

Autumn 2023



# Aberlour News

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# “My biggest fear was having my baby taken away.”

Thanks to support from Aberlour and South Ayrshire Council, my baby, Marcus, wasn't taken into care. **He is thriving.**

Near the end of my pregnancy, I was introduced to Lidia, my dedicated social worker from South Ayrshire Council, as I needed a bit of help to bring my baby home.

After Marcus was born, I took ill. I kept collapsing, and while one midwife warned against picking him up for safety reasons, the information wasn't passed on, resulting in a report of neglect and placing Marcus on the child protection register. As a young, first-time mum, I felt overwhelmed and anxious, fearing the possibility of losing my baby.

But that's when Aberlour and social work stepped in to help. My Aberlour worker, Fleur, and Lidia took the time to explain why Marcus was on the child protection register and assured me that a plan was in place to support us. Understanding this brought me comfort, knowing they were there to help and that their goal was to keep Marcus with me.

Throughout the process, we had lots of people supporting us; most days we had someone in the house. Fleur taught me how to bond with Marcus, something I struggled with initially. She guided me through childcare courses, covering essential aspects like preparing bottles and baby-led weaning. I had to deal with so many healthcare professionals. Fleur helped me understand everything and become a more confident parent.

**Lidia was the backbone of our support, creating and organising our support plan to ensure everything ran as it needed to. The collaboration between Aberlour and social work was vital, ensuring that everyone worked together.**

Thanks to the support we received, one year after Marcus was placed on the child protection register, he was removed from it, bringing immense relief. At first, I was worried about losing our support, but I soon realised that I still had people to rely on, and the support gradually decreased as it was no longer needed. Watching Marcus' transformation from a tiny baby to a thriving toddler fills me with immense pride, and I've grown in confidence as a parent.

**I am excited about the future for our family and hope to soon move into our own forever home.**

*Bronwyn*

Watch an interview with Bronwyn by visiting [aberlour.org.uk/stories/bronwyns-story](https://www.aberlour.org.uk/stories/bronwyns-story)



**I've grown in confidence as a parent.**



# Bayside FC supporting Aberlour

The committee of Bayside Football Club voted for Aberlour to be their charity of choice. We're very grateful for their support and to have our logo displayed prominently on the back of their shirts as well as at the side of their pitch.

Founded 20 years ago with just 13 players, Bayside now boasts 29 teams ranging from "mini kickers" to over 35's. The club also collaborates with Team United for the Bayside FC Autism Team.

Bayside promotes football for all, welcoming children regardless of ability. The club actively engages the community, organising family events and supporting local charities as well as families facing tough times.

To find out more about supporting Aberlour through a club, group or team, please email us at [hello@aberlour.org.uk](mailto:hello@aberlour.org.uk)

Aberlour's Head of Marketing and Communications, **Sarah McNaught**, said:

**"We're thrilled to be Bayside's charity partner and were delighted to accept their generous donation of £1000 at their recent 20-year anniversary dinner.**

**The club shares the same ethos as Aberlour, striving to give children and young people the best start in life. A big thank you to everyone involved."**



# Sarah's memories raise funds for the Urgent Assistance Fund

**This summer, Aberlour foster carer Sarah Byrom launched her book 'Marmalade Raspberries & Albrecht - a Poetry Prose Memoir', celebrating family life and childhood memories.**

The book is a beautifully illustrated memoir with short stories, poems, and recipes, a tribute to 'the wonderment and often bonkerness of daily, family life.'

Every penny from sales of her book and illustrated cards will go to Aberlour's Urgent Assistance Fund, supporting struggling families during the cost-of-living crisis.

To purchase the book please contact [sarah.byrom@aberlour.org.uk](mailto:sarah.byrom@aberlour.org.uk)

Community Fundraiser **Abby Parkhouse** said:

**"We are so grateful to Sarah for using something so very personal to raise money to help others struggling to keep their heads above water during the cost-of-living crisis. Without supporters like Sarah, we wouldn't be there for the families who need us."**

# No child should go hungry

In previous editions of Aberlour News, we have focussed on our campaign to see an end to school meal debt.

We have urged the Scottish Government to act to reduce the debt burden for families with school meal debt and to make sure no child goes hungry at school.

**25,000 children**

We have called on councils to take action to write off school meal debt for all children in their own areas. Our research published last year showed that around 25,000 children had a school meal debt totalling more than £1 million.

**14 councils**

So far 14 councils have committed to cancel school meal debt. But the majority of councils around the country still have children who have school meal debt.

We are calling on the Scottish Government to do two things – to make sure Scotland will no longer be a country where children are shamed and burdened with school meal debt and also to ensure children won't go hungry at school.

Firstly, we are asking the Scottish Government to write off school meal debt for all children across Scotland. If the remaining councils won't act, then they must step up to do the right thing.

But we know the financial pressures for low-income families will persist. We need to prevent school meal debt in the first place. Therefore, we are also calling on the Scottish Government to increase and extend the eligibility of free school meals to all low-income families who receive any level of benefit, such as Universal Credit.

