Bairnecessities & Baby Bank



# Trustees Annual Report

February 2025 - January 2026

SC050423

Bairnecessities & Baby Bank

## CHARITY CONTACT INFORMATION:


**Bairnecessities Baby Bank**

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**BairnecessitiesBabyBankNetwork**


## OBJECTS AND ACTIVITIES

The organisation's purposes are:

The prevention or relief of poverty principally within the community (AB41, AB42, AB43, AB44, AB45, AB51 and AB53). Particularly, by providing good quality pre-owned baby items and services to families with young children and/or charities or other organisations who also work to prevent or relieve poverty amongst families with young children.




## Charity Trustees

Helen Feeney - Chair
Rosemary Johnson - Treasurer (retired December 2025)
Karen Brown - Treasurer (previously Vice Chair)
Hannah Higgins - Secretary
Wendy Cahoon - Clothing Coordinator

## Trustee Recruitment & Appointment

We are currently recruiting for new Trustees. The Board completed a skills matrix to inform us what range of skills we had and still needed on the Board. We have advertised the vacancies and are undergoing recruitment and selection processes.

## STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

**Bairnecessities Baby Bank is set up as a two-tier Membership charity. This means we have two separate groups:**

**Charity Trustees, who control and supervise the activities of the charity, including monitoring and controlling its financial position**

**Members who can take part in key decisions, such as voting for Charity Trustees and agreeing to any changes to our constitution. This helps keep the charity open, transparent, and guided by the community it serves.**

**We operate under a two-tier constitution**

# Why do we do what we do at Bairnecessities?

10 years ago this year, in 2016, Bairnecessities founder, Helen, had been in her role as Community Nursery Nurse within the Health Visiting team for nearly a year. During this time, she witnessed first-hand the vast amount of poverty in her local area and the impact this had on families and on parents who wanted to be able to provide for their babies and children. Helen saw the opportunity to tackle two problems at once.

By redistributing the good quality clothes and equipment families had outgrown across the area, she could help local families as well as reducing the amount being sent to landfill. Bairnecessities was born!

Our mission is to support families in need by providing them items and services free of charge, resulting in an improved living environment, a reduced financial burden for families that are already struggling and increased opportunities to strengthen the ethos of recycle-reuse.

**ORGANISATIONAL SUSTAINABILITY**
Any additional money raised will be reinvested into Bairnecessities to help us achieve our aims.

**OPEN AND ACCOUNTABLE.**
We will be fair, efficient, and transparent in the way we conduct business

## As we do our work, the values we hold close are:

**LOW CARBON FOOTPRINT**
We will source from and provide to those in our local community.

**COLLABORATIVE.**
We will work closely with agencies , charities and organisations.

# Who do we stand alongside?

We know that in Aberdeenshire, poverty levels increased by almost 5% between 2015 and 2022 (Aberdeenshire Child Poverty Action Report, 2023-24), and given the rural poverty premium that affects much of our areas, true levels of poverty in our area are even higher. The area we cover includes two of the 15% most deprived areas of Scotland, according to the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation.



## Local families

We stand alongside families facing financial hardship, unexpected crises, or challenging life circumstances, helping to ensure their babies and young children have the essential items they need to thrive. This includes parents and carers who may be experiencing poverty, homelessness, domestic abuse, poor mental or physical health, or the pressures that can come with welcoming a new child into difficult circumstances. By providing safe, good quality baby bank items, we aim to ease some of the immediate stress families face, offering practical support, reassurance, and dignity during what can often be an overwhelming time.



## Our planet

We also stand alongside our planet by promoting reuse and recycling wherever we can. Many baby items are only needed for a short time, so by passing them on to new families, we help reduce waste and stop good quality items from ending up in landfill. Every donation we carefully check, clean, and rehome helps both families and the environment. We want to encourage our community to see that sharing and reusing baby essentials is not only practical and cost-effective, but also a simple way we can all help care for the world our children are growing up in.

# What have we done in the last year?

## Volunteers

We are supported by an amazing team of volunteers!



