

Fife Gingerbread **Strategic Plan**

— 2020-2025 —



Fife
Gingerbread

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Company No. SC365015, Charity No. SC024254

SOCIALISE WITH US:



@FifeGingerbread

OUR MAIN FUNDERS:



Introduction to Fife Gingerbread /

We are a voluntary sector organisation that provides information, advice and support service to lone parents and families in need all over Fife.

Our aim is simple: to provide accessible, approachable and non-judgemental support, advice and information to lone parents. We are the only voluntary sector organisation in Fife with charitable status that has lone parent families as its primary focus. Based in Glenrothes we cover the whole of Fife providing a variety of services to lone parent families, in their local communities.

We seek to empower lone parents and families in need to promote their wellbeing and opportunities. We offer holistic support through our various projects, working at the pace and timescale that is right for the parent to overcome barriers such as poverty, isolation and poor mental health.

Throughout all projects our ethos is the same: **Engage – Support – Progress**



Our Vision /

‘Better today’s and brighter tomorrow’s for Fife’s lone parents and families in need’.

We are fully committed to helping those in need to fulfil this vision. We provide holistic support tailored to suit each family. We do whatever we can to make sure families in Fife are given not only the help they need, but also a voice. They shape the support we deliver, and we help shape their future.

Our Mission /

'We support and empower Fife's lone parents and families in need through early intervention and partnership working'.

At Fife Gingerbread it's never 'mission accomplished'. We will continue to support those who need help most and champion for change on their behalf. We pride ourselves in recognising specific needs and gaps in provision and strive to influence policy makers both locally and nationally.

Our Values & Standards /

The values which underpin the work of Fife Gingerbread are linked to our vision and mission statements. We monitor our standards through ongoing supervision and professional development.

Inclusive

- Provide an inclusive service with equality of access for families in Fife – irrespective of gender, disability, religion, age or sexual orientation.
- Engage with families in a variety of ways to give the greatest flexibility and reach of our support services.
- Accept referrals from individuals, statutory organisations and any other organisations working with families.
- Locate our groups in the heart of our communities to reduce barriers to participation.
- Engage in partnership working to ensure that together we can provide access to a greater variety of support and services.

Quality

- Work to the highest standards to support our families in a flexible, holistic, non-judgemental, friendly and professional manner.
- Recruit, train and support colleagues and volunteers to gain valuable experience, add to the organisation and ensure that expectations are met.
- Recruit appropriately qualified and experienced colleagues, volunteers and board members to ensure a range of expertise across the organisation.

Empowerment

- Provide each family with encouragement and hope.
- Work with families to overcome barriers in their lives, enabling change to take place.
- Provide support and guidance to promote autonomy among our colleagues.
- Encourage and support parents into volunteering.

Trust

- Demonstrate and thrive on integrity.
- Build relationships with our families and partners and maintain them to the highest possible standard.
- Adhere to strict policies and procedures with regards to confidentiality and safeguarding.

Respect

- Treat all families, partners, colleagues and volunteers with kindness and dignity.
- Provide a non-judgemental service.

Our Approach /

Our approach is relationship centred – we take a personalised and collaborative approach of forming and maintaining important relationships. Within Fife Gingerbread there is a web of relationships between our team, families, and the local community. Each of these connections allows for effective exchanges of information and is vitally important for maintaining an excellent service and positive relationships.

Our relationship-based approach ensures a culture in which our team share our values and ethos. Our colleagues, board members and volunteers are chosen not only for their qualifications and experiences, but also for their compassionate and caring natures. Therefore, our day to day engagement is genuine and has a meaningful impact on how we support our families.

Achieving the best outcomes for families cannot be done alone. We will work with other appropriate agencies across the sectors to provide a holistic and joined-up approach to supporting lone parents and families in need.

Our Current Projects (2020) /

Fife Gingerbread have several partnership projects allowing us to support lone parents, vulnerable and disadvantaged families across Fife.

