

**S** is for Scotland

**C** is for Commissioner

**C** is for Children

**Y** is for Young

**P** is for People

# What the Commissioner does

In 1989 the UN ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, and two years later the UK became signatories.

A campaign by organisations who wanted a voice to represent children and young people's rights in Scotland followed. This culminated in the establishment through a 2003 Act of Parliament of the office of Scotland's Commissioner for Children & Young People.

Scotland's Commissioner for Children & Young People promotes and safeguards children's and young people's rights by: raising awareness of rights; talking to children and young people about rights; considering law and policy that concern rights; and communicating best practice about rights.

The Commissioner works for all children and young people under the age of 18, or up to 21 if they have ever been 'looked after' or in care.

# Who the Commissioner is

Scotland's Commissioner for Children and Young People is Tam Baillie.

He was appointed in 2009 and his term of office will last until 2017.

Before becoming the Commissioner, Tam worked with children and young people for 30 years, both directly and as a manager. He mainly worked with young offenders, young people in and leaving care, and young homeless people.

Tam's work as Commissioner has been informed by a RIGHT blether, a major national consultation with children and young people conducted in 2010. Recent activities have focused on the Children and People Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, domestic abuse, poverty and education, respect campaigns, and disability.

**“Rights are a list of promises to children and young people to keep them safe.**

**They are used to make sure that you are treated fairly and looked after properly.**

**When something is called a right, it means that nobody can take it away from you.**

**It is yours, and it is meant to protect you and help you have a good life” \***

*\* Young person consulted as part of the Commissioner's 2010 national consultation a RIGHT blether.*

**R**  
is for Rights



## Welcome to my Annual Report for 2013-14

I am pleased to report another very productive 12 months for the work of the office.

The Policy team has been responsive to a busy legislative year, with a particularly intensive period of activity influencing the parliamentary progress of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. The Act will have a long-lasting impact on children's rights in Scotland, and on the office. I believe the office demonstrated leadership in the work undertaken and significantly improved the proposals in the original Bill.

The Participation and Education team continues to make progress in raising awareness and understanding of children's

rights with those directly working with children and young people. I am particularly pleased to witness the progressive uptake of participatory approaches in schools, youth and social care settings.

The Corporate Services team has had to react to external demands on the basis of our public body status. They have been gearing up for some significant changes in the operations of the office, planning for additional staff and the prospect of a move to new office accommodation in 2014-15.

is for Tam Baillie

He works  
across  
Scotland  
promoting  
children's  
and young  
people's  
rights

I have had another invigorating year, meeting with thousands of inspiring children and young people, addressing key matters relating to children's rights and being part of what I perceive to be a movement towards a more commonly understood approach to the realisation of children's rights in Scotland. I have spoken to and met with more than 7,000 professionals from across Scotland and I am encouraged by the progressive approach to children's rights issues.

However, there is still a very long way to go before we can be sure that we are living up to the ambition of Scotland being the best place in the world for children – and as a consequence we have a long way to go to fulfil our international obligations on the rights of children.

### Child poverty: an overarching issue

I need to record my extreme disquiet about the failure to make sufficient progress in reducing the number of our children who live in poverty. It continues to be a national disgrace that one in five of our children lives in poverty.

We are reminded by a constant stream of reports of the corrosive impact this has on our children's life chances. There is persuasive and disturbing evidence of measurable gaps in social, emotional and cognitive development evident in our youngest children. These are amplified as they grow up. In other words, despite our efforts, remedial actions do not counter the destructive impact on children born into families living in poor circumstances. This will

continue as long as we live in an unequal society. It must be addressed by governments at all levels.

Child poverty is the single most negative factor in too many of our children's lives and the eradication of it is the single most significant influence in the better realisation of their rights.

### **Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014**

The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, which received Royal Assent on 27th March 2014, is the most significant legislation for children and young people passed in many years. In terms of children's rights we pressed for the duties to be strengthened and the Act could have gone further. However, we will use every opportunity to ensure that the legislation has maximum impact.

The implications in terms of children's rights are:

- Duties relating to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) on Ministers, including raising awareness and understanding
- Duties on public bodies in respect of reporting on the UNCRC
- Extended powers of the Commissioner to include individual cases.

There are other measures in the Act which could have far-reaching implications for children and young people's rights, such as: named person; the right to remain looked after up to the age of 21 and supported up to the age of 26; an extension of a right to childcare provision to two-year-olds on the basis of a lack of economic activity in the household; and the extension of the right to free school meals for all children in P1 to P3.

### **Proactive work of the office**

The main focus of the proactive work of the office continues to be based on the responses from a RIGHT blether, the major consultation with children and young people that I undertook in 2010.

Progress continues in each of these areas:

#### Domestic abuse

In November 2013 we published research highlighting the treatment of the views of children in private law child contact disputes where there is a history of domestic abuse.

#### Poverty and education

We have commissioned two separate pieces of work, one seeking the views of children and young people on the impact of poverty



and educational attainment, and another looking at patterns of participation in secondary schools and the impact on attainment. Both of these are due to report later in 2014.

#### Respect campaigns

In September 2013 we launched a campaign to improve school toilets, which was accompanied by relevant reports on children and young people's views of their experiences of school toilets. The campaign continues into 2014.

#### Disability

In September 2013 we published a set of reports on children and young people with disabilities, highlighting the impact of recent changes in service provision to disabled children, young people and their families in Scotland. The reports were launched at a conference where parents, professionals and politicians discussed the findings. We also published a series of reports on the administration of medicines in schools.

#### Reactive work

The office continues to provide vital responses to enquiries we receive on a wide range of children's rights issues. We responded to 23 Freedom of Information requests and we continue to have a significant presence in the press and media on relevant children's rights issues.

You can read more about the details of all these projects, services and resources in summaries from my staff teams over the next few pages. On page 46, I look ahead to our work in the coming year.

**Tam Baillie**

**Scotland's  
Commissioner  
for Children and  
Young People**



**“Child poverty is the single most negative factor in too many of our children's lives”**



The Participation and Education team work to ensure all Scotland's children and young people have a chance to communicate with the Commissioner and talk about the issues that matter to them. The team do this directly with children and young people and through working with schools, organisations and clubs.

