

Quality, value and outcomes



Annual Report 2010



Apex Scotland: working to **engageinspireimprove**sustain individuals and communities

Apex Scotland Board

Pat McMullan
Chair

Mike McCarron
Vice Chair

Sue Brookes

David Coulter
Retired March 2010

Sheriff Brian Donald

Charlie Husband OBE
Retired March 2010

Sam Muir
Retired June 2010

Anne Pinkman

Bryan Rankin

Chief Constable
David Strang

Patrons

Rt Hon Sir Menzies
Campbell CBE QC

William Moodie

Viscount Weir

Employment significantly reduces re-offending rates and both the economy and communities benefit considerably when ex-offenders are given a second chance. So, for over 20 years, Apex Scotland has contributed to a safer Scotland by working with ex-offenders and young people and adults at risk to give them the necessary skills to help them find and stay in work. This approach makes best use of limited resources, bringing lasting value to individuals and society.

Our 163 specialist staff provide a whole variety of cost-effective services from 24 locations across Scotland. These focus on reducing re-offending and providing advice and guidance on conviction relevance and disclosure checks. This report showcases just some of our projects and the valuable contribution they make.

► Against the background of increasing concerns about crime and the ineffectiveness of prison as a remedy for reducing reoffending, the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development believes that employers have a key role to play and a stakeholder interest in finding ways of contributing to the rehabilitation of offenders. There's convincing evidence to show that there are business benefits for including ex-offenders in targeted recruitment programmes, not only to address prevailing skill shortages and problems in filling job vacancies, but also regarding issues of corporate social responsibility and working towards the creation and maintenance of inclusive and economically successful communities in which people and businesses can prosper.

Dianah Worman OBE
Chartered Institute of Personnel
and Development

changinglives

"I'd made a real mess of my life. I'd been in and out of prison half a dozen times. I had no contact with my family or my wee boy and I was drinking all the time and getting into trouble. My social worker told me about Apex but I wasn't convinced. I'd been on loads of other courses and got nowhere but I gave it a go. The first thing I noticed was they didn't talk down to me or get all snooty about my history. They told me they would help me get a job but I needed to sort myself out first. I needed to stop drinking and getting into bother and I needed to take responsibility for my own life and things like that. It was hard going at first but I stuck at it and tried to follow the plan Apex had made for me. I eased up on the drinking and learned I had more skills than I thought I did. I did a CV and application forms and got an interview. I was really nervous but the staff at Apex helped me prepare and I got the job! I was really pleased and have been working now for seven months. Apex were brilliant for me and I'm pleased I went there."



**INVESTORS
IN PEOPLE**

SKILLS for JUSTICE



DWP

Department for
Work and Pensions

A positive future for Apex



I hope that what you read in this report will, in the words of our new “positive future” model, engage your attention, inspire you, improve your understanding of Apex and sustain your contact with us.

Having recently taken over as Chief Executive, I am struck both by the amount of good work being done and the amount of work needing to be done to position ourselves for what will undoubtedly be a difficult period. We benefit from excellent governance; a business plan which provides stability and encourages innovation; and an impressive staff team. We need all these elements if we are to continue to deal with rising prison rates, falling employment opportunities and reduced budgets.

Our resilience and capability are testament to the dedication and commitment of the Board, Directors and staff. I would particularly like to thank Brian Fearon, interim Chief Executive, whose professionalism and humour made my arrival very easy, and Pat McMullan who steered the Board with great skill. Pat has now completed his term as Chair and is succeeded by Mike McCarron, former Vice-Chair. David Coulter, Charlie Husband and Sam Muir also retired from the Board this year and my grateful thanks go to them for the time and energy they devoted to Apex.

This has been a year of uncertainty about funding and how it will be allocated, about what services will survive and what will be lost. This level of uncertainty can lead to pragmatic partnership formation, create tensions among the agencies involved and affect services for clients. To avoid this happening, we need to demonstrate our ability to work together and share our resources where we can. To this end, I am delighted to have agreed a partnership arrangement with Sacro which will allow both organisations to move forward together. Between us we cover a significant area of work with those who have offending backgrounds and, vitally, those who are at risk of going down that road and I am excited by the potential of this pro-active approach to partnership working.

