



Annual Review 2022

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Foreword

In 2021-22, we marked sixty years since The Robertson Trust was founded – and at the same time, renewed our determination to be a force for lasting social change in Scotland. In March 2022, we published a film and the updated story of the Trust. We aimed to do three things: honour the past, and the remarkable vision of the Robertson sisters as pioneering women of business and philanthropy; apply our Values to connect with our mission on Poverty and Trauma until 2030; and put down longer-term roots as stewards of the Trust's resources.

We did all of this mindful of the gale-force winds experienced by the people and places the Trust is here to serve. For most of the year in focus, Scotland continued to face Covid restrictions which maintained the pressure on those we fund and support at the frontline of the third sector. Protections afforded by the furlough scheme, no evictions, accommodation and wider support for people at extreme risk due to homelessness and a massive organising effort by charities to provide a lifeline with food, digital and emotional support continued for part of the year.

However, the uplift in Universal Credit of £20 per week was removed at a stroke last Autumn just as inflation rose significantly. The additional strains upon low-income households due to rising food and energy costs were immediate.

All of this was layered on top of the poverty and trauma hardships already experienced by more than one million Scots before the pandemic. The cost-of-living crisis points to a drop in living standards not seen in the 60 years of the Trust's life. Charities at the frontline are under intolerable strain. Decisive action by government at all levels is needed to reduce the stark risks we are already crystallizing.



Jim McCormick

CEO, THE ROBERTSON TRUST

We are independent but not neutral: we will use our voice and create platforms for others to advocate for the policy and practice changes we need, for example in embedding the Christie principle of prevention above all for those who face the hardest edges in society.

All of this requires us to think hard about the role an independent funder should play. Our Plan 2022-25 set out how we will deliver on our strategy for this. It sees us committing to an average of £25M in charitable expenditure per year, 25% more than was envisaged in the Autumn of 2020. This is possible due to the dividend we receive from Edrington, in which the Trust has a majority stake, and our pooled investments portfolio.

We are planning further work to understand investing for impact and to accelerate carbon reduction. All of our resources could be taken up in crisis response. We are clear that we will have more impact if we act as a catalyst and partner with others, and if we protect some of this budget to invest in longer-term changes with a fighting chance of being sustained.

Running through our objectives to fund, support and influence are four thematic priorities. These define how we will contribute to the changes we need to see in Scotland. These are Financial Security, Emotional Wellbeing and Relationships, Education Pathways and Work Pathways. Theme Teams from across the organisation have been formed around each, drawing upon the skills of each area of the Trust. Cutting across our work is a determination to build our know-how on issues of power and justice. We have committed to a whole organisational approach to active learning on Anti-Racism and Allyship, becoming Trauma-informed and responsive and on advancing Participation. These actions help us understand our mission as one of advancing justice rather than extending charity: while charities are very often the best partners for us to get alongside, it is our joint commitment to lasting social change rather than mitigating disadvantage that will drive our work.

To end with the words of one of our founders, Ethel (Babs) Robertson's statement of compassion which has an enduring place in the Trust's work: ***"I want everyone to feel special and valued and they will see what they can aspire to."***

Simply put, aspiration is not enough. It is only part of the equation.

But, knowing what we do now and facing the circumstances of today, we need to go further if we are to live up our Value of Ambition. Simply put, aspiration is not enough. It is only part of the equation. Evaluation evidence from three decades in many countries, as well as recent Scottish research into how aspirations form in families by our Trustee Professor Morag Treanor, tells us that being able to access high quality opportunities is the other part. Raising aspirations without improving financial security or designing holistic, responsive services with people is doomed to disappoint. We cannot afford to pit aspiration against material circumstances. Money, services and wider support count in roughly equal measure when it comes to boosting the life chances of low-income children.

I hope you will find in this Annual Review some inspiring examples of how charities across Scotland are finding their own distinct way to keep hope alive in tough times. They fuel our ambition to do more and do it better.



How We Work

Our Plan

Our Values



We are ambitious. We are not afraid to take on difficult issues and will take risks in pursuit of positive change.



We connect. We work collaboratively and are informed by the knowledge and experience of those we work with.



We act with integrity. We take personal and collective responsibility for our actions and how we use our resources.

Our Plan 2022-25 sets out how we will deliver on our strategy to reduce poverty and trauma.

Our objectives to **fund, support** and **influence** recognise the responsibility we have as an independent funder to use all of our resources to contribute to the changes we need to see in Scotland to tackle poverty and trauma.

Running through our objectives are four thematic priorities which define how we will contribute to change. These are **Education Pathways, Financial Security, Work Pathways** and **Emotional Wellbeing and Relationships**. Groups made up of staff from across the organisation have been formed for each theme. These draw upon the skills of each area of the Trust and will drive forward our activity in these areas.

Objectives

Fund

Our Plan 2022-25 sees us committing to an average of £25M in charitable expenditure per year: 25% more than was envisaged in the Autumn of 2020 at the point of launching our Strategy, and £75m over the three-year period. This is possible due to the dividend we receive from Edrington, in which the Trust has a majority stake, and returns on our pooled investments portfolio.

Viewed in retrospect, 2021-22 was a year of transition for the Trust. It was the first full year of grant-making via **Our Funds**. These are open for applications to eligible charities and constituted groups throughout the year, across our four themes. Our Board approved an increase of £1M to the original budget so we were able to award £16.6M in response to increasing, well-aligned demand. This spans Wee Grants for wee groups to Large Grants for charities with an annual income below £2M.

