

Autumn 2026



Aberlour News

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Making young voices heard

Children and young people from across Scotland took centre stage ahead of the Scottish Parliament elections earlier this year, challenging political candidates on the issues that matter most to them.

With support from Aberlour, Save the Children Scotland and Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG) in Scotland, they helped organise and lead the unique Speak Up! election hustings in Glasgow.

Many of the young people involved are still too young to vote, yet they used the event to ensure decision-makers heard directly about the challenges facing children and families across Scotland. The questions they chose focused on issues affecting their daily lives, including child poverty, homelessness, the rising cost of school, access to free school meals, support for care-experienced children and the needs of young people seeking asylum.

The event brought together candidates from across the political spectrum, who were asked how they would tackle poverty and improve opportunities for children and young people if elected. Throughout the discussion, one message came through clearly: poverty continues to affect too many children in Scotland and urgent action is needed.

We believe children and young people should have a say in the decisions that shape their futures. By helping them organise this event, alongside our partners, we created a platform where their experiences, ideas and hopes for change could be heard directly by those seeking public office.

Justina Murray, Aberlour Chief Executive, said:

“Our young people explained why child poverty is not a crisis to be managed but a national emergency to be ended.”

Children's rights are at the heart of everything we do, and we will continue to amplify the voices of children, young people and their families, ensuring their experiences help shape the policies and decisions that affect their lives.

Watch our film to find out more about the event at [aberlour.org.uk/speakup](https://www.aberlour.org.uk/speakup)

He'd say, "I love my mama"



Kerie's story highlights the life-changing difference that support at The Burrow, our Mother and Child Recovery House in Falkirk, can make.

When Kerie became pregnant, she was facing an uncertain future. Recovering from an addiction and having experienced the heartbreak of having two children previously removed from her care, she was told that she might not be able to keep her baby.

Determined to give her son the best possible start in life, Kerie agreed to come to The Burrow and work closely with our dedicated team.

With support, encouragement and guidance, Kerie developed the confidence and skills needed to create a safe and loving home for her child. Through establishing healthy routines, attending classes and taking part in a range of activities, she has strengthened the bond with her little boy.

Today, Kerie speaks proudly of the happy, content little boy he has become. They enjoy singing and dancing together, sharing bath time and bedtime stories, and she is delighted to see him sleeping well and meeting all his developmental milestones.

When asked what her son would say if he could put his feelings into words, Kerie says: "He'd say, 'I love my mama.'"

Stories like Kerie's remind us that, with the right support at the right time, families can overcome enormous challenges and build brighter futures together.

Kerie's poem

A little rabbit finds a safe place

*A place he calls his home,
he calls it his burrow*

Just like ours, it becomes our own

*A place of sanctuary we find
ourselves again*

*A place of peace, love and harmony,
it becomes our zen*

*It's a journey shared with the
littlest loves of our life*

*We fight for us, for them and
walk through the tunnel together
into the light*

*Each day can take us by surprise
at how strong we become*

*And how awesome we are at
being a mum*

*Healing is not hard and
recovery isn't easy*

It's the end result that really saves me

*Beneath the burrow lived a mum with
amazing women who believed in she.*

Inspiring Scotland's young people



A unique partnership with the Worshipful Company of Butchers will provide £60,000 over the next three years to support young people across Scotland through a range of activities, including unique food and farming experiences.

Since the partnership launched in January, young people have benefitted from fun, engaging and hands-on experiences designed to broaden their horizons and support their personal development. This included a behind the scenes work experience in a McDonald's restaurant and visit to Campbells Prime Meat.

Kitted up in McDonald's staff uniforms, the young people were taken through each station from taking orders to preparing meals. They learned and developed a range of skills including communication, teamwork, time management, responsibility and independence.

A young person who took part in the McDonald's experience said:

"Without Aberlour, I would never have experienced this, and this was a chance not to be missed!"

Lisa, Aberlour Routes Falkirk Youth Worker, said:

"It was an excellent balance of education and fun."

The visit to Campbells Prime Meat gave them an insight into the variety of jobs, equipment and specialist skills involved at a national meat and fish supplier - including holding a lobster that was older than all of them put together!

