

The Archie Foundation

We're here for you



The Archie Foundation Newsletter March 2024

Dear Mel

I hope this finds you well and enjoying the start of spring. Isn't it lovely to see the sun again? At Archie HQ the weather is not the only thing we've noted improvement in. We've been reviewing our impact stats for 2023 and are thrilled to note significant progress and improvement made in every single aspect of what we do! This is a real testament to the hard work of Team Archie - and as a supporter of the charity you are very much part of this! We are working on a full impact report but in the meantime I hope you will enjoy these headlines. On behalf of the babies, children and families who have benefited from your support, thank you so very much for caring.

Best wishes

Paula Cormack

Chief Executive

A grand total of
£1,667,241
Raised for immediate and longer term projects and services

For the second year running we beat our budget, meaning we raised more, and could do more, than we had ever thought possible. Read on to find out more about how we used these funds and how you can help us do even more this year.



When we wrote our 2022-24 Business Plan one of the goals we set was to improve our reporting and evaluation. This not only helps us measure progress but more importantly it helps in measuring the impact and importance of our work - the increased numbers of people supported, the ways in which we help and the difference it makes. Last year Archie directly supported 2,907 individuals and indirectly we helped a whopping 50,000 babies and children who attended one of the hospitals we support. Many of them will not have known they had Archie supporters like you to thank for the warm welcome they felt when they arrived in hospital, or

for the equipment their doctor or nurse was using, but every one of them will have benefitted in some way.

Archie Support For Neonatal Babies, Staff and Families Continued to Grow

Our counselling service provides crucial support for families and staff at Aberdeen Neonatal Unit and we have recently appointed two new counsellors to meet growing demand for the service. Last year Archie supporters invested nearly £100,000 in specialist neonatal equipment. This funding forms part of our Baird Appeal, which now sits at well over £1m. Wherever possible we're focusing on equipment that can be used in the current facility and transferred to the Baird when it opens. This includes state-of-the-art kit like the new Brainz monitor which provides neurological information in the early stages of newborn development and which is already making the difference for some of the sickest babies in the north east.



Despite all we hear in the media, works continue on the new Baird Family Hospital and, as you can see, excellent progress is being made. I met recently with the Equipment Commissioning Manager to discuss one of the important "extras" that Archie's Baird Appeal will fund - sofa beds for each of the rooms to provide space and comfort for all members of the family.

These will be fully bespoke to ensure they 100% fit all requirements - from technical aspects like adhering to the strictest Infection Prevention & Control standards to the obvious need for comfort and ease of conversion from sofa to bed. At £2,000 each these are certainly not cheap but they have been very carefully designed and assessed with really impressive attention to detail to ensure they are exactly what is needed and that they will last. As with so many things Archie funds, it's the small details that really make the difference.



Last year we reintroduced our Neonatal Supporter Afternoons which take place bi-monthly. These provide a great opportunity for families with babies in the Neonatal Unit (currently, recently or even many years ago) to get together to share experiences and support. In the past these have been very informal but more recently we invited speakers to share information and insights about neonatal care. If there is a topic you would like us to cover please let me know and we will do our best to schedule this in.

Providing a Home From Home When & Where It's Needed Most

The Archie Family Centre provided a home-from-home for a whopping 1,009 parents and carers last year. The difference this facility makes is priceless, whether for a single night stay before a relatively minor procedure or in an emergency or crisis situation. Just last night we took an out-of-hours call from a parent stuck at Aberdeen Airport waiting for a delayed flight back home. They had stayed in our Family Centre the night before her daughter's outpatient appointment and were desperately hoping to get home in time for her 4th birthday celebrations today. Mum was worried their flight might be cancelled and asked if we could accommodate them for a second night, if needed. We set up a room (including a wee birthday gift, just in case) but I'm very pleased to say it wasn't required which should also mean birthday celebrations are now in full swing in Shetland!



Support For The Whole Family When Facing Longer Term Hospital Stays

Unfortunately not all stays are so short term and simple. There are a number of families who, for varying reasons, have no idea when they might finally get home. It's not just patients and parents who find their lives turned upside down by long-term hospital stays. Siblings pay a high price too, missing out on nursery, play dates and so many other activities that are pivotal to their development. In addition to supporting the Play Service teams, who are there for patients, we are really proud to be able to support siblings by funding nursery sessions and other activities and resources. These are really important not only to support siblings' ongoing developmental education but crucially they allow parents guilt-free and dedicated time with the child receiving hospital care. Young Gracie and her parents benefited from this service late last year. They were staying in the Archie Family Centre and had to split their time with one parent looking after Gracie while the other visited their baby in the Neonatal Unit. Until Archie funded these nursery sessions, they had never been with their baby together. As you can see, Gracie settled in quickly, making a special bond with nursery staff and especially enjoying the "messy play" on offer!



Record Results for Archie's Child Bereavement Service In All Three Regions

Archie's Child Bereavement Service continues to grow, with record numbers of referrals received in each of the three regions we support. The referrals received in Tayside and Highlands, where we introduced our service in 2022, have now reached a level where we need additional resource to meet the needs of the children we are supporting. This month we welcomed two new Bereavement Support Workers in Tayside and we are currently advertising for Bereavement Support Workers in the Highlands. In addition to our staff resource we are training a new cohort of Volunteer Responders, who play a crucial role in delivering Archie's support for bereaved children. If this is something you might be interested in, click here to find out more.



Funding Specialist Equipment for NHS Patients, Staff and Facilities



We have worked hard over the last year to raise awareness about our grant funding and to make the applications process easier. Our application form went fully digital last year which not only makes it easier for applicants but also improves our tracking and evaluation. All of this helps enormously in ensuring we get the support out as quickly as possible and that we can share with our supporters the difference their donations and fundraising make. Last year we supported 303 applications totalling over £543k. Our lowest value application last year was for just £10 to fund a taxi so a child could attend an outpatient appointment.

We supported a number of applications for specialist wheelchairs and wheelchair adaptations last year, including one from Jade who lost both her legs and part of her arms at the age of two, after contracting meningitis. Five years ago Archie helped fund an electric wheelchair for Jade and since then there has been no stopping her. Among other accomplishments, Jade is now competing at an international level in surfing! In 2022 she was the youngest competitor representing Scotland at the World Adaptive Surfing Championships held in California, placing 7th overall. Jade applied to Archie last year to request funding to help purchase a new, lighter-weight electric wheelchair that is better suited and easier to transport to the many surfing activities and competitions she attends. We are proud, and we hope you are too, to have played a part in helping Jade live life to the fullest.



Fundraising Events, Activities & Campaigns You Can Get Involved In



We have some chunky goals and ambitions for 2024 and a really exciting calendar of fundraising events and campaigns to help make these possible. A record number of people are taking part in our popular Marathon March campaign and with one week still to go they have already exceeded previous years fundraising! Next up is our hugely exciting Archie Variety Show which will feature sixteen acts performed by children who have been supported by

Archie and/or the NHS. Rehearsals are well underway for what will be an incredible evening of entertainment which will undoubtedly be as heart warming as it will surely be heart wrenching. There are a limited number of tickets still available so I'd highly recommend you book now!

There are many other opportunities to get involved in supporting Archie this year including, for the first time ever, Battle of Badges football tournaments in all three of the regions we support. Click below for more information.



Please donate today

