

Fostering Compassion S.C.I.O

Scottish Charity No. SC046975

The Trustees Annual Report and Financial Statements for The Year Ended 31st December 2024

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Trustees Annual Report

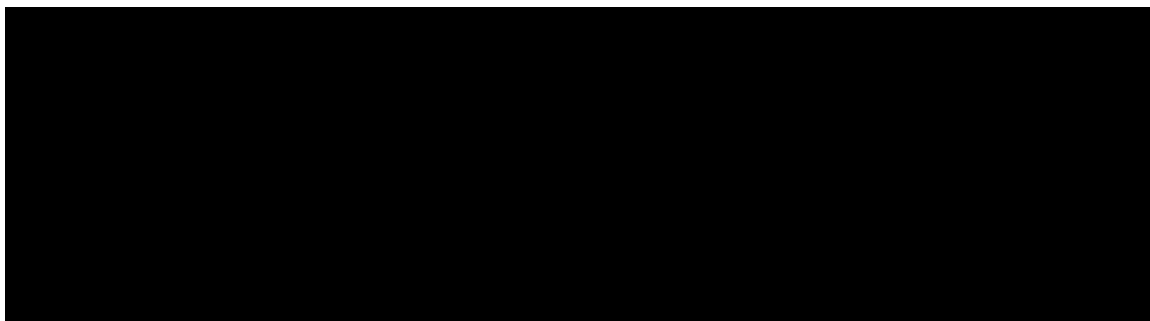
The Trustees have pleasure in presenting their report together with the financial statements and the Independent Examiner's report for the year ended 31st December 2024

Reference and Administration Details

Charity Name: Fostering Compassion
Charity No: SC046975

Principal Address: 1D Cockburn Halls
Ormiston
East Lothian
EH35 5JB

Charity Trustees serving on the date of approval of the Trustees Annual Report :



Structure, Governance and Management

Constitution

Fostering Compassion began as the humane education project of the Winton Foundation for the Welfare of Bears (SCIO) Registered Charity No: SC042614. It was then separated from the Foundation and established as a charity in its own right on 11th November 2016 and is now known as Fostering Compassion (SCIO) Registered Charity No: SC046975 and is governed by its own constitution. The Trustees are the only members and they make up the Board.

Trustee Appointment

Charity Trusteeship is open to;

- any person aged 16 or over, and/or
- any individual who has been nominated for membership by an unincorporated organisation; and/or
- any corporate body,

who subscribes to the purposes of the organisation and wishes to see them fulfilled.

Applications must be in writing and will be considered at the subsequent board meetings. All Trustees step down at the annual AGM but are eligible to be re-elected.

Objectives and Activities

The organisation is established for charitable purposes only, and in particular, the object is to advance animal welfare, the advancement of education and the advancement of health. In furtherance of these purposes the organisation will:-

- Undertake work through the 'Fostering Compassion' humane education project and other methods to encourage children, with a special focus on looked-after children, to see animals as sentient beings who can share similar emotions as they do. By sharing the stories of rescued animals we will work to address the links between animal abuse, child abuse and domestic violence, to reverse the cycle of abuse and help turn worrying behaviour into nurturing and compassionate behaviour. We will raise awareness, through educational and informative means, of the animals and environment we share the planet with. The project is designed to help the children gain a greater understanding of their own circumstances through sharing the stories of rescued animals, instilling compassion and empathy.
- Look at and study attachment to pets, especially in relation to the vulnerable, compassion towards pets and pets helping with transitions during a change of circumstances. We will undertake to promote a stable relationship between human and animal and protecting the bond and attachment.

Summary of the main activities in relation to these objects

2024 began with us still basking in the glow of our wonderfully successful and first ever Compassion Conference held in October 2023 to mark our 10th anniversary. We received a vast number of compliments, made many new contacts and the donation of \$25,000 from our Keynote speakers to a Ukrainian project featured during our conference gained much publicity for Fostering Compassion throughout 2024. The conference was an exceptional achievement for us marking a very significant milestone and by far the largest event we have ever held. It firmly put our charity in the National and International forums, as a leader in the field of humane education.

2024 continued with the ongoing delivery of our services for care experienced and vulnerable children aged 3 - 25 years of age. Our services include our group workshops, our Compassion for Life programme and our one-to-one Support Sessions for children who don't fare so well in group environments. These sessions called 'Working with Worry', 'Coping with Change', 'Fostering Resilience' and 'Moving on from Mistakes' are really popular and sought after, complementing our existing services nicely. We are currently developing another batch of four Support Sessions themed around nature and the environment and an additional Support Session themed around loss, grief and bereavement which can be offered when appropriate. Children being taken into care, often suffer a sense of real loss, even if that is a separation from a neglectful parent. Many children are still suffering loss from the pandemic too.