P

is for Participation

# Through interacting and listening we get to understand the issues

In the past year the Participation and Education team's work has focused on the 7 Golden Rules for Participation (see page 14), a new resource created to help adults understand what participation means for children and young people, and let children and young people think about how adults can help them have their voices heard. Over the course of the year more than 10,000 copies of the Golden Rules were distributed. Another major project has been *Flushed With Success?* (see page 18), a campaign calling on the Scottish Government to introduce new guidance on school toilets and raise awareness of the need to improve pupils' toilets so children and young people's right to safe, secure facilities is respected.

Other activities have included:

## School visits – from Dumfries to Sandwich

The Participation and Education team supports the Commissioner in seeking the views of children and young people through school visits, school and youth forum communications and online networks.

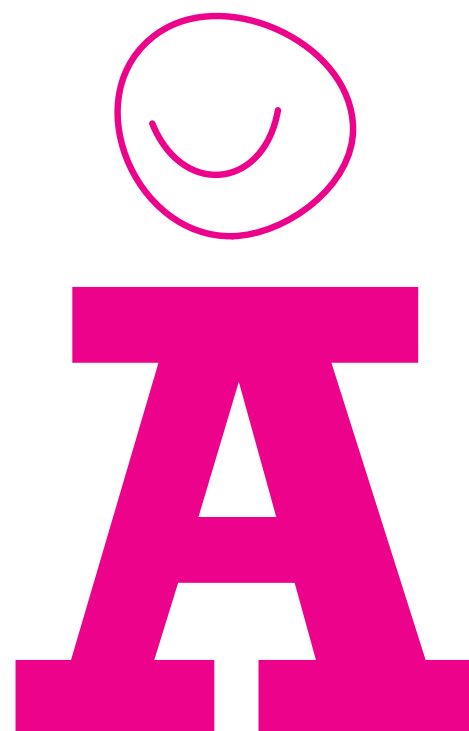
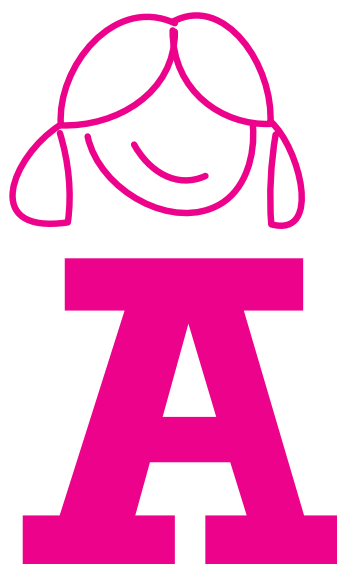
In 2013-14 the Commissioner continued his Blether priority visits, a series of meetings with children and young people across Scotland where he shares the work he's been doing on their behalf since they cast their votes in his major 2010 consultation a RIGHT blether.

Throughout the year the team have also been learning more about best practice in participation in schools. The Commissioner personally visited 28 schools and 15 youth and social care groups. Schools visited have included Dumfries Academy, Hermitage Academy in Helensburgh, and Sandwich Junior High and Sound Primary in Shetland. In March the Commissioner talked to S3s about how their views are taken into account at Oldmachar Academy in Aberdeenshire, a school with a particularly strong track record in listening to and acting on the contribution of their pupils.

## Hear Me, Read Me, See Me, Sign Me

Working with young people at Enable Scotland, the team developed a new approach to accessible resources. Under the headings 'Hear Me', 'Read Me', 'See Me', 'Sign Me', the Golden Rules and

**We make sure children and young people throughout Scotland have an opportunity to talk to Tam about the things that really matter to them**



other resources have been made available in British Sign Language, subtitled, audio, Braille and large print formats. Future resources aimed at children and young people will follow this standard. In 2014-15 the team plan to further develop the Golden Rules to be more accessible to children and young people with communication difficulties through a new partnership with Glasgow City Council.

## A Wee Storybook About Me

Participation and Education staff collaborated with Scottish Book Trust on a special storybook which was sent out in Bookbug Family Packs to P1 children throughout Scotland. *A Wee Storybook About Me* draws together the findings of a RIGHT wee blether, the creative conversation the Commissioner had in 2011 with children under five. More than 60,000 copies of the book were distributed, and a Gaelic version was also produced.

## Youth Sports Strategy consultation

In December 2013 the Scottish Government published its draft Youth Sport Strategy and invited adults to let them know what they thought of it. Following this, the Participation and Education team worked with the government to ensure the views of children were represented. Activity packs designed by the team asking for 3 to 11-year-olds' views on sport were sent out to nurseries, schools and youth groups throughout Scotland, yielding more than 1700 responses. The Commissioner plans to produce a special film to report the views of the children who were consulted.

## Read more about the Participation and Education team's work at:

[www.sccyp.org.uk/education/current-work](http://www.sccyp.org.uk/education/current-work)



is for Accessibility

What does participation mean from the point of view of children and young people? The 7 Golden Rules for Participation aims to answer that question by reminding adults of the importance of participation – and encouraging children and young people to think about what they need from adults to support them to get involved.

**is for Golden Rules  
for Participation**



The resource was created by the Participation and Education team following consultation with children and young people, and research with adult practitioners from across Scotland. The pack includes a set of cards that contains: the 7 Golden Rules; key things to consider about each golden rule; things to think about for children and young people; and things to think about for adults.

The cards have been developed to support children, young people and adults to participate, individually or in groups. They can be used with adults for training and professional development purposes, and as prompts for discussion, decision-making or as part of a wider children's rights programme of work.



The Golden Rules have been designed to strengthen the journey towards wider participation across all areas of children's, young people's and adult's lives. The packs are in use in schools, nurseries, youth groups and adult professional development contexts throughout Scotland, and feedback has been extremely positive.

#### **Case study: Prestwick Academy workshop**

In January 2014, the Participation and Education Team met with a group of pupils at Prestwick Academy, a secondary school in South Ayrshire, to run an interactive workshop about the Golden Rules. The aim was to explain the resource and test some of the Golden Rules supporting activities that have been developed by Scottish Young Carers.

**“The Golden Rules are quite short and there's only seven of them so young children could learn them quite easily. I thought they were really good and quite important”**

*Prestwick Academy pupil*



During the workshop, the young people participated in activities including Golden Rules Go Pop, Match the Golden Rules and Writing on the Wall, and enjoyed dancing and balloon popping. There was dedicated time for conversations about the young people's favourite golden rules as well as an opportunity for them to share their experiences of being supported, listened to and valued.

