

Autumn 2022



# Aberlour News

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Discover how, with your help, we have been able to support Connie and her family

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Read more about how we have been fighting hidden school hunger

# Update from our CEO



**Who would ever have thought that in 2022 parents would be going without food, so their children can eat? Or that they often must choose between heating and eating?**

This is the reality for thousands of households in Scotland, and it's not right.

The cost-of-living crisis has been difficult for us all. No more so than for Scotland's poorest families. 1 in 4 children in Scotland live under the poverty line. This means they lack basic necessities such as food, electricity, clothing and even a bed to sleep in.

**“Aberlour is always there for children and families in Scotland. We are there, not just at the point of crisis but for as long as they need us.”**

As part of the End Child Poverty coalition, we are urging local authorities across Scotland to improve the lives of families. We are keen to see family incomes maximised and the costs that parents face reduced.

As well as campaigning on behalf of Scotland's poorest families, Aberlour is providing help by putting cash directly in their pockets.

Thanks to our donors' generosity and support, we have helped over 13,700 children and 6,500 families since April 2020.

Through our Urgent Assistance Fund we have given out nearly £2.3million in cash grants. This has provided relief to families and helped to pay for food, fuel, clothing and household essentials.

Sadly, with the rise in cost of living, so many more families are needing our help, including many who never needed us before.

**With your continued support, we will raise vital funds, and lobby the Scottish Government to ensure that everyone who's struggling at this challenging time can receive the help they need.**

**SallyAnn Kelly**  
Aberlour CEO



## “Aberlour is different, Aberlour is here to help.”

**Aberlour has changed our lives. Without Aberlour's support our children might have gone into care.**

Sam and I first met Wendy from Aberlour as we were struggling with family life and maintaining our house.

We were nervous about Wendy coming into our home. But after she reassured us, we knew Aberlour was different, we knew Aberlour was here to help.

Wendy could see we weren't coping. Our life was already hectic with two children, and Skylar was on her way.

**Sam was also struggling with his mental health.**

We built a strong bond with Wendy. Sam and I were able to discuss the many challenges we were facing.

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**“My anxiety was awful, and my confidence was so low.”**

**“Our house was damp and freezing. We had storage heaters costing £200 per month to run, so we only used them when we had to.”**

Eva and Ethan constantly suffered from chest infections, colds and coughs. We were worried sick and didn't know what to do.

**But Wendy helped us.**

She got the council to replace the storage heaters with proper heating. Now we could afford to keep our house cosy and warm for our children.

We had bare concrete floor in the hall and the children were sleeping in broken beds when Wendy first arrived. She applied to Aberlour's Urgent Assistance Fund. The fund gave us a grant to buy the items we so desperately needed. We were so grateful.

Wendy also helped build our confidence as parents. She has helped us put routines in place for the children especially at bedtime. This really helped once Skylar arrived.

She has helped us put activities in place with the children, allowing us to have fun together. Our house was hectic before.

**“Having routine and structure has helped make our lives easier. We're a much happier household for it.”**

I am so proud of how far we've come. We're more confident now. Calling the doctor to make an appointment for one of the children seemed impossible.

Now I know I can call and if one of the children is ill and must see a doctor in person, I'll push for it.

Sam is also taking Eva and Ethan to nursery every day and picking them back up. Before Sam's anxiety would stop him doing that. Wendy gave him top tips like to play music when he's on the bus by himself or call a friend. Now he does the trip with no hesitation.

I'm so glad we took the leap and accepted Wendy's help. Without her support we wouldn't be where we are today.

I love seeing how much Eva, Ethan and Skylar are growing and developing with our support.

I love seeing Ethan getting his toy Hoover out to help me while I am cleaning the house. I know that we are teaching our children important life skills.

**Sam and I are so proud of our wee family, and we have only been able to do this because of Aberlour.**

**Connie**



# No child should go hungry in Scotland



A young person told us...

**“I know a good few people who don't actually get lunch because they feel like they're using the money their parents could be using for something better... they feel responsible.”**

Our recent research highlighted a worrying increase in hidden hunger amongst school pupils. It also found that thousands of families across Scotland are unable to pay for their children's school meals.

**Currently children in P1-5 receive universal free school meals.**

However, struggling families with children in their final years of primary school owe over £1 million. The research was conducted by Professor Morag Treanor at Heriot-Watt University. She reports that school meal debt is just “the tip of the iceberg for families.”

We've seen child poverty rise significantly yet far fewer families are eligible for free school meals. Income thresholds for free school meal eligibility have barely risen since they were first introduced twenty years ago.

**It is unknown exactly how many children are affected by hidden hunger in secondary schools.**

Evidence suggests that secondary school pupils, without any money in their school meal account, are choosing to avoid stigma, shame and debt, and instead are going hungry.

Another young person said...

**“In my friend group, I'd say about half of them can't eat food when we go out, so you see people buying food for their friends... we go to Greggs and, because I've got like £3 or £3.50 to spend, I'll get two Yum Yums and a sausage roll and I'll give them the Yum Yums, just because they don't get any food anyway.”**

This hunger has a devastating impact on children's health, wellbeing and educational attainment. With the current cost-of-living crisis, we expect this to worsen. Immediate action is required. We are urging the Scottish Government to work with local councils to clear school meal debt and expand free school meal provision.



# Financial wellbeing help for families

## Parents tell us of the fear they feel when they receive another £200 added to their gas bill.

The guilt they feel when their children's feet are blistered from shoes that are too small and they can't afford to replace them.

