



Chief Executive's Overview

I extend a very warm welcome to our Patrons and thank them for their personal endorsement and support. It is priceless.



Lady Elsie Robson



Lainya and Alan Shearer



Ant and Dec



Mike Browne

Today's reality is stark: cutbacks; closures; rising inflation and uncertain times ahead. In the face of such austerity I am pleased to report that St Cuthberts Care's stewardship remains strong. This has been a productive year for the charity, with the continuing expansion of our key services and the development of community programmes in areas that matter most.

Our primary focus has been the ongoing investment in our residential care homes for children, referred to as our *Auton* provision. Every young person placed in our care has suffered unimaginable trauma at some stage of their life and damage is often compounded by innumerable placement breakdowns. The stability and understanding provided by our *Auton* homes combine to offer the nurturing environment needed for these scars to heal. Over time, as extreme and dysfunctional behaviours subside, a more emotionally balanced teenager emerges, better equipped to prepare for the challenges of adulthood and independence. The impact of our care, compassion and perseverance on the lives of these young people is immeasurable.

Having successfully registered and opened our third children's home earlier in the year, *Auton Villa* in Newcastle, we are on course to open a further two by late summer. This is beyond doubt the most challenging provision of care the charity has ever engaged in and it will remain a priority for the foreseeable future.

For younger children in the looked-after system, fostering is often considered to be a more appropriate alternative to residential care. Being given the right start in life by growing up in a loving family environment can make all the difference to some children's lives. *Fostering North East*, the charity's own fostering service, has steadily recruited new foster carers throughout the year to meet this growing demand.

Our developments continued as we prepared the way to offer *free access* to our specialist facilities for disabled people at our Alan Shearer Activity Centre from April 2011 onwards.

This is a significant and bold commitment for the charity to undertake with the annual subsidy alone costing upwards of £80,000.

At the same time we developed plans to offer *free short breaks* at our Alan Shearer Short Break Centre. The strains placed upon families of children and adults with disabilities can be relentless. There has never been a more pressing time for the charity to take action and this is exactly what we do best: respond to need where need is greatest. St Cuthberts Care is a charity and this is charity in its purest form.

The charity's community presence has continued to flourish with new initiatives in schools, parishes and the wider community. We also extended our 5p Bus project with a second bus, allowing us to address need across the whole of our region.

Our *Apprenticeship and Graduate* employment schemes are further demonstrations of the charity's ability to translate need into action. As unemployment rises, it is fitting for the charity, as a regional employer, to create permanent job opportunities for young adults keen to develop a career in care, business and administration alongside a range of other professions.

At the close of what has been a busy but fruitful year, we can evidence that even in the most challenging of times, the charity continues to push ahead. This is made possible through our responsible management and careful use of resources. I thank everyone who has contributed to the charity's progression this year and I extend a special note of thanks to our dedicated staff teams and volunteers; they are the very lifeblood of St Cuthberts Care.

Augh Dowdall

Chief Executive



Austin Donohoe

From as far back as 1946 when the charity was founded, to this day, the provision of children's services has been pivotal to St Cuthberts Care. As the number of children in care continues to rise, we remain determined to safeguard the wellbeing of those who have been the victims of childhood neglect and abuse.



During this last year, we have expanded our Auton Residential Children's Care service, opening a third home in the region that can accommodate up to six young people. Our new home, Auton Villa, provides an environment of stability, safety and structure, where children who have suffered as a result of damaged pasts can heal and be given the opportunity to look to their futures with boosted self-esteem and confidence.

Our committed staff team work to exceptional standards of practice, often going that extra mile to offer reassurance and guidance during the inevitable testing moments that arise. At Auton House in Newcastle, where the young people have been in our care for several years now, the results of investing in each individual child say it all:

- with rare exceptions, all of our young people now present with socially acceptable and balanced behaviours
- almost all attain 100% school attendance
- homework deadlines are consistently met
- one young person received a community award for teaching sport to vulnerable youngsters and helping to raise self-esteem
- two of our older teenagers have secured offers from colleges of further education

These are outstanding achievements from children who have had to come to terms with deeply damaged pasts and testimony to the dedication of our highly skilled and experienced staff teams.

Our investment in children's residential services is firmly embedded in our vision to expand this provision over the coming years. We are delighted to be opening a fourth home in Sunderland in the very near future with plans already afoot for our fifth home.

St Cuthberts Care has provided both short and long-term fostering services for many years and its very own fostering team, Fostering North East, is continuing to expand and to provide excellent support to the growing number of registered foster carers now on its books.



Mrs Needham, a carer with the charity for 13 years, commented:

"Fostering can be daunting at first but Fostering North East has been with me every step of the way; the support they have provided is second to none. If anyone is thinking about fostering I would definitely recommend them to get in touch with the team."