In addition to **Our Funds**, we were also refining our approach for **Programme Awards**. These are more proactive awards that focus specifically on big change that lasts. They are likely to involve either application via specific Open Calls or discovery work leading to applications by invitation.

Partners in Change was an early example of this approach. Through this programme, we awarded six partnerships a share of £2.4M to drive ambitious change for addressing poverty and trauma.

There is more information on **Our Funds** and our **Programme Awards** throughout this report.



Food pantry run by Govan HELP

In recent years we have supported alternative ways of funding. This includes testing a new Social Bridging Finance (SBF) model for improving the sustainability of preventative services. The final evaluation report will be published soon.

Through 2021-22 we were also reviewing our investment strategy to explore how we can drive positive change through that, as well as what we fund.



Barracks Conference Centre

Support

In addition to funding, we recognise the value of providing non-financial support to organisations and our charity hubs in Glasgow and Stirling offer discounted office and meeting space. Although the pandemic has disrupted our ability to build face-to-face connections, we have been able to re-open The Barracks Conference Centre on a 'funder-plus' basis to all organisations funded through our new strategy. This provides meeting space without charge during a test phase which began in February 2022 and runs until the end of the year.

In the summer of 2021, we undertook discovery work, to better understand the needs and opportunities for strengthening capacity, skills and capability in the third sector. The findings from this have been used to inform our plans for non-financial support. During the year, we continued to work with a number of partners including Community Enterprise Scotland. We also approved awards including:

- £10K to the **Third Sector Governance Forum** to update their resources post-Covid and deliver activities during Trustees' Week in 2021.
- £41K to **The Lens** to support access to online coaching and provide opportunities for collaboration. The platform is now live and we will be opening it to our grant holders soon.
- £6K to the **Third Sector Lab** to support delivery of The Curve 2021. This was a series of free, 90 minutes workshops for third sector organisations which aimed to build knowledge around best digital practices and raise awareness of digital tools.

Further packages of support will be announced in the coming year.

We continued to deliver Journey to Success: a self-development programme for under-represented young people in higher education. There is more on this on page 20.

Influence

We know that our independent voice is a strength. In 2021–22, we began to explore how we could use our own voice, as well as amplifying the voice of others, in a more proactive way. Throughout the year, we published blogs on key issues, wrote editorials for external publications like The Times and [TFN](#), organised meetings with key decision makers, and joined Joseph Rowntree Foundation's #keepthelifeline campaign.

At the heart of our strategy is a commitment to collaborative approaches which advance rights. With 2021 marking ten years since Campbell Christie delivered his Commission's report on the future of public services, we saw an opportunity to bring people together to explore issues and solutions. The Christie Commission's ambition was bold, setting the tone for how we think about prevention and participation in public services to address the pressures of funding and demography. However, long before the pandemic, there was a consensus that Scotland was being blown off course from the journey Christie had started. Certainly, the [Hard Edges Scotland](#) report, we led with [Lankelly Chase](#) in 2019, found that 190,000 adults still had at least one experience of homelessness, offending or addiction in a typical year. This shows that we have a long way to go before prevention is truly embedded across our public services.

Prompted by the anniversary and what we learned from the Hard Edges report, our **#ChristiePlus10** campaign brought experienced leaders and practitioners together through an event and a series of blogs featuring contributions from: [Suzanne Fitzpatrick](#) (Professor of Housing and Social Policy in the Institute for Social Policy, Housing, Policy and Real Estate (I-SPHERE)); [Adam Lang](#) (Head of Nesta in Scotland); [Greg Colgan](#) (Chief Executive of Dundee City Council); [Mike Burns](#) (CEO of Penumbra) and [Mary Glasgow](#) (Chief Executive of Children 1st).

The campaign created a space for people to reflect on progress and to challenge what we need to do next to achieve lasting change for people and places facing the highest risks of poverty and trauma. There was a strong pick-up on social media for the guest blogs and both Suzanne Fitzpatrick and Jim McCormick were invited to speak at other events.

We will use lessons learned from this campaign, and others, to improve our influencing work in the years ahead.



Cross-organisational Approaches

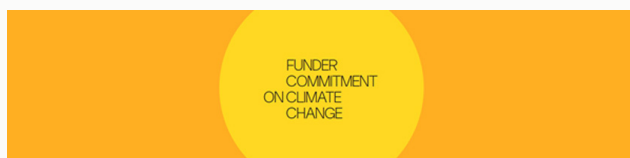
Across all of our work we have a determination to build our knowledge on issues of power and justice. We have committed to a whole organisational approach to:

- **Active learning on Anti-Racism and Allyship, led by Viana Maya and colleagues at [pRESPECT](#).**
- **Becoming Trauma-informed and responsive. Training to become trauma-informed and responsive, led by Shumela Ahmed and colleagues at [Resilience Learning Partnership](#).**
- **Advancing how we meaningfully engage people with lived and learned experience through our work.**

We have also signed up to The Association of Charitable Foundation's [Funder Commitment on Climate Change](#). This makes us accountable to our peers on the steps we are taking towards a Net-Zero future for Scotland.