Apex has an impressive track record. For me, it is the positive and inspirational changes we see every day which make this organisation so exciting. I spoke recently with a young man who had only been out of prison for three months since he was 16 and who, in his 23 years, has been involved in some of the most serious and deep-seated crime imaginable. Through Apex, he said he had come to understand that his future was in his hands rather than being an inevitable consequence of his background. He has just been accepted onto a university social work course. I think he may become the best social worker in the world!

The following pages give a flavour of the year's highlights and achievements.

Alan Staff
Chief Executive

Quality services

Apex provides high quality services and interventions based on evaluation of what works. These focus on addressing criminality and improving employability. They tackle issues such as disclosing criminal convictions, managing debt and overcoming alcohol and drug dependency with the aim of moving clients towards finding and keeping work. We run many of these services in partnership with other agencies.

► *"We enjoy a successful partnership with Apex. The vast majority of Apex placements have proved successful with candidates going on to secure continued employment with us."*

Marks and Spencer (Marks and Start)

Our services reflect the evolving needs of clients and the outcomes required by funders. More than simply relying on past successes, we use the lessons learned to continue improving. We do this by actively listening and responding to clients and funders.

The world of work has changed considerably during the last year and, with the sharp increase in employment rates, the task of placing those furthest from the labour market has become much more challenging. However, with over 20 years of experience working across Scotland, we are optimistic that we can help to create opportunities and change lives for the better.

Partnership approaches

Working with partners is a tried and tested way to add value and extend our reach. There are many examples of such collaboration across the country. For example, we work within the Glasgow Community Safety Partnership Employability Team to provide an employability service to service users completing Community Service Orders. We continue to work in West Dunbartonshire Council's Criminal Justice Team in the Fiscal Work Orders pilot scheme.

Through Open Futures (with Enable Scotland and Renfrewshire Association for Mental Health) we offer a specialist employability service for those with multiple barriers. The Moving On programme in Stranraer helps people to address personal barriers to employability. Funding from the Adult Literacy Network meant the team could set up the Lunchbytes drop-in combining Apex services with those of adult literacy and partner organisations. The Aberdeen team, in partnership with Aberdeen Foyer, held



an employer day providing information to dispel the myths around employing people who are on methadone programmes. And in the Borders, Get Ready For Work clients are working with local churches to improve their grounds and fabric; they are hoping to take over an allotment to grow produce to be donated to the church for distribution.

Reducing barriers

Funded by Fairer Scotland and the European Social Fund, Working for Families in Dundee brings agencies together to support people who find childcare a barrier to gaining and staying in employment. The project had an incredibly successful year, exceeding all targets by a considerable margin. This allowed us to offer more lone parents, parents on low income and those who may have an offending background, financial help, childcare, employability training and benefits advice and support.

Preventative measures

Several of our programmes focus on prevention and early intervention. A good example of this is the work we have done in Dunfermline High School introducing pupils who are excluded, or are at risk of exclusion, to techniques and coping strategies to increase their awareness of the negative impact of their behaviour, acknowledge authority figures and learn how to improve reactions to conflict.

► *“Over the last two years, the exclusion rate from Dunfermline High School has reduced by a remarkable 72% due to the effect of our Apex Inclusion Unit where considerable efforts have been focused on proactive rather than reactive work with particular pupils.”*

**Rector of Dunfermline High School
at school prize giving**

Meanwhile, in Lothian, we piloted the Directions programme aimed at 16 to 20-year-olds in partnership with CLAN (City Literacy and Numeracy). Funded by the Scottish Government, the programme targeted young people who wanted to improve their literacy skills and who were also facing other difficulties. All participants moved on to further education or training as a result.

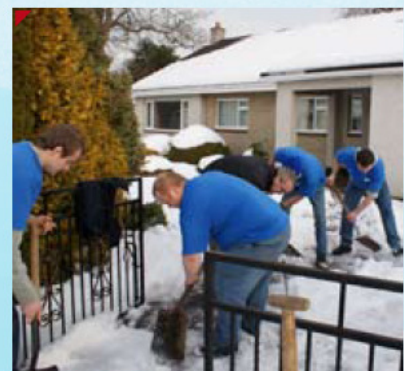
We are now an operating authority for the Duke of Edinburgh award scheme with a licence to offer the award to young people. It gives us more opportunities to work with disadvantaged young people and those excluded from mainstream provision.

