



This is the first Trustees' Annual Report produced since the inception of A Bear Named Buttony as a charity, established in November 2019.

## Objectives and Activities

The establishment of A Bear Named Buttony as a charity was, and continues to be, due to the inspiration of a very special young woman.

Eilidh Gow has lived with a stoma for many years and had her first surgery at the age of three. Seen as the type of medical condition that did not make for easy conversation, Eilidh and her family have lived through many years of appointments and surgeries, whilst also not feeling able to openly talk about stomas and bowels. The relative lack of support and resources to help children and young people through such a delicate issue led to Jenny Gow, Eilidh's mum, establishing Buttony Bear as a resource that could be used to help children, young people and their families navigate through often complicated medical journeys and conversations; and at the same time offering fun and comfort.

Now 23, Eilidh is an active and articulate advocate for raising awareness about stomas and relevant personal and health issues for children and young people.

In recognition of her charitable work in the North-East of Scotland, including A Bear Named Buttony, Jenny was awarded the MBE in June 2019.

---

The objectives of the charity are stated formally in the governing document. In summary, A Bear Named Buttony exists to:

1. **Support children and young people with a stoma.** The provision of "Buttony", a specially created teddy bear with a button stoma, to children with medical conditions is designed to bring instant friendship, support and comfort to a child and their family.
2. Buttony is also a supportive and educational charity which helps to raise public awareness about life with a stoma. This work includes the aim of developing an educational pack for nursery and primary school children
3. The establishment of a dedicated online forum to support parents and carers



---

## Charity Details

**Charity Name:** A Bear Named Buttony SCIO

**Scottish Charity Number:** SC049781

**Address:** c/o Amber Computing Ltd, Tillyneuk, 28 Pannaninch Road, Ballater, Aberdeenshire, AB35 5PA

**Telephone number:** 07813 720963

**Email address:** [info@buttonybear.org.uk](mailto:info@buttonybear.org.uk)

**Website:** [www.buttoneybear.com](http://www.buttoneybear.com)

**Twitter:** @ButtonyBear

**Facebook:** A Bear Named Buttony

**Instagram:** [buttonybear](https://www.instagram.com/buttoneybear)

## Charity Trustees

The charity trustees are as listed below:

Jennifer Gow MBE (Chair)

Linda Ewen

Elizabeth Greig

Helen Macfarlane (Vice Chair)

Moira McDougall (Treasurer)

Lynn Park

Gail Thomson (Secretary)

Aby Wilson

Sheena Yule

## Accountant

Adele Middler FCCA

## Structure, Governance and Management

A Bear Named Buttony has a written constitution which has been approved by the Board of Trustees and OSCR. This includes a recent amendment, approved by OSCR in January 2021, to allow for virtual meetings to take place during the ongoing pandemic.

The charity is governed by a Board of Trustees. The official roles of Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer and Secretary are allocated and clearly defined. The composition of the trustee membership includes a mixture of individuals with a personal or specific interest in stomas and bowel disease, business knowledge and clinical expertise.

The charity has established in 2020 an effective way of running and holding meetings in a virtual setting. All meetings are well documented, with minutes that are available to OSCR, and full agendas are written for each meeting to ensure that all aspects of the charitable work is discussed with the trustee cohort.

During this first year of operation, formal trustee meetings were held on the following dates:

1. 5<sup>th</sup> January 2020 (inaugural meeting)
2. 1<sup>st</sup> March 2020
3. 18<sup>th</sup> October 2020
4. 17<sup>th</sup> January 2021 (first AGM)
5. 17<sup>th</sup> January 2021 (routine Board meeting)

## Trustee Recruitment and Appointment

The list of trustees included in this report refer to the individuals who have been involved with the charity since the inception in 2019. The aim is at all times to have a Board of Trustees with a wide range of skills and expertise.

In addition, the following changes were made:

- Resignation of Linda Ewen (January 2021)
- Nomination and acceptance of Chris Driver (January 2021)
- Nomination and acceptance of Donna Bain (January 2021)



---

## Achievements and Performance

The first year of A Bear Named Buttony as an independent charity has been full of firsts and achievements. Despite the covid restrictions which affected Buttony and all charities from spring 2020 and continue to the present date, the year has been full of successes and demonstrable benefits to children, young people and families.

