened in addition and it has been a great pleasure to go out and meet some of our supporters who have raised fantastic sums from their varied endeavours. It is also heartening to see so many local communities and organisations getting behind fundraising to support local children.

Cindy Webster held her annual 'Cheese Night' in aid of the BCC in December. It was a fabulous evening with Charlie Turnbull, International Cheese Judge, entertaining, educating and delighting the audience with cheese and accompanying (or not) drinks.

Several local organisations chose the BCC as their Charity of the Year 2018 and we were delighted to attend cheque presentations from them, while hearing of their diverse and amazing fundraising

activities, ranging from hula hooping, golf challenges, munro bagging to bake offs, book sales, dress down days/ Christmas jumper competitions and Grand National sweepstakes to mention but a few. So congratulations for all the achievements and my thanks once again for supporting us as your Charity of the Year to: the Scottish Building Society, Bank Street, Galashiels; TK Maxx, Galashiels; Plexus, Kelso; Inforgen, Peebles; Earlston High School's Sixth Form Charity Committee; Melrose Primary School.

Our thanks also go to the following local organisations for their donations: the children at Galashiels Boxing Club for supporting us with the proceeds from their Christmas party; Roxan Datamars, Selkirk for raising funds through their prize draw; Scottish Environment Protection Agency, Galashiels with their tuck shop; Galashiels Dancing Group; Jedburgh Rotary Club; Caddonfoot Parish Church; Ruberslaw Parish Church; ASDA, Galashiels through their Community Life Champion, Emma Tanner.

There are more local schools and many private individuals to whom I extend thanks on the committee's behalf.

We look forward wherever possible to attending future events organised by our generous supporters, upcoming: St Mary's Prep School Form 7 French Café; Penny Stratford's open garden at Wooden House; Easter Weens NGS open garden, with thanks to Alison and Roger Curtis; Great British Food Festival, Floors Castle, supporting us once again this September.

The BCC works in collaboration with other local charities, such as Live Borders, and during the year's meetings have welcomed representatives from Borders Carers' Centre and Tweed Togs as guests to talk about what they do. Much of our work is carried out in support of Scottish Borders Council's Social Work department with whom we convened in November to clarify where our respective funding remits meet. It was a mutually informative exercise that acknowledged ever challenging times.

During the year, in addition to furthering our aim of raising awareness of the Borders Children's Charity through publicity in the local press and increased social media coverage, we have widely advertised our fundraising events and enjoyed representation in person, along with banners and leaflets at local events, ranging from Floors Castle International Horse Trials to a roadshow at our local ASDA supermarket. All have facilitated in raising the charity's profile across the region.

The year has been busy yet rewarding for the BCC committee as we have highlighted our cause, continued fundraising to ensure this vital work endures and stewarded the charity's funds, ever mindful of our primary mission to relieve distress from poverty, sickness and disability amongst children in the Borders.

For as long as there are children living in the Scottish Borders under such circumstances, the Borders Children's Charity will persist towards our goal of meeting their basic needs.

Rebecca Dolby
Chair, June 2018 – May 2019