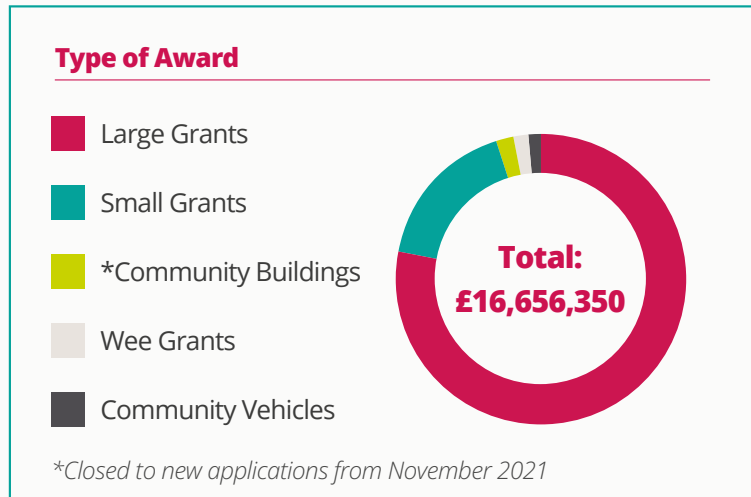
A key part of Our Plan is building a **proactive approach** to our work. Towards the end of 2021, we appointed Russell Gunson as Head of Programmes and Practice and Zoe Ferguson as Head of Insight and Impact, both new roles, to boost our capacity to drive proactive change, integration and learning across the strands of our work.

We know that we have a responsibility to gather, share, and use learning to improve how we work and to influence others. We also want to understand the contribution that we, alongside others, are enabling to make big change that lasts. That requires us to ask consistent questions and to be open and confident about what is and isn't working and what we could do differently to achieve greater impact. We will share more about what we're doing in this area in the coming year.



Our Funds

2021-22 was the first full year of grant-making via **Our Funds**. These are open for applications from eligible charities and constituted groups throughout the year. During this period, we made **453** awards with an expenditure of **£16.6M**. The success rate was **65%** and the split in type of awards made was as follows:



Awarded from April 2021–March 2022

£16,656,350



453
Awards made



Successful Applications



£12,999,000
Large Grants



£2,851,500
Small Grants



£326,000
Community Building



£281,850
Wee Grants



£198,000
Community Vehicles

How We Fund

Through **Our Funds**, we support those organisations working to reduce the impacts of poverty and trauma, with a focus on at least one of the Trust's four thematic priorities. However, we understand the value of organisations taking a holistic approach in how they support individuals, delivering projects and services which often cut across a number of our themes.

This intersectionality is hugely important, and we will continue to work with our partners, to build our insights and understanding of this kind of relational approach.

In 2021-22, **70% of the awards we made through Our Funds (£11.6M) contributed to more than one of our themes.**



**Wee Grant
£2K**

Friends of Settlers Falkirk Wee Grant £2K over 1 year

Since 2016, Friends of Settlers Falkirk have been working to provide support for those who are new to the Falkirk area, particularly those who are refugees or asylum seekers. The support is aimed at helping families integrate into the local community through befriending, introducing them to local services and providing conversational English classes to help support with accessing employment.

"Poverty and trauma are both extremely relevant to the work that we do. In terms of trauma, we know that there isn't enough joined-up mental health provision for people in the asylum system. What we aim to do is to better people's morale through activities such as sports, walks, going for swims, spending time together and eating together – essentially having fun and taking their mind off things. That sense of solidarity, friendship and fun is the best that we can do right now for them.

The vast majority of people that we work with do not have any disposable income at all and we know that learning English is a barrier to employment and volunteering opportunities for them.

We are working well with our local council to support the provision of ESOL classes, but we would like to see much more of this to help asylum seekers integrate better. We believe that ESOL classes should be embedded in local council provision with longer-term support, rather than short term provision with various funding. This would help massively."

Jessica Paterson, Chair of Friends of Settlers



Continuous Improvement

We value feedback from our partner organisations and from intermediaries and we regularly consult with other funders to ensure we are applying consistent, recognised good practice. During the course of 2021-22 we ran our first grant holders' survey which was analysed by New Philanthropy Capital. We are always grateful to organisations for taking the time to share thoughts with us and know that we have a responsibility to use this to continually reflect and review our processes.

We had 237 responses on this occasion and plan to build on this in future years. Overall, the feedback was positive with the majority providing positive feedback about our processes and over 90% of respondents stating that they either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, **'we know what to expect from engagements with you.'**

In spite of this, there are still a number of learning points for us. The most common were:

- **The value of having more regular 'check-ins' with organisations (3 or 6 months), which focussed on identifying broader, non-financial, support needs.**
- **The importance of adopting a relational approach, with organisations saying more visits would be beneficial in developing closer relationships, enabling them to showcase and give us a better understanding of their work needs.**
- **The need to improve some technical issues to improve aspects of our application and reporting processes.**
- **The need for us to promote our non-financial 'funder-plus' support more widely so that grant holders know what they can access and how.**

Grant holders wanting to have a more relational approach with us was an endorsement of our internal thinking, particularly felt by our staff following the pandemic, and from our conversations with other funders. As part of this, we have committed to IVAR's Open and Trusted Grantmaking initiative which will support and challenge us to continue to develop and benchmark our approaches alongside our peers.

There have been a number of consistent messages from third sector organisations over the years which we have tried to reflect in how we fund. For example, we continue to welcome requests for unrestricted funds to meet core costs and to provide multi-year funding.