In the coming year, Fostering North East will continue to recruit more carers for its growing caseload. If you would like to consider fostering, or if you would just like to find out a little more information, you can contact Sarah Croft on 0191 242 4805 or email Sarah at sarah.croft@fosteringnortheast.org.uk.

The Alan Shearer Short Break Centre offers specialised short breaks for disabled adults and children with complex needs.



The constant responsibility of caring for a loved one with disabilities can be both physically and mentally exhausting. Looking forward to a short break every now and again can sometimes mean the difference between coping or reaching desperation point. Our short break facility plays a vital role in allowing families and carers to enjoy a period of respite from the rigors and demands placed on them in their role as a carer.

It's equally as important for the recipient of the short break to have this breathing space too. Choosing our Alan Shearer

"The fact that he loves it just adds to the feeling of relaxation for us both. He's always counting the days until his next visit and crossing them off the calendar"
Dawn is mum to John, a guest at the Short Break Centre

Short Break Centre guarantees specialist support and equipment and access to a whole range of sensory, soothing and stimulating experiences. A short break at our Centre ensures both guest and carer return to each other refreshed and therefore better prepared to face the weeks ahead.

St Cuthberts Care fully understands the pressures parents and carers face and this year we have focused on raising funds to offer free short breaks for families in need. We are the only provider of short break care to have taken this stance in this turbulent financial climate and we will continue to do whatever we can to alleviate the strains on family life for those who need it most.

The Alan Shearer Activity Centre is fully accessible by our short break guests and it is also available to the public, offering disabled people and their families and carers an opportunity to benefit from its activities at a time of their choosing.



The Activity Centre offers a tremendous range of specialist facilities for people with wide-ranging disabilities. This year we brought on board a new sound and music room and re-introduced a designated arts and crafts room. We also invested in a qualified chef to support Browne's, the Activity Centre's on-site café, to develop a choice of enticing menus.

During the year, the charity made a commitment to offer the Centre's facilities free with effect from April 2011. St Cuthberts Care will undertake to subsidise the Centre annually to ensure those who wish to benefit from the facilities can do so without any financial constraints. This sum will be upwards of £80,000 each year and the charity will fundraise and ring-fence donations raised for this purpose. The Centre has experienced a significant rise in membership from the date of the announcement.

If you would like to know more about the Alan Shearer Activity Centre, contact Rob Molineux, the Centre's manager on 0191 276 8118 or email Rob at rob.molineux@alansheareractivitycentre.org.uk.

St Catherine's nursing and residential care home is the only purpose-built Catholic home in the region.

It continues to offer our older generation a peaceful and tranquil place to live whilst ensuring dignity and the highest quality of care at all times. With its spiritual ambience and chapel it is often the first choice of residential home by people of all Christians faiths.

Julie Batham's father, Noel, has lived at St Catherine's for two years now. Julie said:

"When Mum and I were looking for a suitable home for

Dad, St Catherine's stood out from the crowd. Dad has dementia but the excellent care and professional support he receives from everyone there is reassuring and gives us peace of mind at all times."

The charity has plans to develop its residential care provision for older people in the very near future and hopes to be in a position to make an announcement on its intentions later in the year.



The charity now has three distinct areas of community engagement and together, these reach out to thousands of people every month.



Our innovative 5p Bus service, set up in 2008, coordinates receipts of good quality second-hand clothes, bedding and children's toys and then redistributes these goods into the heart of some of the poorest communities in our region for just 5p an item.

We are extremely grateful for the support we received during the year which enabled us to extend and professionalise the service. Our second bus was kindly donated by Arriva and through the generosity of the Ballinger Trust, we now operate the service from a large, centrally located depot in Swalwell. This allows for the efficient storage and sorting of the goods.

These strides now mean that between them, the buses serve an average of 3,500 customers per month, evidencing just how important the 5p Buses have become to people's lives.

The project is funded entirely through voluntary donations. With the operational costs of running each bus averaging £43,000 per annum, the charity is committed to regular fundraising campaigns to ensure they remain on the road.

If you would like to volunteer for our 5p Bus project, you can contact Kathleen Urwin on 0191 228 0111.



Parish and Community Enablement (PACE) was developed during the year.

Its purpose is for St Cuthberts Care to partner parishes and local communities to enable them to set up weekly drop-in type facilities with sign-posting assistance for people facing isolation or for those who may just be in need of some direction in their life.

The very first service to evolve was the Worswick Welcome Centre based at St Andrew's in Newcastle. Its aim was to offer basic support for those hardest to reach. The city centre location, a catchment area for many homeless individuals, has resulted in this project providing food, warmth and a friendly welcome, hence the name, for more than forty homeless people each week.

"These forgotten people used to pass our doors but now, with the help of St Cuthberts Care and many willing volunteers, they are very much part of our community."

Fr Michael Corbett, Parish Priest of St Andrew's, Newcastle

St Cuthberts Care is enabling projects across the whole of our region to follow suit and new projects are starting up every few months.