We know this will help thousands more struggling families who aren't currently entitled to free school meals but who are worrying every day about how they will feed their children.

**If we do this, we can put an end to school meal debt and hidden school hunger for good.**



**“Being in debt has caused more pressure, resulting in sleepless nights. I am over the moon to hear that the debt has been cancelled, it will take some weight off me.”**

Mum, who has had school meal debt cancelled

**“Some families might be reluctant to seek help, but this gives them extra support in difficult times without the feeling of embarrassment. With the cost-of-living crisis, it's one less barrier for them to worry about.”**

Aberlour support worker

# Updates from around Scotland!

## Aberlour helps increase confidence in the kitchen

**Our team in Perth has secured funding from Perth and Kinross Council's Good Food Fund to purchase monthly recipe packs for our families.**

The team will teach our families to batch cook and freeze food by providing online tutorials. Many families are struggling with food poverty and this funding will help increase their confidence in the kitchen and support them to cook a range of nutritious, budget-friendly meals.



## Delivering summer fun for children with disabilities in East Ayrshire

**"The summer programme has been a lifeline for our family. Not just giving our boys a safe place to have fun but helping them keep a bit of their routine. I know for a fact that they'd be struggling without this, and they've had so much fun while there. I just can't put into words how grateful we are."**

Maria\*

Over the summer, we have been helping East Ayrshire Council deliver their holiday support programme for children with disabilities. The children have been able to take part in many fun activities, including swimming, interactive games in sensory rooms and outdoor play. There was even a visit from a few furry friends!



## Aberlour helps young people grow friendships

**"I'm loving life now, I never thought I would take part in so many fun activities and make new friends. I was so anxious about going back to school after the holidays. But after attending all these activities and making new friends, I'm looking forward to going back to school. Earlier this year I couldn't even leave the house, now I'm buzzing to get up and get out with my new friends."**

Riley\*, Aberlour young person

Throughout the summer we've provided a jam-packed holiday programme for young people across Moray. Activities included archery, Lego coding as well as BBQ's, movie days and workshop activities.

## Aberlour's summer adventures for everyone!

**Our Adventures team organises holidays and trips for children and young people with disabilities from across Scotland.**

This summer, our young people have been to Calvert Lakes in Keswick and Ford Castle in Berwick. They've had lots of fun, making new friends and trying different activities like raft building.

**"That was brilliant! Can I do it again?"**

Mark\*, Aberlour young person



\*Name changed to protect identity.

# Paul wins Aberlour volunteer award

Recently, Paul, a 62-year-old window cleaner from Prestonpans, won our 'Volunteers are Special' award in recognition of his dedicated work at our disability service in his local area.

Paul started volunteering with Aberlour about a year-and-a-half ago, initially helping with the garden while cleaning the house windows.

His efforts have transformed the garden into a welcoming space for children with learning and physical disabilities, providing them with a place to enjoy the outdoors. Eventually, Paul expanded his voluntary work to include painting and decorating the inside.

Paul said:  
**"It's really just about making a better place for the kids – Prestonpans has been good to me all my working life and I just felt like I had to put something back in. If you can volunteer, you should! You get so much out of it; I get so much more out of this than I do for the paid work to be truthful."**

## Could you become an Aberlour volunteer?

We have flexible and regular volunteer roles available across Scotland. To have a chat with our team, email [volunteering@aberlour.org.uk](mailto:volunteering@aberlour.org.uk) or to view our current roles, visit [aberlour.org.uk/help-us/volunteer](http://aberlour.org.uk/help-us/volunteer).

Before



After



# The TEFL Org raises over £8,000 for Aberlour

The TEFL Org is an internationally recognised and award-winning teacher training company which teaches English to people who don't speak English as their first language. The company chose Aberlour as its Charity of the Year for 2021 and 2022 as the values of both organisations are closely aligned.

Andy Healy, Managing Director of The TEFL Org said: "Aberlour was the perfect charity partner for The TEFL Org. It's aligned with our own ethos and values, helps children develop important life skills and has a strong focus on education. In supporting Aberlour, The TEFL Org aimed to help families feed, clothe and keep their children warm, which will enable them to focus on their education and reach their potential."

Thank you to everyone at The TEFL Org for supporting Aberlour!

## A gift in your will could give children in Scotland a brighter future

Our generous supporter, Rose, recently pledged a gift in her will to Aberlour.

Rose spent 10 years in Aberlour's care growing up, and she said: "I hope many of the children in your care can benefit from this gift."

Including Aberlour in your will is straightforward:

When making or updating your will, you just need to let your solicitor know the following information:

**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

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

Supporters over 50 can write a will for free with our partners Thomas Bradley & Co.

Call 0330 390 9200 for more info.

## 3 Your contact details

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

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

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, FK8 1QZ.

Aberlour Child Care Trust | Scottish Charity no: SC007991 | Company reg no: SC312912  
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Autumn 2023

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