However, whilst aspiring to provide 5-year funding at the launch of our current strategy, the level of demand has made this more challenging than anticipated. We fully recognise the need for long term funding, and this is an area which we will continue to explore.

Towards the end of the financial year 2022, we started to see the impact of escalating costs and rising inflation. Together with other funders, we are considering an appropriate response, one which will hopefully contribute to immediate need but more importantly, also seek longer term solutions which are likely to go beyond the provision of direct financial support.



Programme Awards

In addition to our **Our Funds**, we further developed our approach to **Programme Awards** where we will fund work with the highest potential for delivering big change that lasts on poverty and trauma. This involves new ways of working for the Trust, including cross-functional Theme Teams that will advance work under our four thematic priorities.

Under our current strategy, our first Programme Awards were through **Partners in Change**. We received over 155 applications and were able to award £2.4M across six system change projects that are being led by a mix of partners from across the third and university sectors. Within this programme, we have appointed [Thrive](#) as our learning and evaluation partner. They will support us and the funded projects to understand what helps and hinders change and to share learning as we go.

We have also made some individual Programme Awards through each of our themes. More information on all of these can be found on the thematic pages below.



Our Themes

As part of our strategy, we have identified four themes which we think are essential for reducing the impacts of poverty and trauma in Scotland:

- **Education Pathways**
- **Financial Security**
- **Work Pathways**
- **Emotional Wellbeing and Relationships**

The sections below outline some of the work that we have been doing under these themes as well as highlighting some of the **Programme Awards** we have made through them.

Education Pathways

Through our Education Pathways theme, we aim to help shape an education system that maximises its contribution to wellbeing, to spotting and addressing trauma and to tackling poverty.

Education Pathways was the first theme to get started, initially as a combined theme with Work Pathways. Throughout 2021-22, the thematic group undertook significant discovery work. This included convening groups of grant holders to listen to their views, as well as commissioning external research into which educational interventions could have the biggest impact on poverty and trauma for young people across Scotland. From this work, we identified mentoring and tutoring as early priorities that we wanted to focus on. Additional priorities for the next three years will be identified through ongoing discovery work.

We also explored different ways for us to share findings and our thinking as we go. This included publishing two reports by the Poverty Alliance:

- [An evidence review into the poverty-related attainment gap,](#)
- [A report which explored the effectiveness of mentoring and tutoring for children and young people living in poverty.](#)

We also shared blog posts from [The Robertson Trust](#) and [Sue Ellis](#), former Professor of Education at Strathclyde University, that both responded to the research and discussed the findings in a [podcast](#) which we made with the Poverty Alliance. We will continue to share research findings and reflections in different ways to ensure they are as accessible as possible.

Awards

Through **Our Funds**, we are interested in work which:

- Supports educational engagement and attainment (including engagement of parents and wider family members).
- Supports people with the transition through education and training to work.

More information can be found on our [website](#).



Large Grant



five years

£150K

Govan Home and Education Link Project Govan HELP

Large Grant - £150K awarded over 5 years

Govan HELP is working to improve the lives of children and families living in Govan and the surrounding areas. It works closely with local schools to create the best package of support for individual families. It delivers seven distinct services that aim to support families to overcome issues that are negatively impacting on family life, including a Children's Befriending Project. Through this, children are referred from schools at the end of a Play Therapy course to allow them to continue to develop positive relationships and build communication skills through positive role models.

"Govan has one of the most culturally and ethnically diverse communities in Scotland. It also has one of the highest rates of urban poverty. Many of the families that we support in Govan have experienced multiple traumas over many years. It is our experience, and research shows, that families living in poverty are less likely than more affluent neighbours to have access to resources that might mitigate against the impact of trauma.

Fundamentally we need families to be lifted out of poverty so that they never have to make decisions about heating or eating. We know that for many of the families we support, they are experiencing difficulties just affording the essentials like food, clothes, and fuel and over the last year we have adapted our services to ensure we could meet these needs.

Our early intervention approach with families aims to identify and implement appropriate supports for families, providing coping strategies and interventions that help to improve their circumstances while preventing them from escalating to crisis point. Specific funding to support more of this work, particularly in deprived communities would help to address the issues."

Viv Sawyers, Chief Officer

We have also made three **Programme Awards**:

intandem was awarded £450K over three years to expand its national mentoring programme for children living in kinship care arrangements. Celia Tennant, Chief Executive of Inspiring Scotland, commented:



We've listened and sought to understand how intandem could be more effective and make a bigger difference. This expansion has been realised and informed by conversations with young people and their families, partner charities, social workers, and others across the sector to fill a current gap in mentoring support. We are delighted that with this support, we can help Scotland keep its promise to all care-experienced children, young people, and their families so that every child grows up loved, safe and respected, able to realise their full potential."

Borders College was awarded £90K over two years and **Forth Valley College** was awarded £75K over two years. Both awards are to support student wellbeing and progress within the college sector through established mentoring provision.



Action for Children was awarded £450K through **Partners in Change**, over three years for delivery of The STAY Programme. This project seeks to improve college retention, completion and success rates amongst care-experienced young people. Action for Children will work with Glasgow College, West College Scotland, Edinburgh College and other partners to provide broader support for students, outwith the college setting, to deal with complex issues such as poverty, mental health, homelessness, drug and alcohol misuse, money management, financial abuse or unemployment.



Within our Education Pathways theme, we are proud to deliver an in-house Scholarship scheme and self-development award for young people who are under-represented in higher education. There is more information on this over the page.