#### **Responses from children and young people:**

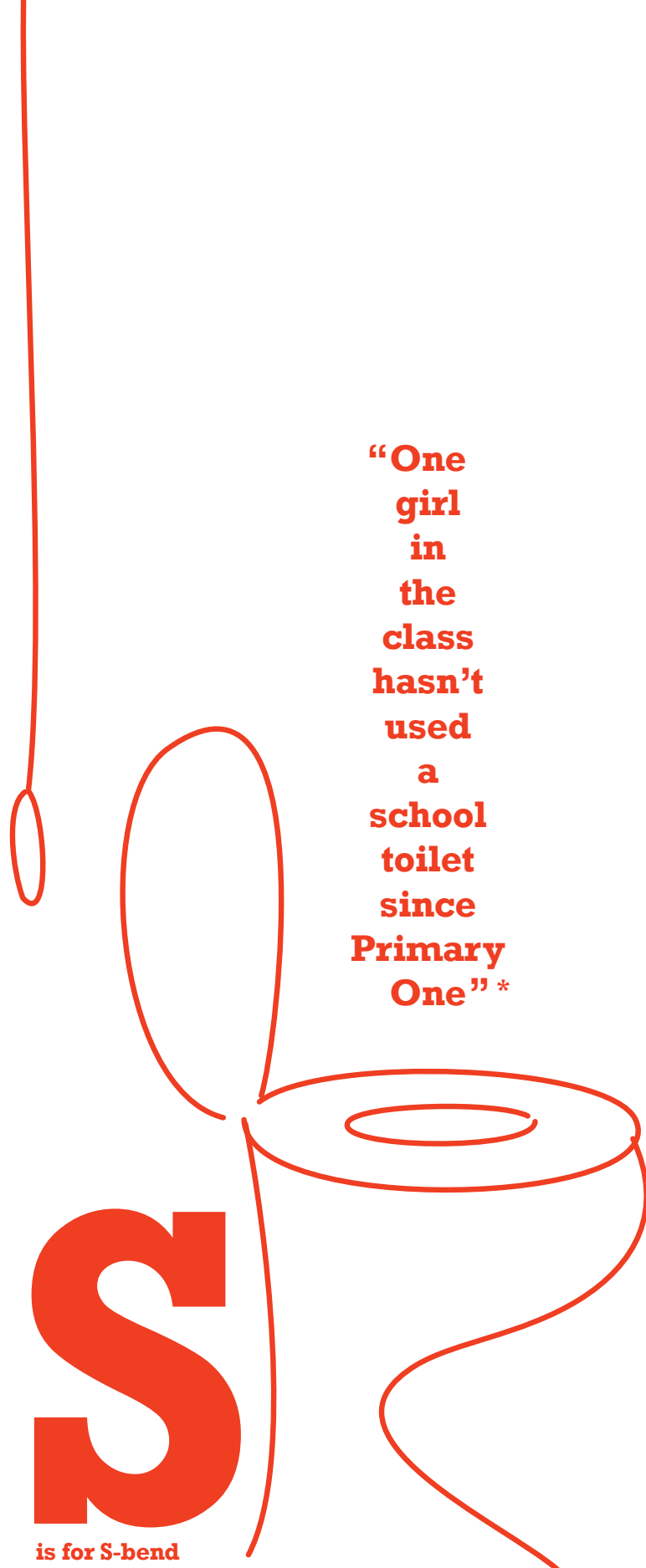
**“What was good about it is that everyone had something to offer. Not everyone could read Braille, not everyone could read large print so you had to work together to find answers and get more clues, get more treasure and then finally, get cupcakes! It was awesome”**

*Young person involved in a Golden Rules workshop with Haggeye, a project working across Scotland to bring together young people aged 12-30 living with sight loss*

**“My favourite Golden Rule is Value Me. It's quite self-explanatory. It shows you that you are really important. Even if kids a lot of the time think they're not important at all, this rule explains to them that, yes, you're really important and you're needed”**

*Prestwick Academy pupil*





**“One girl in the class hasn’t used a school toilet since Primary One” \***

is for S-bend

### **Flushed With Success? How we’re helping schools test if their toilets are up to scratch**

Our children and young people have the right to dignified and safe toilet facilities in their schools. That simple fact has been the starting point for the Commissioner’s campaign *Flushed With Success? Setting the Standard for Scotland’s School Toilets*.

The campaign calls on the Scottish Government to introduce new guidance on school toilets. It was informed by research conducted with children and young people by Ipsos MORI which found that 56 per cent of Scottish pupils never used school toilets or only used them if they ‘really had to’.

It draws on a commissioned literature review and learning from discussions on the subject with more than 900 participating primary school pupils at a national GLOW event.

The research showed that many pupils avoid using the toilets at school because they say they lack basic provisions, are not private enough, or because they are not allowed to go to the toilet when they need to.

As part of the campaign schools are self-assessing the current state of their toilets by taking part in *Flushed with Success? Active Enquiries*, with pupils involved in the audit process. Since the launch a total of 32 schools throughout Scotland have signed up to take part.

Speaking at the launch the Commissioner said: “I have come across many instances where the standard of school toilets is poor and children regularly complain about the facilities. While legislation protects standards of toilets for adults in workplaces and in schools, the standards for school toilets are not being upheld. This is a clear breach of children’s rights.”

In December 2013 key figures from the Scottish Government, Education Scotland, CoSLA and organisations including LGBT Youth Scotland and for Scotland’s Disabled Children met to discuss the issues raised by the campaign. A further event, at which participating schools will share their Active Enquiry findings, is planned for June 2014.

#### **Find out more about ‘Flushed With Success?’**

[www.sccyp.org.uk/  
education/flushed](http://www.sccyp.org.uk/education/flushed)



*\* Contributor to Flushed With Success: the great school toilet debate (GLOW meeting)*

On 28 November 2013 the Commissioner held his second annual reporting event to tell children and young people about the work done on their behalf over the previous 12 months. During the event, held at Glasgow's Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum, children and young people presented a report about what they thought Tam's main achievements were – and enjoyed a chance to explore the museum!



**A**

is for  
Annual Reporting



The children's report, *Your Rights, Your Voice*, took the form of cartoons and audio recordings of children and young people reflecting on the Commissioner's activities in 2012-13. Illustrator Martin Hensey developed the cartoons, inspired by contributions from children and young people discussing topics including Tam's visits to schools, the Golden Rules for Participation, and the school toilets campaign.

Looking back on the event, the Commissioner said: "I always trust in the opinions and experiences of children and young people to help guide my work and I was delighted to have this opportunity to report back to them. There were some excellent searching and provocative questions on the day from children about what I have done on their behalf."

