



# Summary Annual Report 2015/16



children's  
hearings  
scotland

Children's Hearings Scotland (CHS) is a public body which recruits and trains the volunteer panel members who make decisions at children's hearings.

CHS' senior management team (SMT) is responsible for leading the work of CHS, making sure we do everything in our Business Plans and Corporate Plan. Boyd McAdam is our National Convener and Chief Executive and he leads the SMT.

The CHS Board decides what work CHS is going to concentrate on. CHS Board members are appointed by, and are responsible to Scottish Ministers. The Chair of our Board is called Garry Coutts. Three of our Board members have been Children's Panel members in the past.

At the end of March 2016, CHS had six Board members, five SMT members and 17 members of staff.

In 2015/16 we had five business objectives. Despite a challenging year, this report gives an update on what we have managed to achieve.



## Voice of the child

- the views of children and young people helped us write our **participation framework** which explains how we involve children and young people in our work
- children designed a new leaflet '**All About Panel Members**' to help explain to other children what panel members do in a hearing
- our website is improving thanks to the feedback we have received from children and young people
- children and young people's views of how they want to be treated in hearings is explained in a new '**Quick Guide**' for panel members
- young people now help us recruit new senior staff members and senior volunteers
- children and young people provide feedback to the National Convener through a programme of engagement events such as '**Tea with Boyd**'
- young people are now always involved in panel member pre-service training



## Strengthening the panel

- to make sure that there are enough children's panel members to attend children's hearings, we appointed 424 new panel members in May/June 2015
- our summer 2015 recruitment campaign resulted in 1,730 applications being received across Scotland from people wishing to become panel members
- we are improving the support and service we provide to our volunteers using the feedback they gave us in our CHS Community survey
- we carried out a review of the 2015 panel member recruitment campaign to help us improve the campaign in 2016
- we have a stronger leadership team as a result of the leadership event we held in partnership with Lloyd's Banking Group
- for the first time young people helped us to recruit new panel members, they wrote a report '**In Their Own Words**' about their experiences of this and made some suggestions about how we could do things better in the future
- our volunteers are better able to use our IT systems because of the training and support we have provided
- we reappointed 1,313 panel and AST members for a further three years



## Supporting decision making

- over 455 trainee panel members learned the skills they needed to make decisions at children's hearings by attending pre-service training
- panel members make better decisions thanks to our '**Quick Guide**' and are kept up to date through our regular panel member e-newsletters
- panel members are better informed about the training available to them through our new annual **training prospectus**
- 1,800 panel members improved their skills by attending core training (this is the training that panel members have to do)
- children and young people were supported by panel member continuity in 324 cases (that means having one of the same panel members at the next hearing for that child)



# The highlights

April 2015 to March 2016

making sure we have good relationships, systems and processes in place

making sure we do all the things we should as a public body, that we are efficient and report on our progress

## Voice of the child



"Getting to interview panel members made me feel as though I mattered - it was pretty phenomenal actually."

88% of young people felt listened to at their hearing\*

15 young people delivered 18 pre-service training sessions

over 2 weeks

to over 450 panel members

\* source SCRA Children and Families Survey 2015

## Strengthening the panel



1,012 people responded to our CHS Community Survey

94% of volunteers are proud to tell others they are part of CHS

"We promise that together with our partners we will inspire, lead and support panel members to ensure the best possible outcomes for Scotland's children and families".

CHS Community leadership vision

5 YOUNG PEOPLE

involved in panel member recruitment 2015

Over 400

panel members qualified for a Professional Development Award

## Supporting decision making

324 requests for panel member continuity  
10 panel practice e-newsletters issued  
2,500 panel members received a copy of the new 'Quick Guide'



Over 70,000 hours of training delivered to our volunteers including: core training to 1,800 panel members

## Sustainable infrastructure



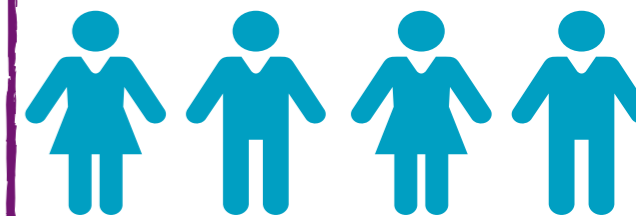
89% of volunteers had completed their Information Governance e-learning



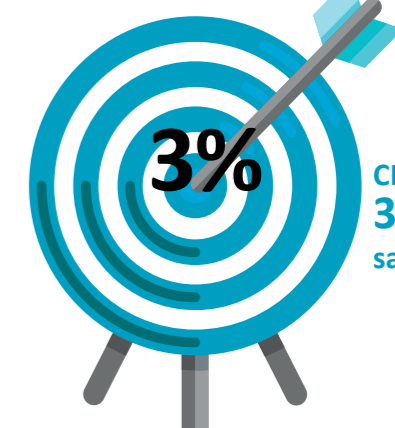
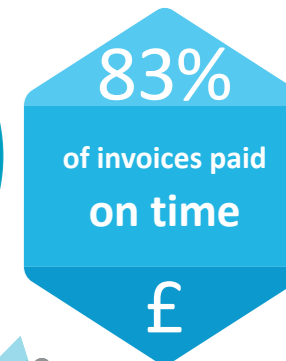
CHS sat on 22 partnership working groups to influence practice and policy in the Children's Hearings System



## Governance



4 new members of staff appointed





4

### Sustainable infrastructure

- our strong relationships with members of the Children's Hearings Improvement Partnership have enabled us to make improvements for children and young people
- we have worked to make sure that both CHS and the National Convener are equipped and ready to meet our new duties as Corporate Parents
- our Digital Strategy for the Children's Hearings System with SCRA explains how we hope to make better use of technology within the Children's Hearings System
- the scheduling of hearings has improved because of our work on the Hearings Management Group with SCRA
- we will be able to report to panel members about the impact their decisions have because we have worked with local authorities to start collecting the information we need to do this (known as the 'feedback loop')

5

### Governance

- the information we hold about children, young people and families is held safely and securely in line with our information governance policies and training
- our volunteers, partners and some children and young people told us what we should concentrate on in our '**Corporate Plan 2015-18**'
- all our records are stored in line with our new '**Records Management Plan**'

" For me the best part of this year has been working with volunteers and care experienced children and young people who have helped us to improve what we can do for those young people coming into the Children's Hearings System. It has been fun, challenging and very worthwhile. "



Boyd McAdam, National Convener and CEO, CHS

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Click to watch our films...

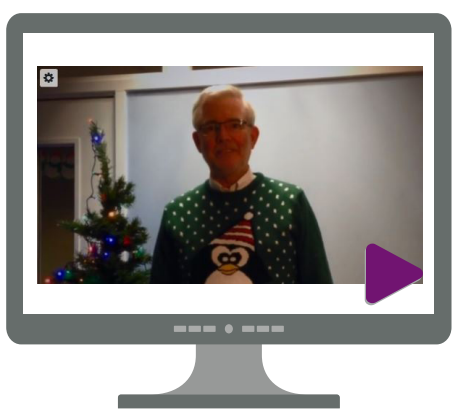
(or visit <https://vimeo.com/chscotland>)



...about the leadership event we organised in March 2016



...welcoming trainee panel members to their first training session in December 2015



...wishing young people at the Who Cares? Scotland Care Christmas event a Merry Christmas



The Children's Panel — life changing.