The Robertson Scholarship

Journey to Success

The Robertson Trust's Journey to Success programme aims to improve access, retention and graduate outcomes for under-represented young people going to university in Scotland. Managed in-house by The Robertson Trust scholarship team, it builds on our long-held experience of providing bursaries to young people who face barriers to accessing university; something we've done for almost 30 years.



The Trust provides financial support to scholars through bursaries, and we also offer non-financial support through our Journey to Success self-development programme. This includes training, internships, mentoring and wellbeing support. In the seven years since the introduction of the Journey to Success programme the Trust has provided financial support to more than 2,000 young people. Just over 700 scholars, and just over 150 new starts were supported in 2021-22.

"The Journey to Success programme has really changed my life. Some of the best people I've met have been through the programme. The workshops have helped me gain awareness about employment after you graduate, and have helped me develop a lot of the skills I will need to be successful. It's really changed my perspective on the kind of expectations I had about myself, and it's opened a lot of doors for me."

Vijay Chand, Robertson Scholar

Covid caused significant disruption to how the programme was delivered. As well as moving to online provision, the team also saw an increase in demand for mental health support for scholars and the number of discretionary payments needed.

In 2022-23, we plan to mark our 30th anniversary of providing scholarships and undertake an evaluation of the programme to help us understand which elements are having the greatest impact on reducing the impacts of poverty and trauma. We will use this alongside our learning of what works in online and face-to-face support to develop new ways of working for the years ahead.

You can find out more about Journey to Success through [this blog](#) and [this video](#) which tell scholars' stories in their own words.



Financial Security

At its heart, poverty means a lack of access to the financial resources we need to live a dignified quality of life. Through our Financial Security theme, we want to improve income adequacy, income security, reduce cost-related pressures on finances, and to improve financial safety nets for people in financial trouble.

Discovery work on Financial Security began in late 2021 and, so far, we have focused on responding to immediate demand in relation to the cost-of-living crisis alongside initial awards focused on long-term change. Through our discovery phase, we have reached out to grantholders, stakeholders, and policy makers, together with those with lived and learned experience to understand how action via this theme can have the greatest impact on poverty and trauma.

We will share our priorities for this theme for 2022-23 and beyond over the coming months as we act upon what our discovery phase has told us; identifying the areas we should focus on to advance long-term change, and the partners we need to work with.

However, we already know that boosting income through social security, tackling the costs of essential goods and services and building systems better able to prevent crisis and drive security will be at the heart of this theme.

Cost of Living Campaign

Our strategy sets out our ambition to use our voice and influence to enable ambitious change on poverty and trauma in Scotland. Given the external context, with a cost-of-living emergency that accelerated during 2022 and is set to worsen further over autumn and winter 2022, and rising financial insecurity, we have identified this as an immediate area where The Robertson Trust has the capacity and responsibility to act.

Over the past year, we have been involved in various forms of influencing, including Joseph Rowntree Foundation's **#KeepTheLifeline** campaign.

This campaign saw organisations across the UK, including The Robertson Trust, join together in urging the UK Government not to go ahead with the planned £20-a-week cut to Universal Credit and Working Tax Credit in October 2021.

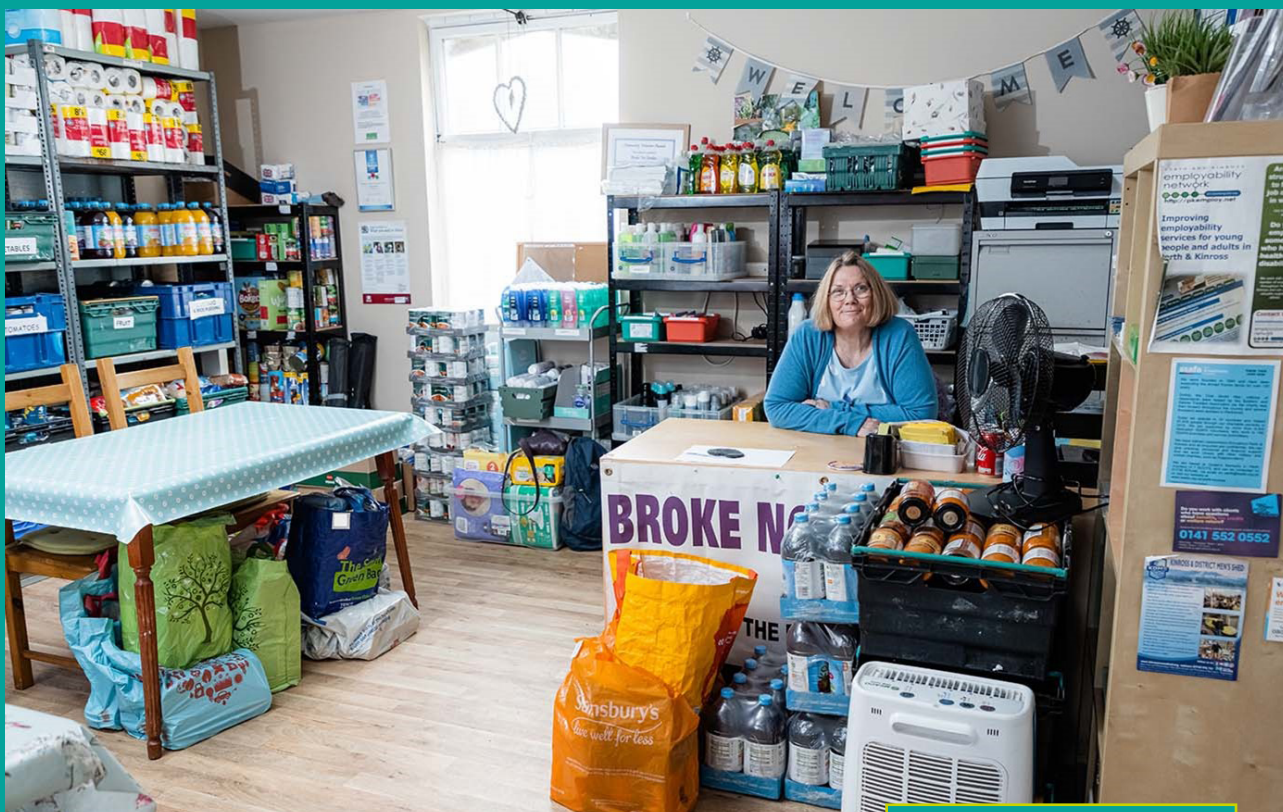
Autumn and winter 2022 must see a number of significant interventions to support lower income families in Scotland to avoid financial insecurity and the worst of a cost-of-living emergency. Clearly, the UK Government needs to act but we must also see action in Scotland. We will be using our voice to influence governments and others to ensure essential support is put in place.

