

ANNUAL REVIEW 2017



ScotsCare 
The charity for Scots in London

Annual Review 2017



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Helping build strong families in the Scottish Community



Message from Shona Fleming, *Chief Executive*

The Scottish tradition of helping those less fortunate continues after more than 400 years of Scots in London.

However, as a modern charity, ScotsCare has evolved and finds that the need for support has never been greater.

Today ScotsCare offers a range of services and support for Scots and their families in Greater London. We help with housing, health, advocacy, welfare grants, training, housing assistance, respite holidays and social events, as well as newer services such as career coaching and counselling.

I am about to begin my second year as Chief Executive after 14 years' experience in a variety of roles within ScotsCare. During that time, the organisation modernised by developing a new strategic direction that focuses on how we support our clients. The number of clients and the services available to them has increased significantly. I have striven to build on ScotsCare's achievements by revising our strategic objectives with a focus on services that support children and families; this will remain a focus in the coming years.

ScotsCare believes that the earlier we can support parents financially, practically and emotionally, the better. Our overarching aim is to stop the cycle of poverty, low educational attainment and unemployment. Providing support for parents enables them to support their children. With that in mind, our range of services benefit the whole family as well as the individual. In particular, we focus on supporting parents while providing positive experiences and opportunities for their children, thus investing in the future of our clients and their families - we do not want the child we help today to be dependent on our help in the future.

Shona Fleming,
Chief Executive

Client support at the Heart of ScotsCare



ScotsCare's reach into the Scottish community in Greater London continues to grow. We have demonstrated success in many areas that make huge differences to our clients' health and wellbeing and have increased the services we offer as well as the number of people we support.

A diverse range of services and programmes provide comprehensive support which includes children and families outbound activity holiday, an enhanced children's grant to fund sports, drama and music activities, career coaching, an advocacy service and counselling.

We also provide a range of social activities to build a stronger Scottish community. Our children and families events are held several times during the year and this year included a Thames River cruise, a seaside trip and ice skating and circus at Winter Wonderland in Hyde Park.

These popular events provide opportunities for parents to spend time with their children, and get to meet other Scottish families. ScotsCare meets the costs of travel, food and entry for each event. In addition, there is the successful annual UK-based PGL outbound holiday for families which we will continue in the coming year.

Social activities for our older clients (over 55s) include monthly lunches and parties in London and Luton, and outings such as the Salute to 40s in Historic Chatham Dockyards, which took place this past Summer, are regular features as well.

Understanding and meeting the needs of our clients is important to us and last year we developed and put in place a way to survey our clients. This client satisfaction survey confirms that we are on the right course. Highlights this year include:

- ✘ 91.5% of clients rate our service excellent or good
- ✘ 43% have received additional help that was not asked for at the application stage
- ✘ 72% say that ScotsCare had improved their standard of living
- ✘ 96% think that the knowledge and competence of staff was excellent or good





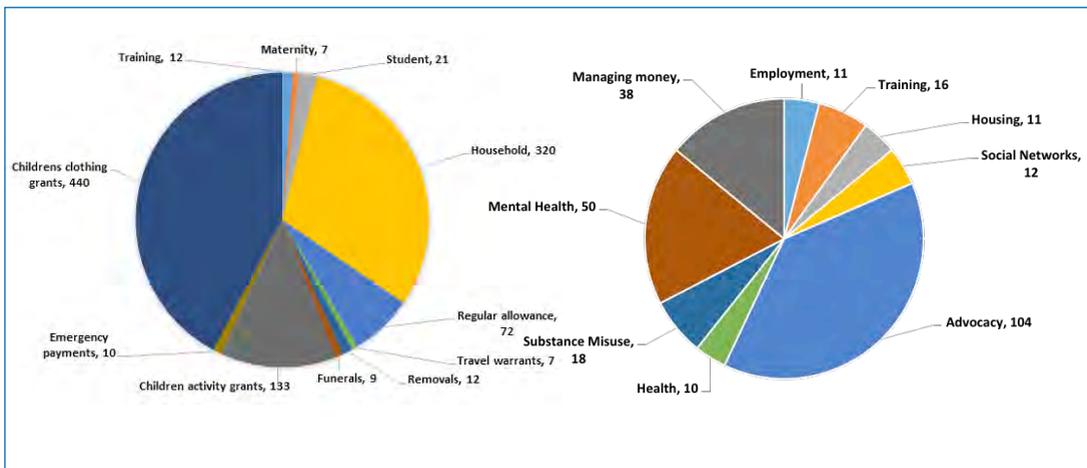
In the coming year our focus will be on what these services and activities achieve, so we will be looking more closely at measuring our impact. We have been working on a Theory of Change programme related to our children and families clients. The aim of the programme is to generate definitive evidence of ScotsCare's impact and how that translates into improving wellbeing, strengthening financial resilience and enabling parents to realise aspirations for their children.