We know that financial problems affect parents' mental health and wellbeing. They're already struggling with the stresses and challenges of parenthood.

We've established a new service in Tayside to address this. It explores what will happen to families in the long term if we assist them with their finances and debt.

Two Financial Wellbeing Coordinators are now working alongside the families. Using a wellbeing checklist, they encourage families to discuss their situations. The checklist sparks new conversations rather than using the same old questions such as "do you have debt?" It enables the coordinators to explore how families are dealing with the cost-of-living crisis.

Our team works with others such as Welfare Rights and Money Advice to ensure families receive maximum entitlements. It also provides advice around the families' debts and how to manage them.

The aim is to enable families to improve their lives by removing the financial burden.

One dad, John\* speaking about debt said:

**"I felt very depressed knowing I had this extra money to pay each month. It was on my mind constantly. I knew this was something that would be difficult to be paid off, especially with two young children and another on the way."**

Joanne\*, mum of two, speaking about the help she's had with her finances said:

**"The amount of stress that has been relieved is unreal and now I feel I can maintain and budget my current income to support my girls. Now my debt has been paid off, I am able to get support from housing to hopefully move to a bigger house with more bedrooms and I also want to go to college to do hairdressing."**

This project has been generously funded by both the CORRA Promise fund and The Robertson Trust. Working together we aim to improve the standard of living for the children and families we work with.

\*Names have been changed to protect their identities.



## Get involved!



## This festive season, shine a light for children and families in desperate need.

Many Episcopalian churches in Scotland have celebrated Christingle since 1968, and Aberlour has been fortunate to have benefitted from many collections and donations marking this occasion.

The service usually includes prayers, readings, hymns and carols, and of course the lighting of the Christingles. Christingle was created with children in mind, and the celebrations are the perfect event for children and families and can be enjoyed by people of all ages, even if they don't regularly attend church.

Holding a Christingle celebration in support of Aberlour will directly benefit children and families in Scotland who are struggling to stay afloat due to the cost-of-living crisis. We can supply Christingle donation envelopes for your event, or if you choose to fundraise online, you can donate at [justgiving.com/campaign/christingle2022](https://justgiving.com/campaign/christingle2022)

**Our team are available to give help and support in making sure your Christingle goes smoothly. Call us on 0141 260 9190 or email [hello@aberlour.org.uk](mailto:hello@aberlour.org.uk). To find out more, visit [aberlour.org.uk/christingle](https://aberlour.org.uk/christingle).**

## How to include a gift to Aberlour in your will...

### You can give children in Scotland a brighter future by remembering Aberlour in your will.

Just let your solicitor know your intentions, and give them the details provided here. Anything you leave to charity is free of Inheritance Tax, so it can be a useful way to reduce your Inheritance Tax bill while benefitting a good cause.

**After you have taken care of your loved ones, even leaving just 1% of your estate to Aberlour would make a huge difference to children and young people in Scotland.**

**Name of Charity:**  
Aberlour Child Care Trust

**Scottish Charity Number:**  
SC007991

**Address:**  
Aberlour Child Care Trust,  
Kintail House, Forthside Way,  
Stirling, FK8 1QZ

# I'd like to make a gift to help children in Scotland



## 1 I would like to make a regular gift

I would like to give:  £3  £5  £8  £10 or my choice £ \_\_\_ each month

Name(s) of account holder(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Bank/Building Society account number

Sort code

### Instruction to your Bank/Building Society

Please pay Aberlour Child Care Trust Direct Debits from the account detailed in this instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this Instruction may remain with Aberlour Child Care Trust and, if so, details will be passed electronically to my Bank or Building Society.

## 2 I would like to make a one-off gift

I enclose a cheque for:  £10  £25  £50 or my choice £ \_\_\_ made payable to Aberlour

Please debit my  Mastercard /  Visa /  Maestro /  CAFcard  £10  £25  £50 or my choice £ \_\_\_

Name on card \_\_\_\_\_

Card number

Start date

Expiry date

If your church, workplace, or group can support children across Scotland who are living in poverty by donating or raising funds, please contact our team at [hello@aberlour.org.uk](mailto:hello@aberlour.org.uk)

## 3 Your contact details

First Name \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name \_\_\_\_\_ Tel \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

We'd love to keep in touch. Please tick the box below to indicate how you prefer to receive further communication from Aberlour.  by post  by telephone  by email

You can change your preferences at any time by contacting us at [hello@aberlour.org.uk](mailto:hello@aberlour.org.uk) or 0141 260 9190. We store your details securely and will never share them with any third parties for the purposes of their marketing. See [www.aberlour.org.uk](http://www.aberlour.org.uk) for full privacy statement.

## 4 *giftaid it*

I want to make my gift worth 25% extra at no cost to me.

I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax in the current tax year than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

Signature(s) of account holder(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Thank you

Completed forms can be sent to  
Aberlour, Kintail House, Forthside Way, Stirling, FK81QZ.

Aberlour Child Care Trust | Scottish Charity no: SC007991 | Company reg no: SC312912  
Registered Head Office: Kintail House, Forthside Way | Stirling FK81QZ  
T: 0141 260 9190 | E: [hello@aberlour.org.uk](mailto:hello@aberlour.org.uk) | [www.aberlour.org.uk](http://www.aberlour.org.uk)



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We invest in people Platinum

Autumn 2022

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