The charity met for the first time officially in January 2020 and this meeting oversaw the election of trustees to the Board, the appointment of trustees to the key Board roles and the acceptance of the constitution as our governing document.

During 2020, the charity has supported 925 children and young people by providing bears and young adult packs. This included 585 bears and 340 young adult packs.

Buttony had, up until the end of 2019, been part of the larger charity, The Breakaway Foundation. The success of Buttony as an independent charity during 2020 meant we were able to help 129 more beneficiaries than during the previous year.

We are particularly proud of the inception and development of the young adult pack and the growth in demand for this during 2020.

Due to the experiences of Board members, we had the knowledge that this was an oft-overlooked age range and there was a keen desire to develop something for young adults as well as for younger children who are the most likely beneficiaries of the Buttony Bear.

The charity engages actively with stoma nurses across the UK. This engagement directly with clinical staff has been invaluable and has been managed remotely, whilst still achieving the same results as attending planned conferences in person.

A special thanks and recognition must go to the many volunteers who support the charity in the background and make what we do possible.

There are 35 volunteers who undertake tasks such as drawing out templates, cutting felt and fabric, making up packs and sewing pouch covers.

In summary, 2020 and the impact of covid has been a challenge that the Buttony team have had to face, similar to all charities. The pandemic has meant the cancellation of all planned attendances at conferences, the inability to meet in person with sponsors and donors and the lack of opportunity to attend meetings and talks to promote Buttony. All of these activities remain important to the charity and will be re-commenced as core tasks post-pandemic. Despite all of this, the Board is extremely proud of what our small charity has achieved and we look forward to an even more successful year in 2021.

---

## Notes From Our Beneficiaries

“Buttony has given Emily comfort. She has often said she feels like she is not alone as long as she has her special bear. Since Buttony had his colostomy she has been confident that she will be able to tackle the procedure herself. She proudly shows her bag to anyone. Without Buttony the transition for Emily would have been very different. I believe the magic he brings has helped her through the most difficult of times.”

“Buttony was donated to us before my son’s operation in September 2020 from receiving Buttony he helped my little boy come to terms with having his own little button in his belly before his op . Buttony went through the whole journey with him, he was there during his operation and there in recovery. Now my little boy and Buttony are inseparable. He helps him explain to his friends and also family what a stoma is .He's a huge part of our family and takes every journey with Jax, we cant thank you enough”

“Buttony has been a best friend to Jessica, she received him two months before having her stoma formed. He has been a comfort to her and even an emotional support. When she’s feeling down or unwell she cuddles Buttony and takes him everywhere everyday.”



“A beautiful compassionate service for young people at a traumatic time. It has been a great comfort for our granddaughter, helping her understand and come to terms with a difficult time in her life.”

---

## Financial Review

Key points from the financial report for the period includes:

Income of £28,300

Total expenditure of £23,487

Bank balance of £3,812

110 donations were received through Virgin Giving at a total of £8,540  
(of which £893 in Gift Aid)

Large donations were also received from:

- Benevity £1,507
- Ecclesiastical Movement for Good £1,000
- The Three Bill's Ballater Golf Club Charity Golf Day £1,000
- Stuart Andrew Lawtie Memorial Fund £1,500
- Ballater RHS £500
- C Archer £670
- Roaring Stag £2,103

The Amazon wish list that was set up during 2020 has seen goods to the value of £1,274 donated.

The major expenses incurred by the charity involve the purchase of the bears (Canterbury Bears £5,602) and the items required for the young adult packs £6,038).



---

## Future Plans

The charity hopes to revert to more routine activities at some point in 2021, covid pandemic allowing. The successes in 2020 will continue to be developed e.g. the allocation of bears, the continued development of the young adult packs etc. The charity also intends to develop new ventures such as a urology pack and also a Buttonly book.

## Thanks

We couldn't do what we do without our generous supporters.

Thank you all.

## Conclusion

The Board are very pleased with the progress the charity has made in our first year as an independent entity. Despite covid, the aims of the charity have been well progressed and there are exciting plans for 2021 and beyond.

We are a small charity but we are proud to make a real difference to the lives of children, young people and families across the UK.

## Declaration

Signed on behalf of the charity trustees:

Print name

Designation

Date