**"It was about highlighting the importance of children's rights and ensuring that they are fully taken into account when policy, laws and services are being planned"**

Alongside the report, the event saw the launch of a new children's rights trail. Designed by pupils from Glasgow's Swinton Primary and staff from Kelvingrove's Learning and Access team, children used it to navigate around Kelvingrove's artworks and artefacts, discussing and exploring issues related to children's rights along the way.

**"Even though children are younger, they'll have opinions like adults do, so it's important to hear what they have to say"**

*Contributor to  
Your Rights, Your Voice*



The event was run in partnership with Kids in Museums, an independent charity dedicated to making museums open and welcoming to all families, in particular those who haven't visited before.

28 November was also the first ever Museums and Galleries Takeover Day in Scotland, a celebration of children and young people's contribution to museums, galleries and historic homes. On Takeover Day children are given meaningful roles, working alongside staff and volunteers.

More than 30 museums took part throughout the country, with around 1000 young people getting involved in curating and conservation, managing front of house, going on pest control and acting as museum consultants.

Takeover Day reflects children and young people's right to cultural and creative opportunities, as enshrined in Article 31 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

**To hear what children and young people told Tam**  
[www.sccyp.org.uk/publications/research](http://www.sccyp.org.uk/publications/research)





# C

is for Creating Change

By looking at how policy is developed and implemented, the Policy team supports the Commissioner's work to make sure children's and young people's rights are respected and their voices heard. The past year has included work on the Children and Young People (Scotland) Bill 2014, research on domestic abuse, numerous consultation responses and submissions to Parliament on topics relating to children's rights, and a report on disabled children and families' access to disability services.

# Through policy work we can influence law and inspire practice

## Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014

Influencing the legislation and highlighting children's rights implications throughout was a policy priority in 2013-14. In terms of children's rights, the Policy team regard the Act as a mixed bag. It will bring some very welcome changes for looked-after children and young people, which should ease their transition towards adulthood and independent living. However, an opportunity was missed to make the legislation a genuine game-changer for children and young people by more fully embedding the legal protection of children's rights in Scotland. The Commissioner is now working with the Scottish Government and others to ensure children's rights are a strong feature in the Act's implementation.

**“We'll work with the government to make sure children's rights are a key feature of the Act's implementation”**

## An extension of the Commissioner's powers from 2016

Part two of the Act will extend the investigatory power of the Commissioner from April 2016, enabling him to investigate complaints relating to children's rights brought to the office by or on behalf of individual children. The Commissioner and his team are undertaking a programme of work leading up to the introduction of this new function, and will provide opportunities to contribute to the development of the model from later in 2014.

## Disability report and conference

In September, the Commissioner published research exploring the impacts of spending cuts on disabled children, young people and their families. Professor Kirsten Stalker's report, *It Always Comes Down to Money*, was launched at a conference which brought together service leaders and frontline practitioners with disabled young people and their parents (see page 32 for more details).

**Policy priorities throughout the year were about trying to shape relevant legislation and making efforts to further highlight children's rights issues**

## Other key projects:

### Domestic Abuse

In December 2013 new research was published as part of the Commissioner's focus on domestic abuse. *The treatment of the views of children in private law child contact disputes where there is a history of domestic abuse*, by Dr Kirsteen Mackay, highlighted questions about the mechanisms employed by the courts and others to ensure that children's, especially young children's, views are heard in contact proceedings. Further research in this area has been explored with expert partners, and an additional research project will be commissioned in 2014-15.

### Children with Disabilities

The Policy team conducted a detailed scoping exercise which will be used to inform influencing priorities in 2014-15. This was based on the findings of *It Always Comes Down to Money* as well as other recent evidence, such

as the Doran Review and Becki Lancaster's report into eligibility criteria for social work services for disabled children and young people and their families, published by the Commissioner in 2012.

### Administration of Medicines in Schools

The Commissioner published two reports relating to this project in 2013. One set out the findings of research into local authority policies and practices, while the second reported on the views of parents/carers. A short-life working group was then convened, which made recommendations to the Scottish Government's review of guidance on the administration of medicines in schools. The Commissioner will be represented on the Scottish Government working group reviewing the guidance in 2014-15.

## Policy and Parliamentary work

The Commissioner and Policy team regularly provide evidence to the Scottish Parliament. Fifteen pieces of written and oral evidence were supplied in 2013-14, on areas ranging from the Health and Sport Committee's Inquiry into Health Inequalities in the Early Years, to the Justice Committee's scrutiny of the Criminal Justice (Scotland) Bill. Staff also engaged with the Referendum (Scotland) Bill Committee and the Deputy First Minister to ensure an extension of safe voter registration options for vulnerable 16-17 year-olds through the Scottish Independence Referendum (Franchise) Bill.

The team responded to consultations through the year, including Jenny Marra MSP's consultation on proposals for a Human Trafficking (Scotland) Bill; the Scottish Government's *Draft Guidance on Relationships, Sexual Health and Parenthood Education*; and consultations on proposed new legislation to extend the rights of carers and young carers.

Comments were provided on the Scottish Government's report to Parliament *Extending the Rights of Children with Capacity under the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004, and Repealing Section 70 of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980*, and on guidance for children too ill to attend school.

The team maintain a presence on many groups, including the Advisory Group for Additional Support for Learning. They are contributing to consultation documents for the National Care Standards and assisting with the development of a health service improvement framework for Looked After Children.

**Read full details of the Policy team's 2013-14 evidence to parliament and consultation responses at:**  
[www.sccyp.org.uk/policy/evidence](http://www.sccyp.org.uk/policy/evidence)

## Research

The Commissioner's office is actively involved in research that relates to the rights of children and young people and how the Commissioner can make a difference. Research encompasses surveys of children, young people and adults; discussion with children and young people in focus groups; analysis of existing research; and desktop reviews. The Commissioner's research programme feeds into and supports the work of the whole office.

Alongside research on disability and domestic abuse, other reports published in 2013-14 included MORI research and a literature review of school toilets, which informed the Flushed With Success? school toilets campaign.

The research manager is also involved in work by the Scottish Universities Insight Institute in Glasgow examining how children and young people's complex identities and inequalities impact on their day to day experiences. A programme of seminars to discuss the topic began in December 2013.

Upcoming research in 2014 will include a literature review of approaches to online bullying; *Learning Lessons*, a joint report with Save the Children on poverty and education in Scotland; a report back to children and young people on the Commissioner's Youth Sports Strategy consultation; and work by academics from Stirling University on patterns of participation in secondary schools.