We continue to deliver workshops to full school classrooms - online and in person and 2024 saw us with our largest in person group ever - 23 children! We were delighted to welcome them all to our lovely Woodland Haven Room for our 'Horsing Around - Why the Long Face' workshop where the children got to spend time with the ever popular and much loved Therapy Ponies. Even the children's teacher exclaimed at the end of the workshop 'This has been the best day of my life!' so our activities are enjoyed by children and adults alike!

Throughout 2024 we have continued to build on relationships with our many referral agencies and have made connections with new ones. We receive referrals from Social Work, Local Authorities, medical professionals, schools, Third Sector Children's Charities and self referrals. We continue to receive a number of individual referrals from families desperate for support and with nowhere else to turn having excellent results with a number of these children.

Every Fostering Compassion workshop includes a 'Gift of Compassion' that the children create or donate to an animal in need. Our Animal Heroes workshop sees us team up with the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) and the children learn all about animals who save people and people who save animals. The Gift of Compassion from our Animal Heroes workshops are the Smokey Paws Animal Oxygen Mask resuscitation kits. These are used by Firefighters to help save animals who have been overcome by smoke in fires.

During the year, we were able to donate another five kits to the Highlands and Islands region of Scotland. Four of these kits went to the Isle of Skye which previously had no kits and the 5th went to the Isle of Raasay meaning we have kitted out two Scottish Islands helping keep their animals safe. This has brought the total number of kits we have donated to the SFRS to 43 and resulted in a Scottish Fire Chief praising the work of Fostering Compassion during a meeting of Scottish emergency services. High praise indeed for us. Not only that, but the story was also picked up by STV News and resulted in Fostering Compassion having its TV debut with a wonderful piece on our work. This in turn resulted in more media coverage and a request for a kit from the Isle of Sark Fire Station where their fire engine is pulled along by a tractor! We were delighted to provide a kit helping keep the animals on this small island safe.

We continue to have an excellent relationship with Edinburgh University and the Royal Dick School of Veterinary Studies holding our much loved 'Be a Vet for the Day' workshop annually. A student led workshop which gives the children a unique opportunity to access the school's Clinical Skills lab, dress up in scrubs and get a feel for being a vet for the day and various veterinary practices including bandaging their teddies!

The Bob Harvey Award launched in 2022 jointly between Fostering Compassion and the Society for Companion Animal Studies entered its second year. We requested nominations for care homes, hospices, hospitals and any care facilities that had gone above and beyond to recognise and protect the Human-Animal Bond. This year's winner was based in Colombia with the previous year's joint winners being in Israel and Australia - Fostering Compassion's reach spreading even further.

We were delighted to launch another two initiatives in 2024 - workshops and activities to support Young Carers and the Fostering Compassion Bursary. We were able to offer a number of bespoke activities for some of East Lothian's many Young Carers - some of whom are as young as 4 years old. These children shoulder a great deal while caring for other family members and often feel worry and guilt in leaving them, sometimes resulting in them not going to school. There are currently 670 Young Carers registered with our Local Authority but it is thought there are at least 4000 young carers in East Lothian. We aim to provide as much support to them as possible.

In July we introduced our Bursary Programme and made our first award. This award will go to a vulnerable or care experienced student studying veterinary medicine or animal-based studies, to help them with the cost of living as they complete their studies. Our first Bursary went to a remarkable young man and Ukrainian refugee, who had to flee his homeland, suffering significant trauma after his grandparents were killed during the Russian invasion. He arrived as a refugee in the UK with only a backpack containing his remaining possessions. We are delighted to offer a small level of support to him as he works to improve the lives of animals and continue to foster compassion in as many ways as we can.

During 2024 we began to implement our succession plans as our current CEO begins to move towards retirement. With the assistance of funding from the National Lottery and our unrestricted resources we were able to recruit a Volunteer Development Officer and a Fundraising Development Co-ordinator. Later this year, we will be recruiting a Depute CEO as part of our ongoing future plans.

2024 drew to a close with the resurrection of one of our most popular events - our Christmas reception for the first time since the pandemic. This extremely popular event provides an opportunity for us to thank all our supporters, volunteers, partners and service users. An evening event with guest speakers, refreshments, raffles and therapy animals which is always extremely well attended and a lovely way to conclude another very successful year for Fostering Compassion.