Awards

Through **Our Funds**, we are interested in work which:

- **Helps people who are struggling with day-to-day costs.**
- **Creates access to advice, support and advocacy around welfare, debt, income maximisation and housing.**

More information can be found on our [website](#).



Large Grant



three years

£46K

Broke not Broken

Large Grant - £46K awarded over 3 years

Broke Not Broken aims to tackle the effects of poverty in Kinross-shire and eradicate poverty. They are doing this through a series of projects that target specific challenges in the Kinross area.

"Our support at the moment is very much focussed on food support, energy payments and mental health support. We put dignity at the heart of our charity and work as hard as we can to add a participative element in terms of how our projects run.

Poverty is the lead focus of our work, mitigating it but also working hard on a national and policy level to try and work towards a cash first approach to eradicating poverty in Scotland.

Whilst we do what we can to make the food bank experience as dignified as possible, our aim is for no-one to ever have to use a food bank. We work with local advisory groups (CAB and Welfare Rights) to ensure people are getting the benefits and financial support they are entitled to, but people need more support, more money in their pockets."

Annie McCormack, Chair



Large Grant



three years

£69K

The Energy Advisory Service **Large Grant - £69K over three years**

The Energy Advisory Service (TEAS) helps support Western Isles residents lower their household energy costs by providing fuel poverty advice and support.

“The Outer Hebrides have always faced substantially higher than average fuel poverty figures and unfortunately fuel poverty figures have rocketed. In April 2022, Energy Action Scotland completed a mapping exercise showing the Western Isles to have the highest level of fuel poverty in Scotland at 57%.

Commitment to a long-term energy price cap needs to be in place with emphasis on a rural top up so areas such as the Outer Hebrides have access to affordable energy and are not paying a premium because of our rural location. The next five years need to concentrate in eliminating fuel poverty in Scotland and see all homes are brought up to a reasonable living standard, made as energy efficient as possible without putting the responsibility solely on the homeowner.”

Kirsty MacLeod, Energy Advice Manager



We have made two **Programme Awards** through Financial Security:

- **Homeless Network Scotland** received £500K over three years for the Fair Way Scotland project. The project, with its consortium of partners, supports people and families with no recourse to public funds status in Scotland. This is the biggest single award we have made so far under our current strategy.
- **The Cottage Family Centre** received £100k over 15 months for the Big Hoose Project. The project links low income families in financial stress, and other services supporting them, with surplus household essential goods. This ensures goods that could otherwise go to landfill can be used to meet demand for household essentials.

Through **Partners in Change**, we also awarded funding to two partnerships which are working within our Financial Security theme:

- **Aberlour** received £409K over three years for the Tayside Family Financial Wellbeing, which aims to facilitate the systems-change needed to promote new and different approaches to financially assisting vulnerable families. This project will be delivered in partnership with local families and Tayside Councils.
- **Capital City Partnership** was awarded £300K over three years for the “Whole Family Equality Project” which takes a child-centred, family minded approach to tackling child poverty in Edinburgh. Working together with partners including **Children 1st** and **Community Help and Advice Initiative**, the approach will be adapted and extended to better meet the needs of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Communities.

We also committed £250K to Corra Foundation to extend the Household Hardship Fund. This provided funding to smaller charities and community groups working to support low-income families in financial crisis.

Work Pathways

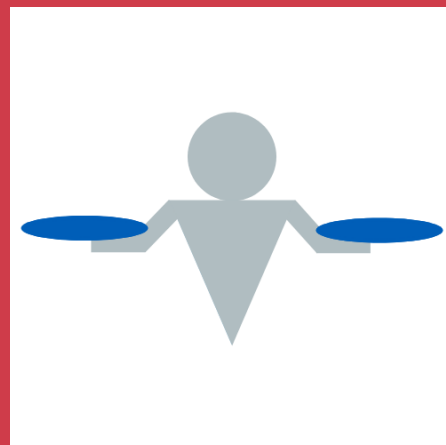
Through Work Pathways, we aim to improve employability services and employability rates for key population groups that are currently underrepresented in the labour market, and overrepresented in low paid, insecure, work.