**Read more about the Commissioner's research work in 2013-14 at:**  
[www.sccyp.org.uk/publications/research](http://www.sccyp.org.uk/publications/research)



**Research later in 2014 will include a review of approaches to online bullying**



is for Freedom

**“We support children with epilepsy and additional support needs. A number of the children we support have lost or seen their funding from local authorities dramatically reduced.**

**As an organisation we have looked for alternative funding to continue to support these families. This has been extremely challenging.**

**We have seen an increase in referrals as families feel they are not being supported by their local authority and are in crisis – or close to it” \***

*\* A service provider's response included in 'It Always Comes Down to Money'.*



**IM** is for Money

## It Always Comes Down to Money

In September 2013 the Commissioner published a report by Professor Kirsten Stalker about changes in service provision to disabled children, young people and their families in Scotland.

The report, *It Always Comes Down to Money*, was launched at a major conference in Glasgow. More than 100 delegates gathered to discuss its key theme: the reduction in services for disabled youngsters and their families across Scotland in light of public sector cuts. The main recommendation in the report was that local authorities, health boards and voluntary organisations must ensure they are observing disabled children's legislative rights and entitlements.

**“These changes have resulted in stress, disappointment and frustration for disabled children, young people and their families”**

Almost nine in 10 (87 per cent) of the 53 voluntary service organisations that responded to the report had experienced a cut in funding or a change in allocation procedures by public funders, reducing their ability to support families. Some 81 per cent believed there had been some deterioration in their service provision, with 48 per cent limiting the number of people using their services. Parents in 10 focus groups held across Scotland as part of the research reported withdrawals of, and reductions in, the support they receive from a range of services – local authority social work and education departments, FE colleges, voluntary organisations, health services and professions allied to medicine – between 2011 and 2013.

Most of the young people who participated in the research had experience of using a service such as speech and language therapy or physiotherapy which had then been withdrawn.



**Read the report**  
[www.sccyp.org.uk/publications/disability](http://www.sccyp.org.uk/publications/disability)



**Read feedback about the conference**  
[www.sccyp.org.uk/news/in-the-news/access-to-disability-services-delegates-views-published-on-un-rights-anniversary-](http://www.sccyp.org.uk/news/in-the-news/access-to-disability-services-delegates-views-published-on-un-rights-anniversary-)



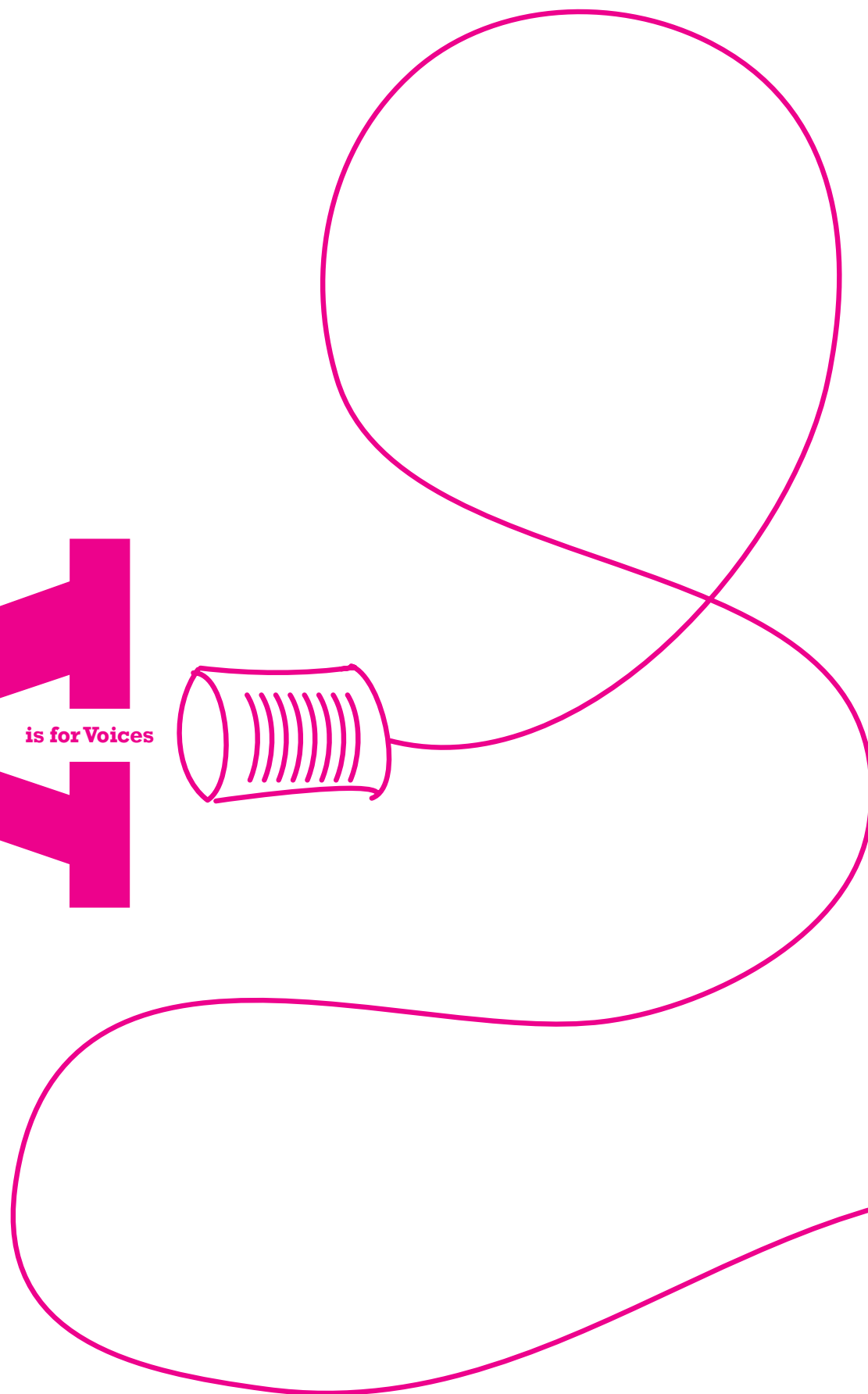
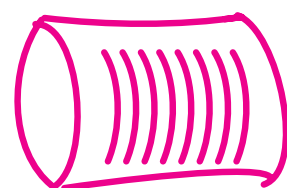
### Cuts 'are eroding children's rights'

Speaking at the conference, the Commissioner said: "There is evidence of cuts in local authority budgets leading to reductions in services alongside tighter eligibility criteria, support being removed without review or reassessment, and a lack of consultation. In many cases, the changes have resulted in stress, disappointment and frustration for disabled children, young people and their families. There is a real danger that children and young people's entitlements under international conventions and UK and Scots law are being – and will continue to be – eroded, alongside the undermining of established good policy and practice and a shift away from preventative work, to crisis intervention.