Inside outside

Through our unique partnership with Abriachan Forest Trust, clients have the chance to work outside on projects such as building mountain bike tracks, paths, an outdoor classroom, bothy and children's play area. The benefits are many, both to the individuals involved and the local community. We also rallied a team who cleared snow for vulnerable people trapped in their homes during the bad weather.

Flying down to Rio

Apex Scotland has developed a very successful partnership with Street Soccer Scotland with the Apex Scotland team recently winning the national seven-a-side tournament of the Homeless World Cup at Toryglen watched by Justice Minister, Kenny MacAskill and Gordon Smith, former Chief Executive of the Scottish Football Association. One of our P2W clients has been selected to play for Scotland at this year's Homeless World Cup in Rio de Janeiro.

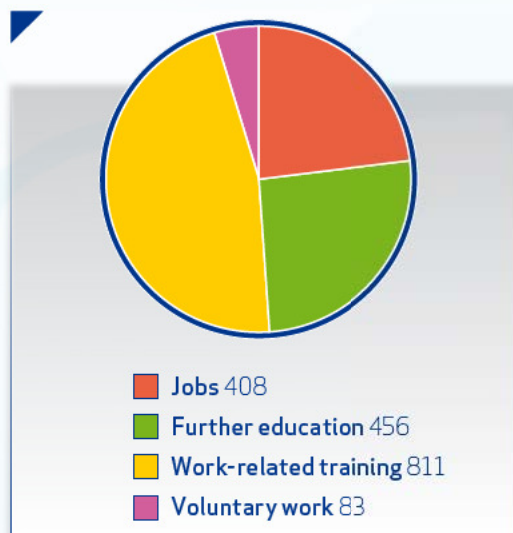


An outcomes approach

A place at college,
a decent job, staying
out of trouble: positive
outcomes for our
service users.

Counting successes

During the year, we dealt with 5,874 referrals resulting in 3,351 starts (57%). Of these, 1,758 (52%) achieved a positive outcome.



Results for referrers and funders

Positive feedback from referrers and funders indicates that 92% of survey respondents are either satisfied or very satisfied with our services.

- ▶ *"Apex has consistently achieved the targets set and provides excellent value for money"*
- ▶ *"Apex makes a significant contribution to changing the lives of the service users they work with"*

Results for clients

Similarly, our annual client survey tells us that we are on the right track. Clients were overwhelmingly positive about the quality of our training and the progress they had made.

- ▶ *"My time at Apex has been brilliant. They've helped me to get a place at college, something I never thought would happen"*
- ▶ *"I'm a different person since going to Apex - thanks to the help I got I've now got a job doing something I enjoy"*

Exceeding targets

We continued to be the largest provider of the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) progress2work initiative in Scotland, working with people who have stabilised their substance misuse to prepare them for work. We exceeded targets, securing jobs, further education or training places for over 62% of those involved. Similarly, although not a condition of Supervised Attendance Orders, Apex has a good record in helping clients find work or training. This year we supported 77% more people than we were contracted for with 66% successfully completing their order.



Our Employment and Guidance service for those on community sentences supported almost double the number than contracted and exceeded our positive outcome target by 83%.

Building new lives

Working with HMP Edinburgh, we prepared individuals approaching their release dates for jobs in the construction industry. The initiative was so popular that we worked with over three times as many people as originally planned and achieved 96% of our into jobs target.

Apex talks money

We were delighted to be one of only four organisations selected by the DWP from 70 applications to pilot financial capability activities. The pilots will run across three sites. So far, work has included designing and distributing a financial capability manual for offenders and introducing specialist interventions in partnership with the Chartered Institute of Bankers and their Financial Education Partnership.