Our Work Pathways theme looks at how work can better help tackle poverty and trauma. Too often work quality, security, wages, hours and prospects mean employment is not the route out of poverty it should be. This theme will house our actions to fund, support and influence to ensure work can be a better route out of poverty for more people.

In 2021-22, the Work Pathways thematic group began a discovery phase, exploring an initial interest in improving employability services. We spoke to a range of stakeholders and hosted three conversations with current grant holders. We wanted to hear from them about the challenges they were facing, what opportunities they could see, and how we could support them more effectively as an independent funder.

Through all of our conversations, organisations have been keen to stress the importance of building a relationship with the people they support, as well as adopting approaches that are tailored to an individual's circumstances, goals and skills. This is something we will reflect in our future commitments.

Under this theme, we are also exploring where we could work to advance fair work in Scotland and to drive the improvements in pay, hours, security, progression, flexibility and job quality needed to see work become a genuine route out of poverty for many more than now.



Logo for the 'Serving the Future' partnership project. More information on this can be found on page 28.

Awards

Through **Our Funds**, we are interested in funding work which:

- Supports people with the skills they require to gain and retain employment.
- Supports people to achieve progression at work.

More information can be found on our [website](#).

Roxburgh and Berwickshire Citizens Advice Bureau, The Employment Rights and Advice Service (ERAS) Large Grant - £62K over two years

Large Grant



two years

£62K

Roxburgh & Berwickshire Citizens Advice Bureau are working with other Bureau from across the South of Scotland, including Scottish Borders Citizens Advice Bureau Consortium and Dumfries & Galloway Citizens Advice Service. Working together for the first time, they aim to improve access to employment rights and support. They also hope to address the root of the issue by providing guidance to employers on Scotland's Fair Work agenda and how to embed these practices in their workplace.

"Maintaining people's employment and assisting employers to understand the benefits of embedding fair work practices into the workplace, prevents the need to access the welfare benefits system, meaning a higher household income.

In the next five years, it is hoped that the Bureaus operating across the south of Scotland are better equipped and feel more able to support employees in maintaining or instructing their employment rights. We hope employment advice will be as mainstream as providing benefits, debt or housing advice and advisers will feel able to offer representation.

The Scottish Government has taken the first steps by producing the agenda for change. What needs to happen now is education and support for implementation of the Fair Work agenda."

Annette McGraith, Berwickshire Manager

Large Grant

three years

£120K**Glasgow Council on Alcohol – Elevate Glasgow PSP****Large Grant - £120K over three years**

Elevate Glasgow is an Employability Public Social Partnership for individuals in recovery from addictions. The PSP involves 30 organisations of which Glasgow Council on Alcohol is the lead agency. Elevate’s aim is to empower individuals to become more self-reliant through improving confidence, skills and employability prospects.

“Offering a person-centred approach, the Employability Support Workers will do a variety of work with participants depending on their needs from accompanying them to DWP or housing appointments, to making sure their CV is up to date and going through interview preparation. They will look to address both the real and perceived barriers that affect people including poor mental health, homelessness, trauma, criminality, and adverse childhood experiences. Each participant is unique, and we treat everyone as an individual with dignity and respect. Employability Support Workers, work very intensively with participants and support them right the way through their journey into employment and offer ongoing support once they enter the workplace.

We would like to see the end of the dreaded ‘Pipeline system’ where people are treated as statistics and goals rather than holistically with a genuine person-centred approach which consistently evidences better outcomes for the individuals.”

Lesley Ross, Head of Partnerships and Deputy CEO

We have made a **Programme Award** through Work Pathways:

- **Glasgow Council for the Voluntary Sector (GCVS)** was awarded £18K to commission independent research on Fair Work in the Third Sector. The findings are expected in 2023 and we will use them alongside our own discovery work.

Through **Partners in Change**, we awarded **The University of Strathclyde** £445K over three years for its change project ‘Serving the Future’ which is focused on identifying actions that make paid employment sustainable protection against poverty. This partnership between the University’s Fraser of Allander Institute, Institute for Inspiring Children’s Futures and the Poverty Alliance will work with employers and related public services, as well as people in poverty, to identify and implement meaningful change that will reduce the risk of in-work poverty.

Emotional Wellbeing and Relationships

Under our Emotional Wellbeing and Relationships theme, our aim is to drive change in Scotland by building a more effective response of the damaging effects caused by poverty and trauma, particularly among children, young people and their families. We also want to ensure the provision of appropriate support to help as many people as possible to recover to lead happy and fulfilling lives.

We began our work under this theme in 2021 and have undertaken significant discovery conversations with our grant holders and other stakeholders to understand the current challenges and opportunities within what risks being a very broad piece of work. The findings so far point to a significant gap in knowledge and practice around trauma-responsive approaches and policy in Scotland. They have also identified significant gaps in mental health provision and services, and services and interventions designed to promote wellbeing and strong relationships in order to address poverty and trauma.

For 2022–23, the theme will focus on work that builds our knowledge and skills as a trauma-responsive organisation, as well as beginning further work with grant-holders and wider stakeholders around whole family holistic support and, developing participation on the basis of how people's lives work.