The Commissioner said he was also particularly concerned about the lack of proper support and opportunities available to disabled young people as they move into adult life. There was a need for far more social and recreational opportunities for disabled children and young people, including those with life-limiting conditions. He called on local authorities, health boards and voluntary organisations to ensure they observe disabled children's legislative rights.

Professor Stalker's report follows previous research published by the Commissioner which examined the use of eligibility criteria and assessment tools in services to disabled children and young people across Scotland.





### **The Enquiries Service allows us to hear the relevance of rights to children's lives**

It has been a busy year for the Commissioner's Enquiries service, with enquirers contacting the office on a remarkably broad range of issues. Whether the enquiries have come from parents, grandparents, professionals, or children and young people, there have been some common themes.

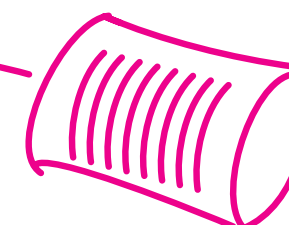
These include many instances of children's voices still going unheard when important decisions are made about their lives – particularly in court settings and around contact arrangements. There have been enquiries highlighting difficulties in co-ordinating care plans and delivering services, especially to children and young people with complex health needs, as well as the lack of advocacy and counselling services for children and young people across the country. There have also been concerns raised about the use of restraint in schools and how current arrangements for the Employability Fund unfairly disadvantage young people who have additional support needs.

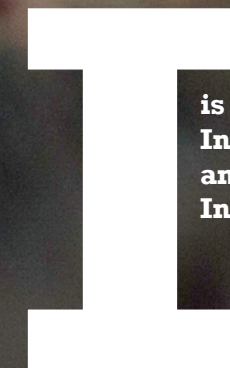
These are just a few examples of how relevant rights are to children and young people's lives and how important it is to be able to look at these issues from a rights-based perspective.

### **A new response to rights complaints**

The Children & Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 will, for the first time, allow the Commissioner to investigate issues affecting individual children and young people. This means that children and young people, and those supporting them, will be able to ask the Commissioner to look at a case and decide whether that child's rights have been breached. The Commissioner can then make recommendations about what should be done to remedy any breach.

While his new powers will not take effect until 2016, work is already underway at the Commissioner's office with a view to establishing a Complaints and Investigations team who will receive and respond to children's rights complaints from across Scotland.





is for  
Informing  
and  
Influencing

The Corporate Services team supports the Commissioner's strategy and helps to guide the direction of the office. The team ensure that the office runs smoothly and that the Commissioner's messages are projected to his audience of children, young people and adults.

# We work to make the office effective, efficient and fit for purpose

The Corporate Services team comprises the Head of Corporate Services, the Commissioner's assistant, information officer, administrator, communications manager and digital media officer.

Alongside the Management team the Head of Corporate Services oversees the financial operation of the office, including sound budgeting and liaison with the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body. He is the point of contact for the office IT contractor and organiser of health and safety audits for the office, ensuring staff are secure in their work.

The Commissioner's assistant organises his busy programme of meetings and visits, while the administrator oversees office orders and meeting organisation, contributes to the running of events, and is a vital first contact point for callers and visitors to the office.

## **Freedom of Information and Child Rights Impact Assessments**

The Commissioner's information officer ensures that staff are made aware of the latest relevant publications from external sources and that new research findings are circulated to the team. She is also responsible for responding to Freedom of Information requests, in accordance with legislation.

Twenty three Freedom of Information Requests were received and responded to in 2013-14. They covered a wide range of issues and often sought information in relation to how the Commissioner's office delivers its functions and manages its resources.

The information officer also held a number of meetings through 2013-14 with members of the Policy team and external staff, such as city council employees and Sheriffs, to discuss the relevance of children's rights impact assessments to their work and responsibilities.

**We ensure the office runs smoothly and that Tam's aims are projected to the children, young people and adults he works with**

## **Equalities, policies and training**

In 2013 the team led the development of an Equality Outcomes report, to meet the duties of the office under current equalities legislation, and this is being followed up by work on Equality Impact Assessments.

Over the past year members of the team have also been responsible for drafting a range of internal staff policies and procedures, such as a Professional Social Media Policy, with the intention of using them to enhance the work of the office and its duties.

The team has also organised regular training to strengthen the professional development of all staff. Training in 2013-14 included a day session on best practice and effective strategies in handling difficult contacts with the office.

In 2014 the office plans to become a member of the accessible language scheme Happy to Translate, as part of its wider commitment to equality and accessible communications. Members of the Corporate Services team will receive training in responding to requests for translated resources and calls and visits from people who do not use English as their first language.

Overall, the team's work continues to underpin the smooth running of the office, ensuring that it remains effective, efficient and fit for purpose.