**Our volunteer team has continued to:**

Collect donated baby items (clothes, nappies, pushchairs, cots, feeding equipment, toys, etc.) from generous members of the public

Sort, clean, and safety-check all items before redistribution

Distribute items to families in need through referrals

Run awareness campaigns about the challenges families face and the benefits of donation/reuse

Partner with local charities, schools, health visitors, and social services

Fundraise essential funds for the charity










# BAIRNECESSITIES HQ

Raising funds for our refurbishment, working on planning permission and plans and getting quotes for building work has been a key area of focus this year, and one we have been successful at!






Planning permission was granted, and through the amazing work of volunteers from Mintlaw Men's Shed, and our team, we were able to start stripping out the building. Building work began in January 26 and we are excited to see the progress of this work.







# What else have we been doing?

## Fundraising activities

Recent fundraising activities have been a great success, with the Maud School Christmas Fayre hamper raising £315. We also supported the Mintlaw Pipe Band Competition with a hamper and games stall, and ran a games stall at the Maud School May Fayre. These events helped boost community engagement while raising valuable funds.

**We have a very successful social media presence, with over 4000 followers on Facebook and a growing following on Instagram. We use this to keep our community up to date with our work.**



# STAFF MEMBER

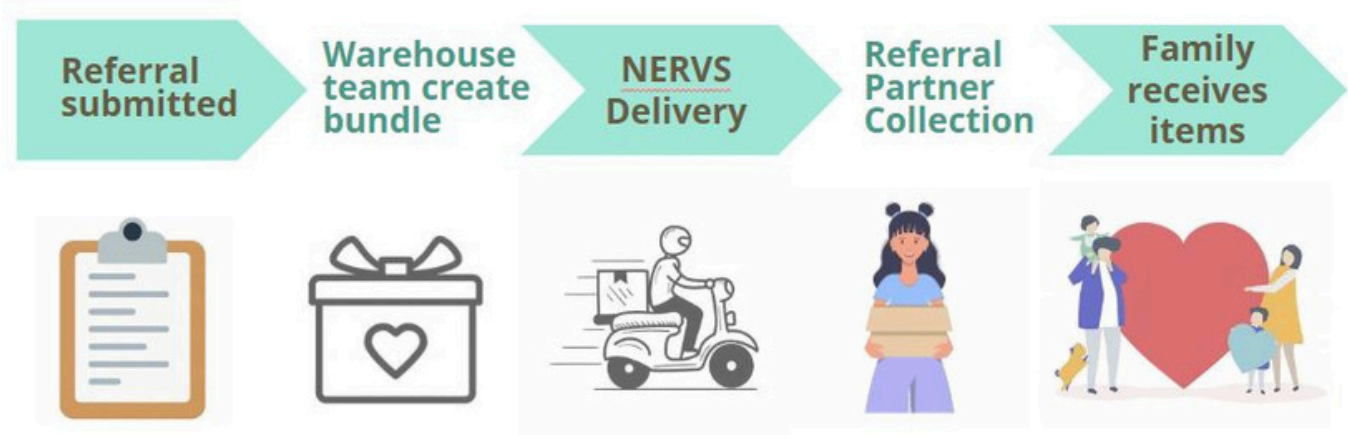
We were fortunate to receive funding from The National Lottery the previous year and appointed our first part time staff member. In this year, they have been crucial in securing funding for both our day to day work, but also for refurbishing Bairnecessities HQ. They have also improved our links with referral partners and supported all aspects of our work.






## Referral partners

**We work with over 115 referral partners across NHS services, statutory agencies, and third sector organisations, reflecting the breadth of professional trust placed in our service and ensuring that families in need are identified and supported through whichever pathway they first encounter.**



# Partnerships & Memberships

## North East Rider Volunteers Scotland

We are proud to partner with NERVS Bloodbikes, whose volunteers generously give their time to deliver items from Bairnecessities to agreed NHS hubs across the region, enabling referral partners to collect essential equipment quickly and efficiently on behalf of the families they support.

