



## Why does the Society exist?

WELCOME to the Society's eighth newsletter. We hope that you enjoy reading it and learning about our progress during 2018. We warmly encourage contributions and feedback from members and supporters.

[www.sonsoftherock.org.uk](http://www.sonsoftherock.org.uk)

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### 'Surge in Scots families seeking emergency aid'.

This recent headline in a leading national newspaper is directly relevant to the core purpose of the Sons of the Rock's existence – giving financial help to people in crisis. What lies behind it?

Social and living conditions in Scotland in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century may have greatly improved compared to those of 200 years ago when the original Glasgow & Stirlingshire Charitable Society was established. Nevertheless, in Scotland today, real poverty still exists and is growing. Since the Scottish Welfare Fund was set up by the Scottish Government in 2013, £173 million has been given to people in need of help to buy essential items, with over 300,000 households helped out in that time. Between April and June this year, over £2 million went on crisis grants to help those on low incomes deal with an emergency, and this figure has increased by 7% over the last 12 months.

Our experience as a grant-making charity operating in the Stirling and Falkirk Council areas mirrors this bigger picture, as the 2018 grants summary below shows. Once again, the Trustees and Secretary have worked closely with local care sector charities to target our grant support for those families and individuals who are most in need, with

over £8,650 awarded in the year – a pleasing 26% increase on 2017.

We know that small amounts of money from the Sons of the Rock can make a big difference to people facing serious poverty, often in crisis situations linked with physical and mental disability. During 2018, the Society has continued to strengthen its working partnerships with front-line charities and local authority agencies delivering social care services in the Forth Valley area. This is particularly true of our first successful £1,000 block grant to Start Up Stirling, a local foodbank charity, also covered below.

The rebranding of the Society's trading name will be launched next spring as part of a new marketing strategy to build our capacity to help many more people. The papers for the forthcoming AGM being sent to all members include a report from the Preses on the progress we have made so far towards this important strategic objective.

The Society continues to move forward. It is very heartening to note the continuing support of members and individual donors which makes our expanding grants programme possible.

**Thank you!**

## Grants Summary 2017-18 – how we have supported people in crisis

We awarded **£8,652** in grants in the year, summarized below, covering Individual and Organisation applicants:

- **£1,000** in block grant for the new Support Service programme of **Start Up Stirling** (see below)
- **£1,000** to **PMcL and NT**, clients of **Shelter Scotland, Stirling**, as rental deposit on accommodation for a homeless young family.
- **£500** to **RV**, a client of **The Action Group, Falkirk**, for essential clothing suited to his medical requirements.
- **£350** to **PLUS Forth Valley** to buy a new oven for cookery classes with disabled young children at the Stirling premises.
- **£455** to **JMcM** to purchase a secure storage shed for a mobility scooter and **£600** to **TD** for replacement of internal doors, as tenants of **Forth Housing Association**.

- **£300 to EB and £150 to NG**, clients of **Home-Start Stirling**, to equip a play area in a sensory garden and purchase child seats for parents of young children with special needs.
- **£320 to AL, £200 to PK, £200 to MM, £300 to MC, £350 to LMcl, £300 to JMcD, £381 to AC, £500 to CW and £600 to SD**, clients of **Stirling Council Advice Services and Social Work**, for the purchase of winter clothing and shoes, white goods, children's beds, essential family travel and flooring.
- **£410 to Cyrenians Falkirk** to purchase new gazebos to publicise its volunteer work programme in Dollar Park, Falkirk.
- **£500 to CMcM**, supported by **Stirling and District Women's Aid**, to buy essential white goods in safe accommodation.
- **£100 to JK and £300 to AK**, both supported by **Stirling Carers Centre**, for yoga therapy classes and the purchase of a laptop for a university course; a £550 underspend in a previous grant to a client was repaid by SCC in the year.
- **£185 to FO'R**, supported by **William Simpsons Home, Pleau** to purchase a mini fridge freezer.
- **£201 to AE**, a client of **Falkirk Council Welfare Services**, to replace kitchen flooring.

### Working with Start Up Stirling – a successful new partnership

Start Up Stirling, which runs three food banks in Stirling from its depot in Springkerse, is widely supported by local supermarkets, churches and colleges. In 2018 the charity used its first Sons of the Rock block grant of £1,000 to help 11 families or individuals in rural and urban communities across the Stirling Council area in a wide variety of crisis situations and to reduce their dependency on food banks. We are maintaining our block grant support for Start Up Stirling in 2019.



*(photos courtesy of Start Up Stirling)*

### Recent donations to Sons of the Rock grants programme.

We are deeply indebted to the donor from Stirling, who wishes to remain anonymous, for a recent £5,000 donation towards the Society's grants programme. This very generous gift has made it possible to increase the level of grant awards approved by Trustees in 2018. We are also most grateful to the Callendar Charitable Trust which has continued to provide an annual grant to support our work, especially in Falkirk.

### Annual Gathering – AGM & Lecture: Auld Hansel Monday 14<sup>th</sup> January 2019 at 7 pm

The refurbished Royal Hotel in the centre of Bridge of Allan is the venue for our 2019 Annual Gathering, comprising our AGM and Annual Lecture followed by a two-course buffet supper. Further details are given in the AGM papers being sent to all members.

This year's Lecture will be given by **Dr Murray Cook** on '**Archaeology for All – the growth of community archaeology in and around Stirling**'. Murray is well known to many as Stirling Council's Archaeologist and regularly organizes events and talks; he is a co-Director of CSW Heritage which specialises in archaeological themed outdoor education, and his wider interests include the integration of archaeological research and tourism

### Fundraising: 'Paint & Varnish – Appearance & Appreciation' fundraising lecture on 17th August

We were delighted that Sons of the Rock was one of three local charities chosen as the beneficiaries of the very interesting lecture given by art historian and paintings conservator Kate Seymour at Gartmore Village Hall, attended by approximately 100 people. Many thanks are due to Carol Seymour and Sarah Chester and their volunteer team for organizing an extremely successful and educational event, which raised £637 for the Society's grants programme.