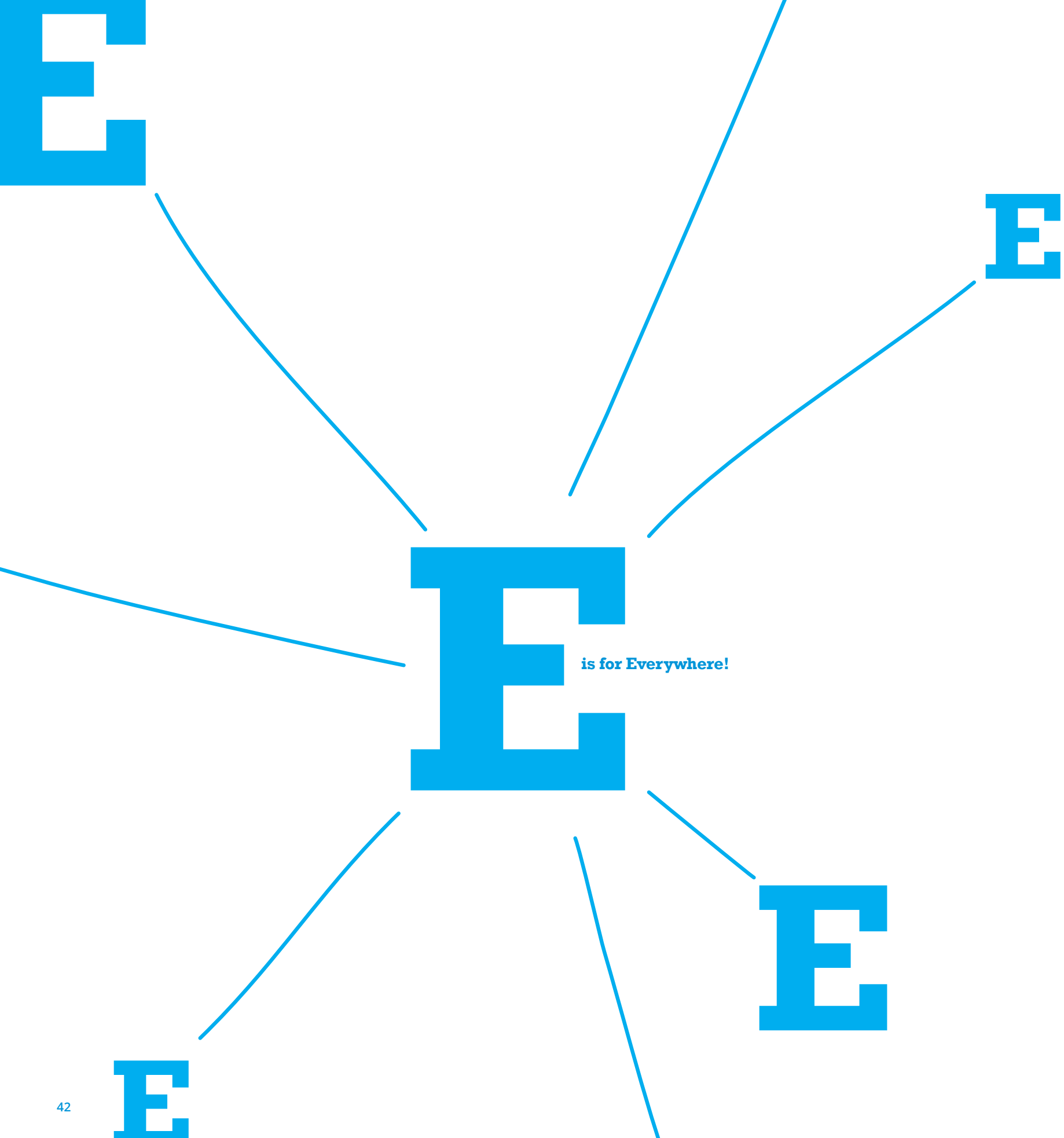
**is for Support**

**“I work in the sector supporting women, children and young people who are experiencing domestic abuse. Within my organisation we encourage children and young people to participate in all aspects of the service, both at a personal level and for the wider good of the organisation as a whole.**

**I recently became aware of the fantastic online resource you provide and I believe the Golden Rules pack would further enhance our service. I would like to request a pack for use at each of our main service bases” \***

*\* A resource worker's response after reading about the Golden Rules on the Commissioner's website.*





**Online, offline, in print and in person... How we use communications to raise the profile of children's rights**

In 2013-14 communications staff worked to strengthen the Commissioner's engagement with children, young people and adults through his website, publications, events, e-newsletter and the use of social media.

**sccyp.org.uk**

The Commissioner's website was relaunched in September 2013. The revamped site makes it easier for children, young people, educators, researchers and policymakers to find out about the work of the office. It has been completely rewritten so that it is easier to read and understand, and now adapts to fit the screens of mobiles, tablets and conventional PCs. Since the relaunch, people have been spending longer on the site and visiting more frequently, while user feedback has been extremely positive.

**Facebook**

In August 2013 the Commissioner launched a new Facebook page, the first such Commissioner in the UK to do so. The page aims to help young people in Scotland find out about their rights, and to discover what they can do if those rights are not respected.

With Facebook remaining very popular among 13-21-year-olds, the Commissioner hopes his page will provide a new way in which they can make contact, interact and find out about his work. The Commissioner has used the page to encourage young people to get involved in campaigns such as *Flushed With Success?*, asking them to let him know about their experiences, their views and what they think needs to change.

**Plans for 2014-15**

In the next financial year the Commissioner intends to build on the positive response to the website by creating new rights-based resources to increase understanding of the UNCRC and meet demand from children and young people for high quality information about their rights.

With more than 3,400 followers, the Commissioner's Twitter account is recognised as an increasingly valuable tool for sharing news and responding directly to questions and comments about children's and young people's rights. Alongside strengthening social media activity, communications staff also plan to relaunch the Commissioner's e-newsletter, reporting monthly on the work of the Participation and Education and Policy teams, and promoting developments throughout the wider children's and young people's sector.

The Financial Position

The Scottish Parliament allocated the Commissioner a budget of £1,226,000 for the financial year 2013-14 (2012-13: £1,234,000).

The Commissioner drew down £1,224,000 (2012-13: £1,183,000), resulting in a £2,000 underspend (2012-13: £51,000).

The annual accounts are prepared on an accruals basis, meaning that expenses are recognised in the period in which they were incurred rather than when the cash payment is made. On this basis, the Commissioner’s expenditure on operating activities for the year ended 31 March 2014 totalled £1,189,000 (2012-2013: £1,258,000). This was on staffing costs £711,000 (2012-2013: £718,000), other operating expenditure £449,000 (2012-2013: £505,000) and depreciation £29,000 (2012-2013: £35,000). Income for the year was £0 (2012-2013: £0).

A further £2,000 (2012-2013: £3,000) was spent on capital additions during the financial year as detailed in note 5 to the accounts, giving total expenditure of £1,191,000. Excluding notional expenditure (Depreciation £29,000) total expenditure was £1,162, 000.