ScotsCare clients - 1077



In the past year, ScotsCare has worked with 1077 clients, of which 440 were children, while adult females numbered 381, and there were 256 adult male clients.

The two charts below show the range of grants offered and the types of interventions the Client Support team has been involved in with clients.





Helping families thrive

A fresh start

Following a series of unfortunate events leading to prison terms in foreign countries, upon release, Michelle and Alan (not their real names) found out about ScotsCare, and Alan being a Scot, got in touch. A visit from one of our case workers resulted in a furniture grant and a children's grant, which Michelle explains was "clothes, duvets, blankets, snow boots and everything a kid needs for winter".

Six years on, now married with three boys, ScotsCare has continued supporting them in becoming self-reliant and assisted them in securing the qualifications required to start new lives. Michelle did a teaching degree while working and Alan is training to become an electrician. They say they're now preparing to go "up the road" to Scotland.

“We’re on the up! In a couple of years we’ll be able to start being the kind of people who donate to ScotsCare rather than accepting help from them, which is the ultimate goal, really.”

Michelle

Michelle and Alan's full story is at www.scotscare.com/news-events-blogs/a-fresh-start/

Partners in advocacy



Advocacy is one of ScotsCare's most successful services. Its purpose is to help clients get the benefits or services they are entitled to receive.

The process of appealing a benefits decision or making a formal complaint regarding things or housing disrepair issues can be complex and many of our clients are unable to navigate their way through the process. Our advocates can support applicants with benefit assessments, appeals, housing issues, and many others. Since last year the number of our clients requiring help with the assessment stage of applying for benefits and again at the appeal stage has almost doubled.

Over the past year we have advocated on behalf of 104 clients, over half of them with benefit appeals and assessments, and achieved an 85% success rate in accessing services, making statutory complaints and overturning medical and DWP decisions.

ScotsCare's advocacy team has never been busier as their caseload continues to grow. This is partly because welfare reforms are making access to benefits more difficult, and generating more complaints. It's also because ScotsCare's tally in overturning decisions is impressive with over a 95% success rate in benefit appeals.

ScotsCare advocates help the client state their case, and do not speak on their behalf. However, the advocacy partner is supported every step of the way. It can be a long road as cases can take many months as the appeal procedure is lengthy and complex.

“Some local authorities deal with people in a purely automated way. Trying to get past that, requesting face to face meetings, sitting down with service providers, gets decisions changed, because there is a real person in front of them.”

*Gearóid Davey,
Advocacy Senior Worker*



Advocacy in action

Making a house a liveable home

Catherine had serious issues with 'disrepairs' in her house for over two years. She had damp caused by vandalism which saw her skylight damaged and the railings around it removed. "The water came down from the skylight and interfered with the electrics. There were switches I couldn't use", she says. The kitchen was unuseable. She also needed a new radiator and rubbish cleared from the garden. However, the landlord's agent would not respond to her requests for repairs.

ScotsCare stepped in and made a formal complaint to the landlord's agency on her behalf. However, that was also ignored. Her Advocacy worker, Gearóid, appealed to the Ombudsman, who ruled in Catherine's favour, which meant that the landlord and its agency had to take action.

The work is nearing completion, with a new skylight and a remodelled kitchen. Also, the radiator has been replaced and the rubbish has been removed.

He's been a lifesaver actually. He's always there at the end of the phone. The whole of ScotsCare is wonderful.