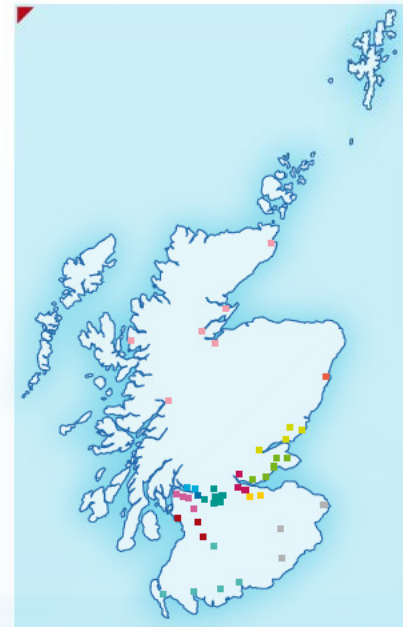
Hearts and minds

We affiliated with the British Heart Foundation Heartstart programme with the dual benefit of training clients in resuscitation/recovery methods and improving their self-esteem and communication skills. In the first year, 38 staff trained as trainers who then went on to train 152 clients.

changinglives

"I was in and out of prison for about 30 years but there was no Apex at that time. Then I got a four-year sentence and then a six-year sentence and when I got out I got in touch with Apex and I have not looked back because it has kept me out of trouble and helped me with my life and made me stay out of prison. It has helped me with my reading and writing and helped teach me how to use a computer. They have helped me a lot with how to say no to my old pals who take drugs and learned me not to do daft things. It has also learned me how to help other people and help my family. Without Apex I think I would be dead now because of all the drugs I used to take and then that would lead me back in to my old ways and dealing again. I've also got my own house now and speak to all my neighbours. My worker at criminal justice is really pleased with me and everyone says they can see the difference. For the first time in my life I don't want to go back to prison."

Our locations



- Ayrshire
- Borders
- Dumfries and Galloway
- Dunbartonshire
- Edinburgh and Lothian
- Fife
- Forth Valley
- Glasgow
- Grampian
- Highland
- Lanarkshire
- Paisley and Inverclyde
- Tayside



Lasting value

Providing long-term value relies on contented and committed staff. So we take great care to look after our employees and volunteers through supportive management and ongoing professional training. Their loyalty is evident with 13 staff receiving a 10-year service award and one celebrating 20 years with us.

We are heartened by the results of this year's staff survey which suggest that people enjoy working for us.

98% think that Apex is a people friendly organisation

96% would recommend Apex as an employer

► *"The most enjoyable part is the positive interaction with clients and playing an active role in their development"*

► *"I feel very much valued and appreciated by both colleagues and management"*

Investing in our people

In 1993, we were one of the first third sector organisations to become an Investor in People (IiP) in Scotland. We now join a select group of a hundred organisations, representing businesses of all sizes and sectors in the UK, which have retained the award for 15 years or more.

Providing job opportunities

We have been actively involved in the Future Jobs Fund recruiting 23 employees through the scheme. Most have been aged 18 to 24, and this has been the first opportunity they have had to work in the voluntary sector. Many are keen to pursue careers in the social care field.

Sound in body

Healthy staff means a healthy organisation. Thanks to a successful bid to the DWP Health, Work and Wellbeing Challenge Fund, we were able to train two members of staff in each of our units in auricular acupuncture, the practice of inserting and manipulating fine needles into the earlobe to relieve stress, insomnia and anxiety. DWP regarded our bid as the most innovative in the UK and it was the only one

to receive two years' funding. The scheme, 'Apex Detox', is extremely popular with staff and service users who say they have benefited enormously from the regular sessions. We also signed up for the Scottish Government/NHS Healthy Working Lives programme. Providing fresh fruit, improving fitness, reducing smoking and changing our drug and alcohol policy were just some of the ways in which we achieved a Bronze Award. We are now heading for a Healthy Working Lives Silver Award.

Working together for a positive future: this year's staff conference

Our annual staff conference focused on our Strategic Plan for 2010-2013. Our whole staff team along with Board members were involved in developing the Plan and this was reflected in the extent to which they participated in the day.

Reaping the rewards

Congratulations to the Apex Highland team which won the **Sam Dow Memorial Award** on two counts. It successfully introduced a new learning resource centre into the unit to support those with literacy issues; the team also worked with service users to build a bothy in the Arbrachan forest resulting in a valuable amenity for the local community as well as drystone dyking qualifications and the John Muir Trust Award for service users.