St Cuthberts Care has always received tremendous support from the schools across our region and this year we invested in a dedicated individual to co-ordinate this work.

The new role will allow us to engage more fully with schools, to explain our work and to offer opportunities for pupils to become more involved with our projects.

The charity engages in many activities with younger pupils so we decided to launch our inaugural Young Social Entrepreneur of the Year Award, specifically aimed at sixth-form students. It will be an annual competition between sixth-forms giving students the opportunity to try out their business skills and entrepreneurial ideas to see which school can raise the most money from an initial stake of £250. This year, all proceeds will go towards providing free short breaks at our Alan Shearer Short Break Centre.

It is fitting therefore, that the finalists will be invited on stage to meet the Centre's namesake and charity Patron, Alan Shearer, at an award ceremony at Live Theatre in July. All participants from the schools will be invited along to join in the fun and tension to hear the long-awaited announcement of the lucky winning team.

Nicola Milne, St Cuthberts Care's new School Co-ordinator commented:

"The competition has got the sixth-formers buzzing. They all want to win the coveted trophy for their school, particularly with this being the first year."

The charity has already received enquiries from new schools expressing an interest in signing-up next year, so this innovative and empowering fundraising idea looks set to go from strength to strength.

Financial Review 2010—2011

The charity's income from commissioned services increased by 9.3% this year to £6,306,732 (2010: £5,766,165). This reflects the increase in provision of children's services and improved occupancy rates within this area. Fee rates across all services remained flat and we expect this will be the case for most of our services next year.

The continuing adverse economic conditions have impacted on the charity's charitable receipts, with donations from individuals declining by 25.7% compared to last year. We thank all those who have continued to support us this year.

Expenditure on charitable activities represents the costs involved in providing services for the vulnerable and needy in the region.

For a full set of accounts audited by PricewaterhouseCoopers please contact Nic Gilbert, our Director of Finance, on **0191 228 0111**, or email Nic at nic.gilbert@stcuthbertscare.org.uk

Summarised Statement of Financial Activities

INCOME	2011	2010
Commissioned services	£6,306,732	£5,766,165
Grants & donations	£257,744	£364,564
Other income	£121,611	£178,085
TOTAL INCOME	£6,686,087	£6,308,814
EXPENDITURE		
Charitable activities	£6,193,694	£5,752,377
Cost of generating funds	£53,312	£63,968
Other costs	£125,463	£178,203
Governance costs	£22,258	£21,280
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£6,394,727	£6,015,828
NET INCOME FOR THE YEAR	£291,360	£292,986

As we hear almost daily of rising unemployment, St Cuthberts Care has responded by launching two separate employment opportunities to help young people across our region gain worthwhile employment.

Both our Graduate programme and our Apprenticeship scheme have been warmly welcomed by young people looking to embark upon their new careers.

Our Graduate programme offers an opportunity into management by working towards recognised qualifications across a range of care disciplines, whilst gaining invaluable hands-on experience. Similarly, our Apprenticeship scheme offers school leavers a whole range of options including care, catering, horticulture and business administration. St Cuthberts Care guarantees permanent, full-time employment for those successfully completing their training period and now employs eight people across both schemes.

Through these opportunities, the charity is playing its part in helping to improve the future prospects of young people, whilst ensuring our projects experience a regular flow of new recruits in a planned and measured way.



Closing Statement by Bishop Seamus Cunningham

In these challenging times, many more people in our communities find themselves in desperate need of help and support, so it is heartening to see St Cuthberts Care, our diocesan charity, extend their work so considerably across our region.

It is encouraging to know this year that the charity's specialist services continue to expand and that the charity has also been able to focus its attention on fractured communities, offering practical help and support. Its work enables volunteers, parishioners and the local communities to bind together. Providing essentials in life to many who have nothing is indeed Faith in Action.

Sometimes it can be easy to lose sight of those worse off than ourselves, particularly when we are all caught up with our own concerns. However, through our prayers and a determined leadership, I believe the charity can continue to improve, beyond measure in some cases, the lives of those whose needs are so much greater than our own.

Right Reverend Seamus Cunningham
Bishop of Hexham and Newcastle Diocese

Every year we are overwhelmed by the generosity of our supporters and volunteers. We receive money, time, goods and services from so many people and businesses to help us improve the lives of those who are disadvantaged. Without this regular support we could not achieve what we do. Thank you to you all.

If you are interested in supporting St Cuthberts Care and would like to know more, please contact Sheila Errington, Director of Developments, on 0191 228 0111 or email Sheila at sheila.errington@stcuthbertscare.org.uk.

Board of Trustees: Bishop Seamus Cunningham, Fr Michael Campion, Mr Austin Donohoe, Dr Desmond Dunleavy, Mr Freddie Fletcher, Mr John Flynn, Mr Michael Hogan, Mr John Jones, Dr Kathryn Mannix, Mr David Relton, Mrs Angela Russell.

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