Catherine's story is at www.scotscare.com/videos

Mental health matters



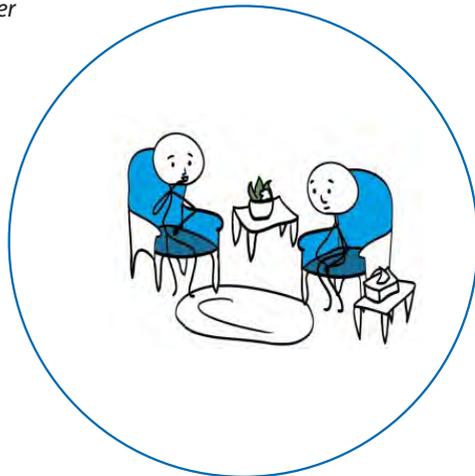
In 2013 ScotsCare carried out an analysis of all our client groups and discovered that over half had suffered with mental health issues at some point in their lives. During assessments a number of clients told us that they relied heavily on antidepressants while trying to access talking therapies on the NHS, which in most cases meant an 18-month wait.

This feedback led us to develop a service which could provide our clients with the support they needed quickly; therefore enabling them to reduce the medication they were taking.

Our counselling service is provided for clients like Jane, who had suffered a bereavement and was struggling to cope with her two young children. She was dependent on medication which made her feel numb and lethargic. Jane talked with a therapist on a weekly basis for six months, and after slowly reducing her medication, no longer needs it. She feels much more able to take care of her children and is now volunteering at a local community centre. The outcome of this six-month intervention has been very positive for her and she says there has been a significant change in her symptoms and capacity to cope with everyday life.

// The counselling service that ScotsCare funds has made a difference to people's lives and in some cases, the lives of their children as well. //

Isabel Dunlop, Client Support Manager



Volunteers make things happen

With just over 20 staff, ScotsCare supports Scots in London in a range of ways - from family support and education and training grants to housing for over-55s. But without its 55 volunteers, there are some services the charity wouldn't be able to offer. In the past year our volunteers clocked up over 7,000 hours supporting our work. There are quite a few roles that volunteers take. They are our staff at the reception desk and telephones, and help with a variety of activities, including social events, outings for clients, mail-outs, administrative tasks, outreach and even run a coffee morning for some of our residents.

Another service is 'Blether Buddies' in which befrienders call or meet ScotsCare clients on a regular basis, helping to reduce their sense of isolation and improve wellbeing.

Volunteers' motivations are just as diverse as the activities they undertake. For some it's helping those less fortunate than they are. It is also about getting skills, meeting people, staying active, or finding work again.

When I came down here from Glasgow I took a long time to settle down before I could start to make progress. So I can understand other people having problems.

Dan, a reception desk and former befriending volunteer

Volunteers get training in a variety of areas – safeguarding, professional boundaries, first aid, lone working and telephone skills.

ScotsCare celebrated Befriending Week in November to recognise the contribution our Blether Buddies make. A short video was produced, some of which featured on our social media. It includes comments from befrienders and befriendees about what they get out of their visits and phone calls.

ScotsCare has a calendar of social events organised for volunteers to show our appreciation and to offer a social aspect to their roles throughout the year, including participating in national initiatives such as Volunteers' and Befrienders' weeks and a tour of Houses of Parliament. A highlight of the year is the Summer Thames River boat cruise party.

Everyone really enjoys this event. It's a great way for ScotsCare to show our volunteers how grateful we are for all their hard work.

Louise Davies, Volunteer Coordinator



“The Houses of Parliament have an aura of calm, presided over by four mosaics of the patron saints of Scotland, England, Ireland and Wales glittering above the arches.”

Amy, volunteer



Volunteer Willy Donnelly receiving the Islington Older Volunteer Award from the Islington Mayoress.



A bit of Scotland in London

ScotsCare owns and manages three sheltered housing sites. Those are Rothesay Court in Lewisham providing 36 flats mostly one bedroom, Bawtry Road in Barnet accommodating 28 one bedroom flats, while our 20 flats at Kinnear Court in Wimbledon accommodate both working age and elderly clients, with the current intake for over 55s only.

Accommodation is allocated based on priority housing needs, such as to those applicants who have been living in poor accommodation, have had major disrepair issues, clients who have been living in temporary accommodation and had a history of homelessness, or clients who are a priority on medical grounds.