Awards

Through **Our Funds**, we are particularly interested in work which focuses on:

- **Holistic parenting, early years and family support which focuses on child attachment.**
- **Mental health support which aims to reduce the need for children and young people to use crisis or clinical services**
- **Activities which empower vulnerable girls and women, including crisis support for those affected by gender- based violence**
- **Services and support for adults affected by severe and multiple issues – the ‘hard edges’ - including addictions and homelessness.**

More information can be found on our [website](#).

Large Grant



three years

£78K

Muirhouse Millennium Centre, Low Income Families Together

Large Grant - £78K over three years

Low Income Families Together (LIFT) is committed to working in a holistic way with individuals, families and the community. LIFT'S aims and objectives are to assist families to learn new skills to improve their lives and encourage their children to grow up feeling loved, safe and respected so that they can realise their full potential.

"Poverty is our highest reason for referral to LIFT, both in work poverty and food poverty. We had hoped after the pandemic, we would be focussing on prevention work but sadly due to the increase in the cost of living we are seeing a huge increase in the referrals for crisis work.

We are supporting families to meet the huge increase in the cost of living and helping families to budget their finances. We also have to focus our support on helping families with their mental wellbeing as poverty, whether it's in work poverty or food poverty, is having a catastrophic impact.

We would like to see more longer-term funding. One or two years is just not enough as the time scale for engaging with a family, building their trust, reducing barriers to employment, setting achievable goals for their own journey to reach their full potential can take years."

Pauline Bowie, Manager at LIFT



Large Grant



three years

£105K

Grampian Women's Aid – Running Costs
Large Grant £105K over three years

Grampian Women's Aid provides specialist domestic abuse support services for women, children and young people in Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire. It offers crisis intervention, support, refuge accommodation, information, advocacy, group work educational programmes, and peer support groups.

"We provide services reflecting the crisis nature of domestic abuse. Where women access our refuge services and support, they often come to us with nothing other than the clothes they are wearing. Through our local partnership, we source food and toiletries packs.

Follow on support is provided when families and women leave the refuge, aiding with moving in, safety planning and practical support where required and this is provided by our Outreach and Follow-on service.

We also provide outreach services for women and children who do not want or need refuge accommodation. The level and frequency of support is flexible and tailored to the women's individual needs and risks.

A human rights approach to domestic abuse requires a need-based funding structure for frontline services for women, children and young people experiencing domestic abuse.

It is in this unsustainable context that, every day, Women's Aid workers have to make gruellingly difficult decisions about how to use the too-scarce resources they have to meet rising demand for their services. The impact of COVID-19 continues to be felt through court delays, increase in our referrals and limited funding to cover basic overheads."

Alison Hay, Prevention and Development Lead

We didn't make any **Programme Awards** under this theme in 2021-22 but we did make two awards through **Partners in Change**:

- **Apex Scotland** was awarded £337K to develop and test a trauma-informed environment both for the users of Apex's services, primarily people facing severe and multiple disadvantages, and the staff that deliver them. Apex Scotland will partner with Resilience Learning Partnership and a Psychotherapist trained in Traumatic Stress Studies to develop and embed this work. The project will be tracked by an embedded researcher who will produce a final evaluation overseen by University of Dundee.
- **Scottish Refugee Council** was awarded £450K to pilot a case management model with newly arrived and dispersed families, supporting them with immigration advice and representation to increase access to justice and reduce poverty for 200 families in Scotland. The project will partner with Latta & Co and JustRight Scotland.

Within our Emotional Wellbeing and Relationships theme, we are proud to host **Each and Every Child** at The Robertson Trust. This is a partnership project between CELCIS, Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, Life Changes Trust, The Robertson Trust, Scottish Government and Social Work Scotland. The Trust is contributing £250K over three years.



Each and Every Child

Each and Every Child is a new initiative that aims to tell a compelling story about children and young people in the care system, transforming the current public narrative and mobilising people at all levels in the community to take action to improve the life chances of all children, young people and families across Scotland



How we talk about care experience matters. This story looks to build and improve public support for the progressive vision outlined in The Promise. To help with this challenge, **Each and Every Child** are sharing framing recommendations from FrameWorksUK's research into public attitudes towards care experience and the Care system in Scotland.

Now in the second year of the initiative, **Each and Every Child** have been delivering sessions on how to frame care experience to organisations such as the Care Inspectorate, The Scottish Government, Barnardo's and different local authorities across Scotland. These sessions explore how changing the language we use can radically shift public attitudes towards people with experience of care and the care system, challenging stigma and building support for progressive policies. The team have now delivered 75 Introduction to Framing and Framing Care Experience sessions to over 1600 people, as well as delivering more intensive additional sessions and intensive support to early adopter organisations.

The **Each and Every Child** Voices of Experience reference group have co-designed a training session for people with lived experience to explore the framing recommendations when speaking about care. The team, together with members of the Voice of Experience reference group, started to deliver these in summer 2022.

You can read more about **Each and Every Child's** work and keep up to date with their progress here: <https://eachandeverychild.co.uk/>

Let Us Know What You Think

In the future, this will become a place where we can increasingly share our learning about big change that lasts. We hope to use it, among other opportunities, to engage more with our grantholders, peers, policy makers and practitioners and - most importantly - people and communities with lived experience of the issues we hope to address.

In the meantime, we hope this review has set out what we are doing and where we are going, and we would welcome any thoughts.

If you have any comments about this report, or the work we have discussed within it, please contact us at TRTcomms@therobertsontrust.org.uk or telephone us on 0141 353 7300.



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