Thank you to the Worshipful Company of Butchers, Liverymen and businesses for inspiring Scotland's young people.



Mary, Aberlour Routes Falkirk Service Manager, said:

"The young people were fascinated by everything. A highlight was meeting Campbells' staff who shared their own journeys to employment - about leaving school without qualifications or a clear plan, starting part-time roles at Campbells' and then being supported through apprenticeships into careers they genuinely love. It was such a powerful message for our young people to hear and showed them that there are so many different routes to success."



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My favourite part was learning about all the kinds of meat and seeing the steaks air drying. I also liked that they deliver to football clubs."

Young person who visited Campbells Prime Meat

Thank you to Dunbia Highland Meats, Campbells Prime Meat, Cosmos Pizza, John Gilmour Butchers, Highland Game, Quality Meat Scotland, Dovecote Park, Husband Business Consultancy, Scottish Association of Meat Wholesalers, Scottish Craft Butchers, The Association of Independent Meat Suppliers (AIMS), The Incorporation of Fleshers of Glasgow and The Fleshers of Aberdeen.

The difference one person can make



Across Scotland, there is an urgent need for more foster carers to provide safe, nurturing and loving homes for children and young people. Claire has been fostering with Aberlour for more than 20 years and has seen first-hand the difference that a caring adult can make.

"When I first became involved with Aberlour over 20 years ago, I didn't realise fostering was something people like me could do.

My journey into fostering began through volunteering with Aberlour. I spent time with a young person living in an Aberlour residential house and we quickly developed a close bond.

Wanting to continue supporting them, I discovered that I could foster with Aberlour, allowing them to stay with me regularly and become part of our family life. That experience was so rewarding that I've continued fostering ever since.

What I love most is seeing children arrive feeling comfortable and excited to be here. Whether we're spending time outdoors, getting creative, playing with the animals or simply relaxing together, I want my home to be somewhere they can enjoy being children.

The children I've supported have taught me so much. They've shown me how resilient young people can be and reminded me never to judge what someone might be carrying with them. Every child has their own strengths and personality, and I've learned something from all of them.

The support from Aberlour has always been excellent. You never feel like you're doing it alone. There's always someone at the end of the phone, and the training and guidance give you confidence every step of the way.

If I could give one piece of advice, it would be not to worry about being perfect. Children don't need perfection. They need someone who is patient, kind, reliable and willing to understand."

If you, or someone you know, could offer a child a safe and loving home, we'd love to hear from you.

Find out more about fostering with Aberlour at [aberlour.org.uk/fostering](https://www.aberlour.org.uk/fostering)

Our Urgent Assistance Fund

Thanks to our wonderful supporters, since 2021 the Aberlour Urgent Assistance Fund has been able to distribute over **£3.8m** in small cash grants to support over **19,900** children and **11,000** families across every local authority in Scotland.



We've supported **19,931 children**



and **11,000 families**



£347 average amount given



That's over **£1,980 a day**

Whilst enabling parents to put food on the table, buy clothing and bedding for their children and heat their homes, the difference it's made has been so much more.

We'll be sharing more about Aberlour's Urgent Assistance Fund and its impact on families across Scotland in the months ahead. Visit [aberlour.org.uk](https://www.aberlour.org.uk) to find out more.

“

I am extremely grateful to this charity as they provided not only financial relief but returned my sense of hope in what felt like a dark time, where I felt this was impossible. They have made it possible, and without them I do not know where me and my daughter would be. I will be forever grateful.”

We've supported families from **every local authority** in Scotland



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Due to this funding, it has allowed me to see a better future, with choice and opportunities. I no longer feel a financial burden, and I really appreciate the support where I feel there was no judgement, which made a massive impact throughout the process.”

Updates from around Scotland!

Hopetoun Court development

Children with disabilities and their families across Aberdeen and the surrounding area will soon benefit from our improved specialist support.

Hopetoun Court is being extended to provide additional space and enhanced facilities, including the creation of an accessible landscaped garden and play areas. We look forward to it reopening in Spring 2027!



Summer smiles in Glasgow

This summer our team in Glasgow held events for over 50 children and their families.

Everyone could take part in summer crafts, face painting, glitter tattoos, games and plenty of fun with bubbles! A brilliant time was had by all.