Net Expenditure 2013-14

Source: Scotland’s Commissioner for Children and Young People Accounts 2013-14

The page opposite outlines the cost of operating activities by category of expenditure. Excluding staffing costs of £711,000 and depreciation of £29,000, other operating expenditure amounted to £449,000, of which Property (23%) includes all rent, rates, energy costs, property insurance, repairs, maintenance and cleaning. Administration (14%) includes all normal office running costs; for example, stationery, postage, telephones, photocopying, printing, equipment maintenance, etc. Recruitment and Training (4%) includes costs for advertising and venue hire and investment in both the individual and staff teams. Travel and expenses (4%) includes costs incurred both by the Commissioner and the staff team. Promotion and Participation (29%) includes all activities; for example, publicity, promotion and participation undertaken in fulfilment of

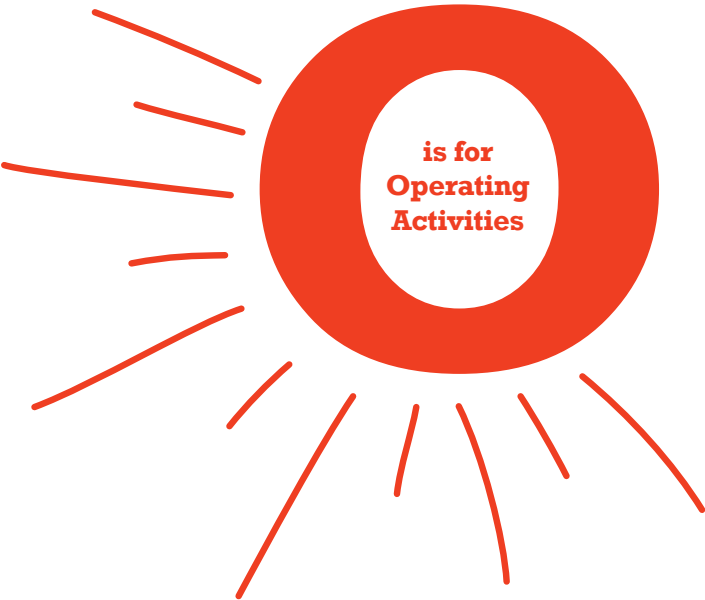
the general function of the Commissioner. Research (13%) includes a number of projects related to the second work stream of the national consultation exercise undertaken in 2010 entitled a RIGHT blether. IT (4%) includes the cost of support and maintenance for the office. Website development and maintenance (2%) includes continued development of the website as a major interactive tool for communicating with children and young people. Professional fees (7%) include the costs of payroll support, legal, audit and accountancy.

Operating Activities 2013-14

Source: Scotland’s Commissioner for Children and Young People Accounts 2013-14

A full copy of the Annual Accounts 2013-14 can be obtained on request from Scotland’s Commissioner for Children and Young People and are available in full at [www.sccyp.org.uk](http://www.sccyp.org.uk)

The accounts are subject to approval by external auditors.



Property Costs  
£123k (26%)

General Office  
Running Costs  
£62k (13%)

Staff Recruitment  
& Training  
£18k (4%)

Travel Expenses  
£18k (4%)

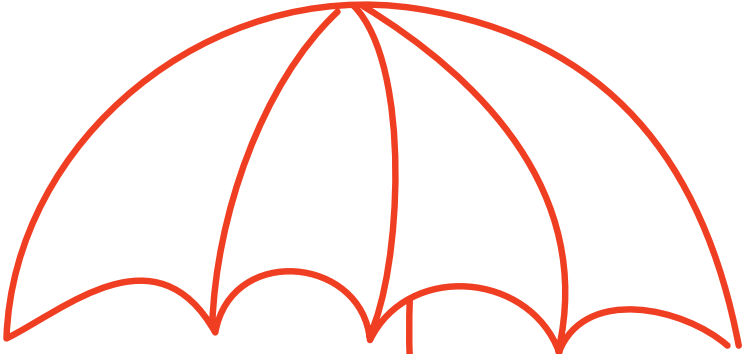
Promotion and  
Participation  
£129k (29%)

Research  
£58k (12%)

IT Support  
£18k (4%)

Website  
£12k (2%)

Professional Fees  
£31k (7%)



Staffing Costs  
£711k (60%)

Capital Expenditure  
£2k (0%)

Operating Costs  
£469k (40%)

Depreciation  
£9k (0%)



# The year ahead...

In 2014-2015 I want to maximise the impact of implementation of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act. This will give added momentum to the work already undertaken and is my single overarching priority for the coming year.

The extension of the powers of the office carries a budget for an additional three staff. This will require provision to be made in the 2015-2016 budget, due to be submitted August 2014.

The provision of additional staff and a break clause opportunity in our current lease has prompted a requirement to seek alternative accommodation. It is anticipated the office will move to new premises later in 2014.

I am currently the Chair-elect of the European Network of Ombudspersons (ENOC). As a consequence, the ENOC Annual Conference and General Assembly will

be held in October 2014 in Edinburgh, where we will host over 100 international guests. We will coordinate the international work programme focusing on the impact of austerity on children and young people in Europe.

I have now completed five of the most invigorating years of my career. I'd like to thank my staff for their excellent work during this time. I believe we are making real progress and the key to continuing on this path is the ownership of children's rights by all members of our society: parent and carers; educators and housing providers; health and social care workers; politicians at all levels; and any decision-makers who affect any children's lives. This is our shared challenge in the years ahead.



**Tam Baillie**

**Scotland's  
Commissioner  
for Children and  
Young People**

# Us (as at 31/3/2014)

**Scotland's  
Commissioner  
for Children and  
Young People**  
Tam Baillie

## Corporate Services

Heather Belmonte  
Administrator

Stephen Grounds  
Head of Corporate Services

Deborah Lawson  
Assistant to the  
Commissioner

Ezmie McCutcheon  
Communications Manager  
(on maternity leave)

Gillian Munro  
Information Officer

Robert Shepherd  
Digital Media Officer

Chris Small  
Communications Manager  
(maternity cover)

## Participation and Education

Cathy Begley  
Participation  
and Education Officer

Katie Brown  
Head of Participation  
and Education

Sarah-Louise Davies  
Participation and  
Engagement Officer

## Policy

Sheila Hamilton  
Research Manager

Nico Juetten  
Acting Head of Policy

Linda Ellis Macdonald  
Enquiries Officer

Máire McCormack  
Head of Policy  
(on secondment)

Pauline McIntyre  
Policy Officer

Chloe Swift  
Policy Officer

# Thanks

The Commissioner would like to thank all the children and young people who contributed their views and ideas to his work in 2013-14.

A children and young people's Annual Report will be produced in the autumn.

(CCYP/2014/01) Laid before the Scottish Parliament by the Commissioner for Children and Young People in pursuance of Section 10 (1) of the Commissioner for Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2003 on 6/08/2014

## Credits

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RightsSCCYP

**Young Person's Freephone:**

**0800 019 1179**