Hats off to Apex Forth Valley, winners of the **Betty Crawford Memorial Award** for its Alloa Youth Elite (AYE) initiative. A partnership between ourselves and Alloa Youth Justice and funded by YouthLink/Cashback for Communities, AYE targets persistent young offenders supporting them into education or training in construction, motor mechanics and horticulture.



changinglives

"Before I went to Apex I'd had a lot of bad experiences with training. I'd got nothing from it and was as far from getting a job as ever. I knew my past behaviour didn't help – I'd been in trouble since I was 14 – but I didn't think the help I was getting was making any difference. I didn't hold out much hope when I went to Apex but they were really good with me from the start. They treated me as a person and really took an interest in finding out about me and encouraging me. I was never any good at school but they told me about courses that I could do at college and helped me get on a computer course. I've been working now for four months and feel I've turned a corner. I know a lot of the changes in my life are down to me but I wouldn't have been able to get where I am now without Apex helping."

Helping, Holding, Hurting: Recalling and Reforming Punishment: the Apex Scotland Annual Lecture

To what extent have we learned the lessons of Scotland's penal history in light of the reforms contained in the Criminal Justice and Licensing (Scotland) Bill? This was the question our guest speaker, Fergus McNeill, Professor of Criminology and Social Work at the University of Glasgow asked at our popular Annual Lecture.

► *"I consider it a real honour to deliver this year's Apex Lecture. In part, this is because this is such a distinguished and esteemed audience and one which has heard from many distinguished and esteemed people in previous Apex Lectures. But perhaps more importantly, it is also because of the opportunity that it affords me to let other, perhaps less distinguished and less esteemed – but no less important – voices be heard at a key point in Scotland's penal development."*

Professor Fergus McNeill speaking at the 2009 Apex Scotland Lecture



Planning for a positive future

Our main focus for the year ahead is on our “positive future” approach.

This is modelled on tackling all the factors which inhibit people from getting and keeping work. It is a fresh approach to designing, commissioning and delivering services, based on all the factors in clients’ lives including housing, benefits, literacy and so on. It means focusing on the most pressing needs first with a view to a long-term positive future.

Over the next year we will continue to focus on value, quality and outcomes by:

- Expanding schools inclusion and youth services activity
- Strengthening our work with women offenders
- Contributing to the design and delivery of Community Payback Orders
- Participating in the delivery of the Government’s new Work Programme
- Providing accredited training for Apex managers jointly with the Scottish Prison Service
- Continuing to explore opportunities for shared services with other agencies, including our strategic partnership with Sacro
- Developing our information security systems and policies to meet the compliance requirements of funders

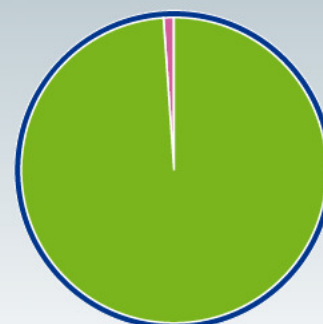


ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

1 April 2009 to 31 March 2010

Expenditure

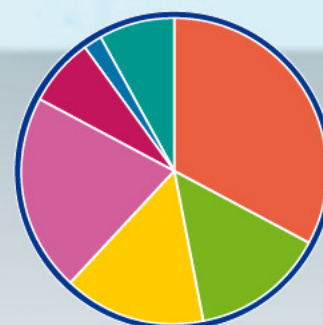
2009/10 Total expenditure £4,771,971
2008/09 Total expenditure £4,923,033



Employability training 99%
Governance costs 1%

Income

2009/10 Total income £4,554,334
2008/09 Total income £5,017,770



Local authorities 33%
Scottish Government 14%
Enterprise Network 15%
Jobcentre Plus 21%
Big Lottery Fund 7%
European Social Fund 2%
Other 8%

Auditor: Henderson Loggie Full audited accounts are available from Apex Scotland.