Financial Review

We continue to work hard to raise funds and increase awareness of our work to help diversify income streams. The recruitment of our new Fundraising Development Co-ordinator has been a huge help in taking much of the fundraising pressure off our CEO who in the past has been solely responsible for raising funds. This addition to the team has resulted in a healthy number of funding applications now being submitted on a regular basis to potential funders. We continue to try to raise unrestricted funding to help us continue with our expansion and succession plans allowing us to broaden our service delivery, help many more children and secure the financial future of the charity. We are gradually securing longer term funding over 2 - 3 year periods which helps hugely with forward planning.

We continue to try to increase direct debit giving and community fundraising. As the new Volunteer Development Officer continues to recruit more volunteers we will be able to broaden this area of fundraising.

During the accounting period our income totalled £91,454. We received grants from the Robertson Trust (£15,000), the CRH Trust (£25,000) and Radio Forth Cash for Kids (£4,980), The National Lottery (£29,224) and Musselburgh Common Good Fund (£4,500). We received donations totalling £978 and raised £6,349 through fundraising and activities. Some of these funds were restricted and this has been reflected accordingly in the financial statements.

Our charitable expenditure for the accounting period was £75, 026 which was made up of staff wages, session delivery costs, administrative, running and governance costs. We continue to rent two rooms at Cockburn Halls, Ormiston - our main office at 1d and our Woodland Haven room at 1a which is the perfect setting for workshops, activities, training and meetings.

The Committee has reserves, funds freely available to meet the running costs of the charity of £52,976, taking into account listed liabilities. Lesley Winton was paid on a self-employed basis over the course of the financial period to carry out activities related to the Fostering Compassion project financed by grants as listed and to steer the charity through the aftermath of the pandemic. She is responsible for managing her own tax and national insurance payments.

Reserves Policy

The charity has no real assets and have agree to maintain reserves of £15,000 to allow a cushion of at least 3 month running costs. They have achieved that this year.

Future Plans

Fostering Compassion continued to thrive during 2024 providing services throughout the year for vulnerable and care experienced children aged 3 - 25 years often helping children with nowhere else to turn. We will be continuing to provide our full level of services to Local Authorities, third sector Children's Charities, schools in areas of socioeconomic deprivation and welcoming self referrals. We are keen to continue developing our activities for East Lothian's Young Carers given the clear level of need.

We will continue implementing our succession planning to cement the future of Fostering Compassion. Our newly recruited Volunteer Development Officer is working to bring in more volunteers to help us meet the continually increasing demand for our services. We were delighted to get expressions of interest in volunteering from a number of young people who benefitted from our services when they were younger. We have also had applications to volunteer, from caregivers who have been very impressed with the service when they have used it.

We are hopeful that the appointment of a Fundraising Development Co-ordinator, will lead to a more stable flow of income to assist us with longer term planning and we will continue to work to diversify our sources of income so that we become less reliant on Grant funding.

We are looking forward with excitement, to the recruitment of our new Depute CEO as we go through a transition process as part of our succession planning. This will allow our current CEO to gradually pass her knowledge on to her Depute and allow her to move towards full retirement while securing the future of the charity. We will also be continuing to promote the Bob Harvey Award annually for any care facility that goes above and beyond to protect and recognise the importance of the human animal bond.

Moving forward, we will continue to cement our presence in our immediate locality of East and Midlothian offering services and the use of our Woodland Haven room to our local community and children's services. The concept of 'The Link' and the strength and importance of the human-animal bond continue to heavily underpin all our work. Our work in general will continue to promote the benefits of the human-animal bond and care, compassion and empathy for animals and the environment we share.

We will continue to raise awareness of the work of Fostering Compassion through local and international talks and presentations, information days and stalls, social and mainstream media and our website. We continue to build a strong infrastructure of sessional staff and volunteers to meet the constantly increasing demand for our services. There is a clear need for this as referrals for the beginning of 2024 are coming in thick and fast - receiving 12 in one day and we want to avoid having to turn anyone away.

We maintain and develop our excellent relationships with Edinburgh and Stirling Universities who provide ongoing evaluation of our service to ensure we continue to deliver a first class evidence based project.