Our dedicated staff at Bawtry Road and Rothesay Court strive to create a sense of community by providing activities and outings, so neighbours can get to know each other and have active social lives.

ScotsCare is continually improving our accommodation to create pleasant living conditions for our residents. At Rothesay Court we have applied to add housing units next year for people on the ScotsCare housing waiting list. Preliminary consultation and planning has been undertaken to add up to 12 new apartments to the existing structure. In addition there has been a complete renewal of bathrooms and kitchens as well as a comprehensive electrical upgrade.

Kinnear Court has had extensive exterior renovation and repair work, including window renewals and a lift upgrade.

We have successfully completed the majority of kitchen and bathroom improvements for our residents and much of the planned work in the third year of our 10-year investment programme, which includes renewing kitchens and bathrooms at all three sites.

Simon Clark, Housing Property Manager

Out and about in the Scottish community

We have made a concerted effort to extend the reach of ScotsCare into the Scottish community and have found new opportunities to engage with clients and potential clients.

Continuing with the successful GP surgery leaflets and posters so that more people learn about our services and to get referrals, we also have an advert in the GP Health Guide which is distributed to GP practices across Greater London. Adverts have also appeared in local newspapers, and for the first time, the Caledonian Club magazine. We have ensured that leaflets are available at the Crown Court and St Columba's churches.

Social media is an increasingly important and cost-effective communication channel. We have significantly increased our social media presence on Facebook and Twitter. Our aim is to make the ScotsCare pages 'go to' sources for news about Scottish culture. Recent features have included ITV chat show host Lorraine Kelly, who made a promotional video that was shared with our audiences on our website, Facebook and Twitter. In addition, we filmed an interview with Kirsty MacLaren, one of the Scottish stars of the Olivier Award-winning National Theatre of Scotland production and West End play 'Our Ladies of Perpetual Succour'. Our outreach to theatre goes includes leaflets and promotions at the Duke of York's Theatre, the Arts Theatre and the Finborough Theatre, which specialises in Scottish theatre.



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Calling all Scots

We seek direct engagement with our local community and to that end, for the first time, we participated in a local community fair, the Angel Canal Festival in Islington, not far from our office on City Road. Looking to the business community ScotsCare has become a member of Scotland House, an initiative from the Scottish Government to promote small to medium-sized Scottish businesses in London. Through the network, ScotsCare looks to build strong relationships to provide more opportunities for our clients. Close ties with the Scottish rugby community have been forged with London Scottish Football Club, with adverts in home match day programmes, pitchside banners and promotional activities.

Communication with clients and volunteers was enhanced with the introduction of electronic newsletters providing updates about activities and relevant news.

While progressing as a modern organisation, ScotsCare also honours its traditions. Commemorating St Andrew's Day is a tradition that goes back to the very origins of our charity, more than 400 years ago. This year, ScotsCare celebrated Scottish solidarity with events for clients, volunteers and trustees, including the 352nd St Andrew's Festival Dinner.



Financial Statement

2016- 2017

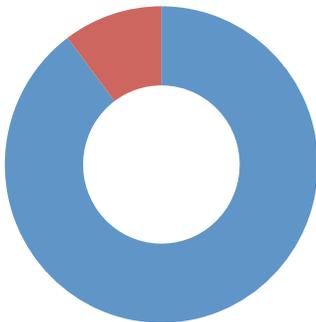
Income

Investment income & interest	1,342,202
Rental income	890,972
Legacies, donations & other income	24,793
Income in relation to homeless services	65,881
Total income	2,323,848

Expenditure

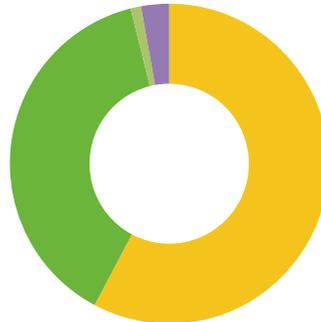
Charitable activities	2,310,418
Investment management	263,189
Total expenditure	2,573,607

Expenditure
Total £2,573,607



■ Charitable activities
■ Investment management

Income
Total £2,323,848



■ Investment income & interest
■ Rental income
■ Legacies, donations & other income
■ Income in relation to homeless services

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