

Chair's Report

It's been another busy year for HomeStart Aberdeen! We welcomed Cameron McCready as our new chief executive having said farewell to Eleanor McEwan. We also filled some vacancies in the team with the appointment of a co-ordinator and a play worker.

We continue to provide a valuable lifeline to 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 2022/23, our trained volunteers enabled us to reach 265 children.

In the aftermath of Covid-19 and the ongoing cost of living crisis, the funding landscape continues to be uncertain and challenging. 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 2023/24 and 2024/25. 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 2023/24.

Recognising that we need to expand the capacity of our board, we are seeking to recruit new trustees with a range of skills. We also have an experienced advisor team which effectively complements the board's mix of skills and expertise.

For the first time ever, our annual shop takings exceeded £100,000 – a brilliant achievement and entirely due to our dedicated and enthusiastic shop staff and volunteers. The shop has gone from strength to strength since it re-opened after the Covid lockdowns and we have now celebrated its tenth anniversary.

Anne MacDonald

Chair, HomeStart Aberdeen