Families come together for Playday

Hundreds of people joined us at Hazlehead Park for our annual free Playday event.

It was a terrific day bringing children and families together in a simple and fun way. We loved seeing so many children playing and having a great time.

Aberdeen

Dundee

Glasgow

A wild day out in Dundee

Our Angus team were able to treat our families to a delicious picnic at Camperdown park and then a trip to the zoo.

For some of our families it was the first time they'd visited a zoo. The children especially loved the big brown bear, who was making the most of the Scottish sun and going for a dip in the pool.





The Stuart McCaffer Foundation Raises £28,000 for Aberlour's Urgent Assistance Fund



The Stuart McCaffer Foundation is truly delighted to be able to assist with such a wonderful cause and we are very happy that our contribution will help vulnerable families and children. It is a privilege to play a small part in making a difference to those who need it most."

The McCaffer Family

Friends, supporters and businesses were brought together at a Ladies Lunch which was a memorable afternoon of fundraising, generosity and celebration, all in support of three chosen charities - Aberlour, Aware Scotland and the Beatson.

The funds raised are helping Aberlour's Urgent Assistance Fund provide emergency support to families experiencing financial crisis, ensuring they can access essentials such as food, clothing, heating and other immediate necessities when they need them most.

Each year, the McCaffer family organises fundraising events in memory of their husband and father, Stuart McCaffer, supporting charities that make a meaningful difference to people's lives. Raising £28,000 is a wonderful reflection of the kindness and generosity of everyone involved!

This Advent you can help disadvantaged children across Scotland

**by holding
a Christingle
service in aid
of Aberlour**



The money raised by your congregation will help children and families living in poverty.

Many churches in Scotland celebrate Christingle, and Aberlour has been fortunate to have benefitted from many collections and donations marking this occasion.

The service usually includes prayers, readings, hymns and carols, and of course the lighting of the Christingles.

Christingle was created with children in mind, and the celebrations are the perfect event for children and families and can be enjoyed by people of all ages, even if they don't regularly attend church.

Holding a Christingle celebration in support of Aberlour will directly benefit children and families in Scotland.

Our team is happy to help and support you in making sure your Christingle goes smoothly. Call us on **0141 260 9190** or email **hello@aberlour.org.uk**
Visit **aberlour.org.uk/christingle** for more information

I'd like to make a gift to help children in Scotland

1 I would like to make a regular gift



I would like to give: ☒ £3 ☒ £5 ☒ £8 ☒ £10 or my choice £ ____ each month

Name(s) of account holder(s) _____

Bank/Building Society account number

Sort code

Instruction to your Bank/Building Society

Please pay Aberlour Child Care Trust Direct Debits from the account detailed in this instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this Instruction may remain with Aberlour Child Care Trust and, if so, details will be passed electronically to my Bank or Building Society.

2 I would like to make a one-off gift

I enclose a cheque for: ☒ £10 ☒ £25 ☒ £50 or my choice £ ____ made payable to Aberlour

Please debit my ☒ Mastercard / ☒ Visa / ☒ Maestro ☒ £10 ☒ £25 ☒ £50 or my choice £ ____

Name on card _____

Card number

Start date

Expiry date

Security code

You can also give children in Scotland a brighter future by remembering Aberlour in your will. Supporters over 50 can write a will for free with our partners Thomas Bradley & Co. Call 0330 390 9200 for more info.

3 Your contact details

First Name _____ Last Name _____ Tel _____

Address _____

Email _____ Postcode _____

We'd love to keep in touch. Please tick the box below to indicate how you prefer to receive further communication from Aberlour. ☒ by post ☒ by telephone ☒ by email

You can change your preferences at any time by contacting us at hello@aberlour.org.uk or 0141 260 9190. We store your details securely and will never share them with any third parties for the purposes of their marketing. See www.aberlour.org.uk for full privacy statement.

4 *giftaid it* ☒ I want to make my gift worth 25% extra at no cost to me.

I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax in the current tax year than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

Signature(s) of account holder(s) _____ Date _____

Thank you

Completed forms can be sent to Aberlour, Kintail House, Forthside Way, Stirling, FK8 1QZ.

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