Fostering Compassion S.C.I.O Charity No. SC046975

Report to the trustees/members of	Independent Examiner's Report on the Accounts Fostering Compassion S.C.I.O
Registered charity number	SC046975
On the financial statements of the charity for the year ended	31 st December 2024
Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner	The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the terms of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 ('the 2005 Act') and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006(as amended) ('the 2006 Accounts regulations'). The charity trustees consider that the audit requirement of Regulation 10(1) (d) of the Accounts Regulations does not apply. It is my responsibility to examine the accounts as required under section 44(1) (c) of the 2005 Act and to state whether particular matters have come to my attention..
Basis of independent examiner's statement	My examination is carried out in accordance with Regulation 11 of the 2006 Accounts Regulations. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeks explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and, consequently, I do not express an audit opinion on the accounts.
Independent examiner's statement	In the course of my examination, no matter has come to my attention : 1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• to keep accounting records in accordance with section 44(1) (a) of the 2005 Act and Regulation 4 of the 2006 Accounts Regulations, and• to prepare accounts with accord with the accounting records and comply with Regulation 9 of the 2006 Accounts Regulations have not been met, or 2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to the accounts to be reached
	Date: 17/04/2025

Statement of Receipts and Payments for the year ended 31st December 2024

	Notes	Unrestricted funds	Restricted fund	Total funds 2024	Total funds 2023
Receipts					
Grants	3	10,980	69,224	80,204	44,980
Donations	4	978		978	8,299
Fundraising		6,349		6,349	2,778
Income from Charitable Activities		414		414	2,830
Gift Aid		3,509		3,509	
Total Receipts		22,230	69,224	91,454	58,887
Payments					
Cost of Charitable Activities	5	24,136	49,809	73,945	62,626
Governance	6	1,050	31	1,081	950
Total Payment		25,186	49,840	75,026	63,576
Surplus / (Deficit)		(2,956)	19,384	(16,428)	(4,689)

The notes on page 12-14 form an integral part of these financial statements.

Fostering Compassion S.C.I.O Charity No. SC046975

Statement of Balances for the year ended 31st December 2024

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted fund	Total funds 2024	Total funds 2023
Funds Reconciliation				
Bank and cash in hand	56,082	10,417	66,499	71,188
Paypal balance			40	
Opening Balances				
Surplus/(Deficit) for year	(2,956)	19,384	16,428	(4,689)
Closing bank balance	53,126	29,801	82,927	66,499
Paypal balance			40	40
			82,967	66,539

1. Liabilities :

Unrestricted Funds

Independent Examiners Fee 150

The notes on page 12-14 form an integral part of these financial statements.

The above report was approved by the Trustees on the 17th 04th 2025 and signed on their behalf of by:

Position: Chairperson

Notes to the Financial Statements for year ended 31st December 2024

2. Basis of Accounting

These accounts have been prepared on the Receipts and payments basis in accordance with the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended)

3. Nature and purpose of funds:

Unrestricted funds are those that may be used at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the objects of the charity. Restricted funds may only be used for specific purposes. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for specific purposes. This year the charity received the following restricted and unrestricted grants.

Grants

Purpose	Funder	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total 2024	Total 2023
Managers Salary	Robertson Trust	1,500	15,000	15,000	15,000
Managers Salary	CRH Trust		25,000	25,000	25,000
General	Bauers Radio Forth Cash for Kids	4,980		4,980	4,980
General	National Lottery		29,224	29,224	-
General	East Lothian Council	4,500		4,500	-
Total:		10,980	69,224	80,204	44,980

4. Donations

Purpose	Donor	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total 2024	Total 2023
General	Lady Sarah Ward				5,000
General	Individual	978		978	1,364
General	Scotland's Garden scheme				1,435
General	East Lothian Golf club				500
Total:		978		978	8,299

5. Cost of Charitable Activities

	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total 2024	Total 2023
Manager Salary		47,320	47,320	36,973
Contracted staff costs	560	1,907	2,467	-
Rent & utilities	12,384		12,384	12,384
Sessional & volunteer hours	2,841		2,841	1,300
Resources & equipment	959	582	1,541	1,207
Website	1,042		1,042	1,029
Phone & broadband fees	810		810	897
Service delivery	2,265		2,265	-
Travel & accommodation	94		94	1,412
Insurance & fees	1,426		1,426	646
Donation to fund bursary	1,000		1,000	-
Marketing & fundraising costs	755		755	
Creating compassionate children				4,626
Conference costs				1,887
Xmas celebration				265
Total	24,136	49,809	73,945	62,626

6. Governance	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total 2024	Total 2023
Monitoring and Preparation of accounts	900		900	800
Independent Examination	150		150	150
Accounts package		31	31	
	1,050	31	1,081	950

7. Trustees Remuneration

One Trustee was paid £1,300 over the financial year for administration support and £60 for storing resources for the charity.