



# Annual Report

2003 - 2004



SACP

Scottish Association  
of Children's Panels



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# Annual Report 2003-04



**Chair's Report**

**It was perhaps with some naivety that at our last AGM in June 2003, I agreed to being elected Vice Chairman, happily thinking that I had 2 years (at least) to shadow the chairman and learn what this new responsibility might entail. Unfortunately, change is a continuing theme in SACP's chair's reports and 2003 was no exception. In October, following the resignation of our elected Chair, Gerry Kearney, I suddenly found myself in the "HOT SEAT", facing a very steep learning curve and feeling more than a little trepidation at the privilege of leading the organisation at this time of change and uncertainty.**

**The children's hearing system is at a crossroads and the road ahead is uncertain but the system has many positives and this review is a chance to focus on these positives and move forward into the interesting and sometimes challenging times ahead.**

**Everyone involved in the Children's Hearings system has a vital role to play in ensuring that the welfare of Scotland's vulnerable children remains the most important issue.**

**Communication or the lack of it has been highlighted on several occasions. Our greatest difficulty has been an unprecedented turnover of the Executive and a dwindling number of active representatives from the panel areas. However, this decline has given us a chance to regroup and reassess our objectives, a business plan has been prepared and submitted to the Scottish Executive indicating ways in which we aim to achieve our objectives and provide value for money for the grants which we receive.**

**We have made great efforts to improve communications using e-mail, internet and extranet in order to reach a wider audience. Our minutes and conference reports are available to all panel members on the extranet.**

**Communication with panel members remains an issue in some areas through lack of representation. We have tried to resolve this issue by meetings with representatives of the Chairman's group and the Scottish Executive Education Department (SEED) to seek clarification of the present situation as they see it and to try and define ways to move forward. I would like to think that the relationships with the Chairman's group are improving and that both organisations have the desire to work in parallel to support and inform panel members and help them to improve the outcomes of vulnerable children in our society.**

**Since our last AGM we have met on 8 occasions and extend our thanks to the Scottish Children's Reporters Administration for allowing us the continued use of their offices at the headquarters in Stirling.**

**At our January meeting we were delighted to welcome Euan Robson MSP who spoke to us about current issues and concerns around the Children's Hearing system as it stands and the impending review. He and Gordon Watt fielded a variety of questions around the lack of secure accommodation in some areas and therefore the expense of having to send a young person outwith their own area to access such a resource. There was also concerns raised about the lack of residential accommodation to manage young people with drug addiction or mental health problems (particularly the under – 16's). He encouraged us to find positive ways to raise the profile of panel members and the Children's Hearing system.**

We have re-established contacts with national organisations so that we can attend conferences and - through formalised feedback to the SACP at council meetings and to panel members via the extranet - we can continue to provide a positive contribution to informed debate on current issues affecting children and families in today's society.

Members have attended the National School "Childhood is a single journey"; the Annual Conference of Children in Scotland; "Father Figures" also organised by Children in Scotland and "ADHD – a multi agency concern" and "Resilience in Vulnerable Children" organised by ACP Scotland.

Gordon Adamson and Paul Maynard attended the official launch of Children's Law UK in October 2003 where Lady Ann Smith succeeded Sheriff Gordon Nicholson as Scottish Patron. We continue, as an association, to be represented as a member of Children's Law UK and I have attended 3 meetings and the AGM on your behalf and I am grateful to SEED for their continuing support to enable me to attend these meetings. The organisation provides a useful forum for sharing information on Juvenile Justice and Child Welfare systems with other parts of the UK and further afield. A conference is planned for 2004 on Children and Domestic Violence and the next international conference will be held in Belfast in August 2005. I have also attended the CPAC Seminar 2004 entitled "Building on the Positive" as well as meetings of the Children's Hearings Representative Group and the Children's Hearing Forum.

We have also had the opportunity to respond to various consultation documents including "Health for all Children", "Sexual Health Strategy" and the Review of the Children's Hearing system.

Finally, I wish to express my appreciation to my colleagues on the Executive and Council for their support during what has been a difficult and demanding year. I would particularly like to thank Gordon Adamson who ably gave me the benefit of his many years experience as a past chairman of the SACP and our very able secretary Marilyn Stenhouse, for all her help in keeping the association focused during a difficult period of time for us all.

Change in the coming year is inevitable but I am confident that the ethos of Kilbrandon will remain to enable the Children's Hearing system to meet the challenges ahead. I hope we can move forward in a positive way to make a difference in the lives of the most vulnerable in our modern society.

Signature

Ann Lee, Chair, 4<sup>th</sup> June 2004

## SACP – Treasurer’s Report

Following on from last year’s report, we have now presented our Three Year Business Plan which has been accepted, in principle, by the Scottish Executive. We are in continuing discussion with them to clarify their observations. However, we are confident that our funding will be secure for the next three years.

### Receipts and payments account – year to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2004

	2004	2003
<b>Receipts</b>		
Grant funding, Scottish Executive	£6174	£7287
Contributions towards meals	<u>£ 562</u>	<u>£ 333</u>
<b>Total Receipts for Year</b>	<b><u>£6736</u></b>	<b><u>£7620</u></b>
<b>Payments</b>		
Secretarial	£2285	£1795
General	£ 406	£1336
Travel and Conference Fees	£1734	£1493
Subscriptions	£ 250	£ 52
Independent Examiner’s Fee	£ 270	£ 270
Equipment	-	<u>£1598</u>
<b>Total payments for Year</b>	<b><u>£4945</u></b>	<b><u>£6544</u></b>
<b>Net Receipts for Year</b>	£1791	£1076
<b>Cash and Bank balances at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2003</b>	£1886	£ 810
<b>Cash and Bank balances at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2004</b>	<b><u>£3677</u></b>	<b><u>£1886</u></b>

### Statement of assets and liabilities at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2004

#### Monetary assets:

Bank Current Account £3677

#### Other Assets:

Held for use by the association:

Toshiba 1800 – 712 laptop  
Epson HP D135 printer

(cost £1199 July 2002)  
(cost £ 399 July 2002)

## Opinion

In our opinion, according to the best of our knowledge and belief and in accordance with the information and explanations given to us:

- (a) the Association satisfied the conditions for exemption from an audit of the accounts for the year specified;
- (b) the receipts and payments and statement of balances and notes thereon have been properly prepared from the records of the Association, and are in agreement therewith; and
- (c) the accounts comply with the terms of the Association's constitution.

Johnston & Co  
Chartered Accountants  
Independent Examiners  
9-11 Register Street  
Bo'ness  
West Lothian EH51 9AE

Date 25 May 2004



This is an extract from the Full Account. A copy of the Full Account is available from **Linda Benton, Treasurer**.