



The earliest years make the biggest impact: Home-Start Aberdeen make sure those years count so that no child's future is limited.



## Chair's Report

Financial year 2021/22 has been a particularly exciting year for Home-Start Aberdeen. With the removal of Covid-19 restrictions, all our services and projects resumed in-person activities. Having secured multi-year funding, we were able to welcome new co-ordinators to the team. We also moved into a new, more functional and modern office space and while staff can continue to work flexibly, most returned to regular office working after the Covid-19 restrictions were removed.

We continue to provide a valuable lifeline to so many families across Aberdeen City. Regular emotional and practical support is provided to around 200 families each year who may be vulnerable or suffering from isolation. During 2021/22, our trained volunteers enabled us to reach over 300 children.

In the aftermath of Covid-19, the funding landscape continues to be uncertain and challenging. This has been exacerbated by the current energy prices crisis. We've been really successful in securing some multi-year funding e.g. the National Lottery Community Fund, Cattanach Trust and the Robertson Trust. This provides a welcome cushion into 2022/23 and 2023/24. While this reduces the pressure, the continuous search to secure funding is a demanding and relentless role. While we remain upbeat and optimistic, the board regularly reviews the financial position and recognises that we may need to draw on our reserves to ensure a balanced financial position is achieved for 2022/23.

Towards the end of the financial year, we launched our own online lottery: Home-Start Aberdeen's Make a Difference Weekly Lottery. Although still in its infancy, we hope this will grow as it becomes more established and make an important contribution to our funding strategy.

A recruitment campaign is currently in progress to expand the skills and capacity of the board. We also have an experienced advisor team which effectively complements the board's mix of skills and expertise and adds value to the services we provide and the families we support.

Our governance arrangements continue to work well with many aspects having been reviewed and strengthened during the year.

Our charity shop re-opened in April 2021 after the second lockdown and although we were initially uncertain about the likely level of footfall, shop proceeds have gone from strength to strength. We are about to embark on a series of events to celebrate the shop's tenth anniversary. All credit for this success must go to our shop manager, Karen, and her dedicated team for their endless enthusiasm, commitment and ideas. Here's to the next ten!

Anne MacDonald

Chair, HomeStart Aberdeen