## Baby Bank Alliance

This year we continued our membership of the Baby Bank Alliance, the national network that brings together baby banks from across the UK to share knowledge, develop best practice, and advocate for the families who need us most, reminding us that while our work is rooted in our local community, we are part of a much wider movement.

## Save the Children

Save the Children supported us through the application for the Community Asset Transfer, they have also provided us support in completing funding applications and by supporting staff and volunteers.

## Circular Communities Scotland

This year, Bairnecessities became a member of Circular Communities Scotland, a recognised network of organisations working to keep goods in use, reduce waste, and build stronger, more sustainable communities, reflecting our belief that every item we redistribute is both a practical lifeline for a family and a small step toward a fairer, greener future.

# What have been the outcomes of our work?

**Most importantly, families received essential items their babies need. We were able to provide:**

| | |
|---|---|
| **4625** ITEMS OF CLOTHING | **166** BEDDING ITEMS |
| **129** ITEMS OF BABY EQUIPMENT | **127** PACKS OF HYGIENE PRODUCTS |
| **2912** NAPPIES | **651** TOTAL ITEMS/ BUNDLES |

## Why have families needed to use the baby bank?

Financial hardship remains the main presenting need, mentioned in connection with 71 referrals (60%). This reflects the ongoing and worsening impact of the cost of living crisis on families in our area, particularly those reliant on benefits, in low-paid or insecure work, or recently made unemployed. Unemployment was a factor in 43 referrals (36%), underscoring how rapidly circumstances can deteriorate and how critical timely support is. Other reasons families needed to use us were domestic violence, ill health, no recourse to public funds and other emergencies.

# What impact do we think we have had?

We play a vital role in supporting children's healthy development by ensuring families have consistent access to essential items such as safe sleeping equipment, clothing, nappies, and hygiene products. By providing these basics, along with books, toys, and sensory resources that stimulate early learning.

Our referral partners tell us we:

- Help create a safe and nurturing home environment during the crucial early years
- Help to improve parental mental health and wellbeing/ reduce parental stress,
- Strengthen positive parent-child interaction
- Promote emotional security, all of which are key foundations for early development.

In addition, by working closely with health visitors, midwives, GP surgeries, and social care teams, the baby bank connects families to wider support networks, helping to reduce inequalities and give every child the best possible start in life.




"Your service has helped many of our families who may have struggled to get items, due to financial reasons, isolation difficulties, it really has meant a lot that we were able to help those families out through the use of your crucial service."

# Environmental impact

As well as supporting family life, baby safety and adult wellbeing, we have raised awareness of sustainable living practices and responsible reuse.

Every item we redistribute is an item that does not go to landfill. This year, the reuse of donated goods across our service is estimated to have saved the equivalent of 12,231kg of $CO_2$, a figure that reflects not only the environmental value of what we do, but our belief that caring for families and caring for the planet are not separate ambitions.

This figure is the same as:

Driving a petrol car roughly twice around the circumference of the Earth

Powering an average UK home for approximately 2.5 years

Boiling a kettle over 600,000 time



# FINANCIAL REVIEW




In the year to Jan 2026, we were able to secure grants of over £71,000, including a large grant of £37,500 from the Just Transition Fund, which is to be used for green energy and environmentally friendly components in our new HQ.

This was a grant that was awarded after a public vote and Bairnecessities is extremely grateful to everyone who voted for us.

In addition, we raised nearly £21,000 in donations and £1,300 from fundraising events.

Our main areas of spending were initial renovation costs for our new building (£9,000), salaries for our staff team (£17,500) and costs for storage and baby items (£9,000).

Overall, our income for the year was £94,676 and our costs for the year were £38,068. At the end of the year, we held restricted funding and reserves of £121,453. £101,000 of this amount was set aside for the renovations of the building which is on-going into 26-27 and we had £20,000 reserves remaining, representing around 9 months of running costs.

## Declaration:

Signed on behalf of the charity trustees:

**Print name:** Helen Feeney

**Designation:** Chairperson

**Date:** 24/10/26



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