To find out everything you need to know about our up to date projects please click on the link below:

<https://www.fifegingerbread.org.uk/projects>

Our Strategy /

The next five years will present significant challenges for Fife Gingerbread as the number of families experiencing poverty and social inequalities is rising and set to increase further still. Poverty is high on the political agenda with a great degree of focus on the issue both nationally and locally in Fife.

As well as a focus on poverty, the Scottish Government is also committed to several strategies and policies that Fife Gingerbread has a part in delivering:

- A commitment to tackling child poverty.
- Supporting families by making sure children and young people can receive the right help, at the right time, from the right people.
- Providing a range of learning and care support for families with young children - from birth until starting school - to make sure that all children get the best possible start in life.
- Providing learning, volunteering and work opportunities for people who are out of work.

We are well placed to respond to these agendas. As a charity we have real strengths in that:

- The families who we work with are at the heart of everything we do.
- Voices are heard and inform how we work.
- We have a solid reputation with our stakeholders and partners.
- We have a unique offering as a charity in that we can offer a range of services and volunteering opportunities.
- We are committed to sustainability and development of the charity.
- We have loyal and committed colleagues who understand the sector and have a wealth of experience.

There are, however, external factors which could potentially threaten how we can respond to increasing demands:

- Poverty in Scotland is rising – over a quarter of children are now living in poverty.
- The detrimental impact of Welfare Reform in all aspects of family life.
- Uncertain political climate and the full impact of Brexit is unknown. A no deal Brexit could, potentially, push a further 130,000 people into poverty.
- Fife Council Children's Services review.

This strategy sets out our plan to prepare for the challenges ahead without sacrificing the quality of what we do and how we do it. Achieving this is only possible if we focus on clear objectives which are relevant to how we operate, and which seek to make Fife Gingerbread fit for the future.

Our strategic objectives over the next five years are to:

1. Ensure that lone parent families are at the heart of what we do.
2. Become financially sustainable and diversify our income streams.
3. Invest in our colleagues to make sure they have the skills and confidence to deliver excellent services.
4. Develop Public Relations to maintain our profile and raise awareness of our cause.

The Plan /

1. Ensure that lone parent families are at the heart of what we do.

Our families - The origins of Fife Gingerbread are to support lone parent families, however, over time our approach has diversified to include a broader range of families facing their own challenges. We will continue to be inclusive of every family that needs our support, however our origins are lone parents and we will strive to ensure that each year at least 90% of the people we work with are lone parents.

We recognise that isolation is particularly prevalent among lone parents which can be attributed to many factors such as low self-esteem and confidence, anxiety and poor mental health, lack of family support and poverty. We will develop the work we do in communities by facilitating a network of hubs for people to attend and remove many of the barriers such as cost and childcare provision.

Volunteers - Volunteering is the backbone of Fife Gingerbread and we will focus on its growth by encouraging and supporting people we have worked with to become volunteers. We recognise the added value of lived experience a volunteer has to offer and the positive impact it can have on a person's emotional and mental wellbeing.

We have had many businesses offering staff time to volunteer for us and we will continue to ensure that these people have a meaningful experience and want to continue to volunteer with us in the future. We are committed to developing our volunteers and will ensure that they have access to opportunities to learn new skills.

Listening to our families - We will develop and implement a people participation policy which ensure that our values are upheld and that the voices of the people we support are heard and influence how we work. The voices of our families are important to us and will help set up various volunteer led forums across Fife for families to attend and allow them share their experiences and be at the heart of how we design and deliver projects.

Quality assurance - We will develop and implement our own quality assurance framework to make sure that each service is delivered to the highest standard. Our primary focus is that the services we offer are effective and meet the expectations of families. We need to make sure proper methods of evaluating feedback is in place for our families and stakeholders to shape our services going forward.

2. Become financially sustainable and diversify our income streams.

Fundraising - As many charities are, we are reliant upon core funding from the local authority. Core funding is vital for us to operate - however, as a charity dedicated to helping others, we need to be able to help ourselves. We will develop a strategy on how we will fundraise to generate more un-restricted funds over the next five years. The key areas we will look at will be:

- Encouraging our families and volunteers to be involved in our fundraising committee.
- Holding regular fundraising events throughout the year.
- Encouraging local businesses to support us.
- Encouraging people to be regular supporters of our charity through regular donations or leaving a legacy.
- Using social and TV media to raise awareness of our cause.

External funding opportunities - We will continue to work with our existing funders and ensure that we are meeting the requirements. We have good systems in place for recording and monitoring data which we are required to report on. The leadership team will ensure that reporting and monitoring is high on the agenda, actions are in place to identify potential short falls and we maintain excellent relationships and lines of open communication with all stakeholders.

Future funding opportunities will be carefully considered to ensure that it reflects our values and what we want to achieve. Our main priorities will to be consider **i)** does the opportunity benefit lone parents? **ii)** is there an opportunity to work in partnership? and **iii)** does the opportunity reflect our values, approach and ethos?

Organisational structure - We will regularly review our organisational structure to ensure that it is robust and able to meet to the demands of services effectively whilst honouring budget constraints. We will identify skills and routes for colleagues to develop and aid succession planning.

We will ensure that our board members have the skills and knowledge required.

We will always look for opportunities for our volunteers to contribute in all areas of our organisation and projects.

Maximising our resources - We need to explore our assets and how these can benefit our financial income. We have a pool of talented professionals within Fife Gingerbread who have a lot to offer our partnership agencies and local authorities. We will explore the option of becoming a social enterprise for bespoke training - relevant to our cause - that can be delivered across Fife. We have the ideal premises to facilitate all types of training.

Partnership working - We know funders are attracted to partnership working. Supporting lone parents is what we do best and by working in partnership we can concentrate on our strengths whilst ensuring there is a holistic approach that is inclusive of every family in need. We will be the organisation that our fellow voluntary sector providers want to work with to support lone parents because of our skills and knowledge. We will achieve this through good networking and awareness raising of what we do.

3. Invest in our colleagues to make sure they have the skills and confidence to deliver excellent services.

Training & Development - We want our colleagues and volunteers to have relevant and up-to-date skills, giving them the confidence and ability to deliver excellent support to the people we work with. We will review our current Training and Development policy to ensure that training is specific to each job role. We will ensure that there is succession planning to enable our colleagues to develop their career within Fife Gingerbread.

Human Resources - We want to ensure that our colleagues are well looked after as their health and wellbeing is vital. We will utilise external HR support to make sure that we have the best advice and support on-hand. We will also review all our current policies and procedures to make sure that they reflect our values and support the strategic plan.

Performance Framework - We can only provide the best services by having a strong and supported workforce. To promote continued professional development, we will replace the current supervision and appraisal process with a performance framework that is evidenced by a person's commitment to learn and contribute to Fife Gingerbread.

4. Will develop a sound Public relations & Marketing strategy to maintain our profile and raise awareness of our cause.

Public relations - Families are at the heart of what we do, and we want to be in the heart of the community. Fife Gingerbread has an excellent reputation within Fife, that we need to maintain and if possible, enhance. We will develop a PR strategy which will inform how we conduct our business and the language we use. We want to ensure that our values shine through.

Social media - We recognise that social media is one of the best platforms to communicate about our cause. We will develop a policy and procedures to make sure that we use social media effectively, respectfully and safely.

Promote our campaigns - We are committed to campaigning for the rights of Fife's lone parents and families in need. Working in partnership with Citizens Advice and Rights Fife and One Parent Families Scotland, we will continue with our 'Bairns Come First – Fairness for Their Future' campaign. This campaign is designed to raise awareness of child maintenance changes and provide support and information.

FIFE GINGERBREAD CONTACT US

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