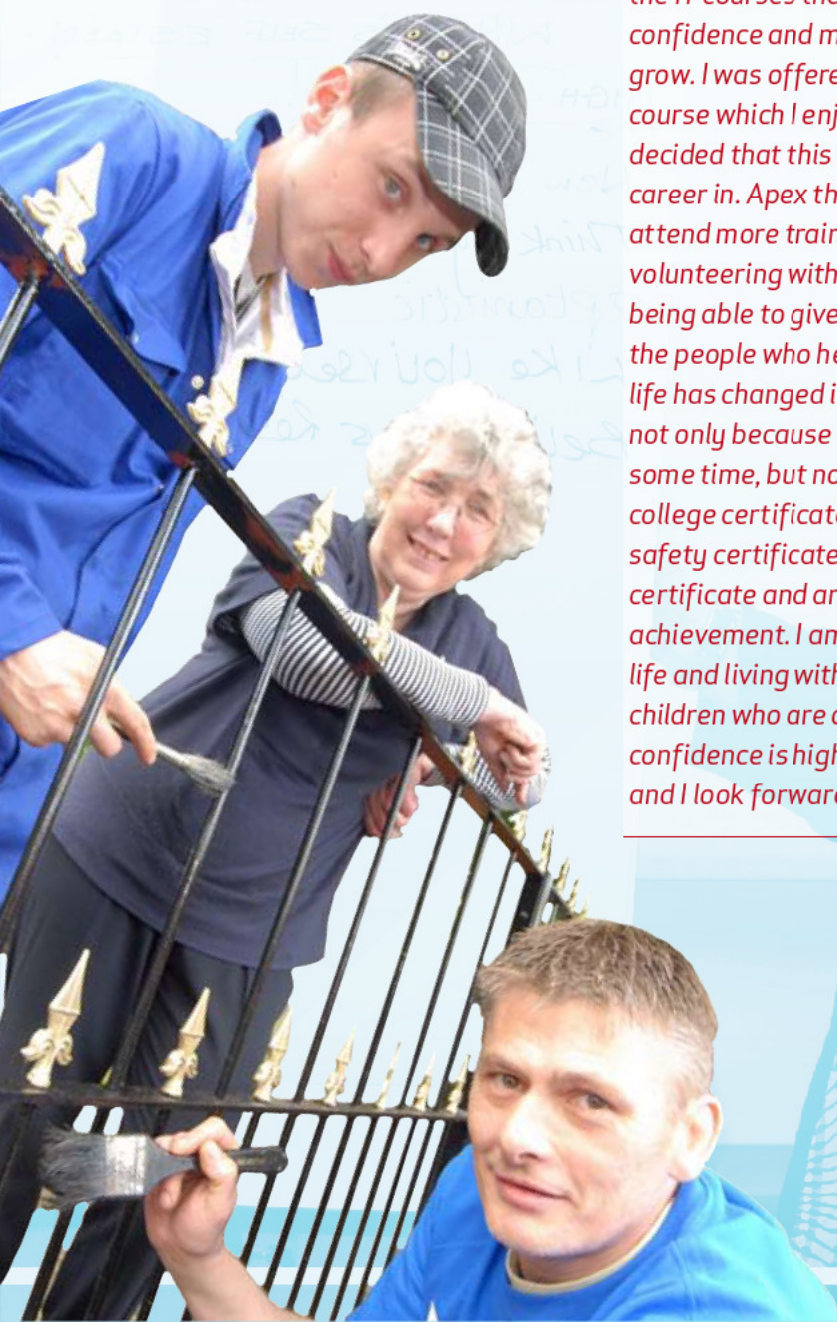
All locked up

In response to the demands of funders, we are reviewing our information security systems and have begun to introduce enhanced information security integration into every aspect of our business consistent with ISO 27001 compliance and risk analysis and countermeasures against information workflows. This will meet the demands of DWP and make Apex ready for the changing demands of other public bodies.

changinglives

"Once I started abusing heroin, my confidence and wellbeing were soon destroyed. From then on I started to get a criminal record and lost my job as a care worker. I was soon referred to Apex for a Supervised Attendance Order. I always enjoyed the workshops but never really applied myself until the drug use nearly took my life. It was after this that I realised that I had to change my lifestyle. Apex played a big part in that. Through the IT courses that I attended, my confidence and motivation started to grow. I was offered a health and safety course which I enjoyed so much that I decided that this was what I wanted a career in. Apex then allowed me to attend more training. I am now volunteering with Apex and enjoying being able to give something back to the people who helped me so much. My life has changed in the past three years, not only because I have been clean for some time, but now I have a recognised college certificate, two health and safety certificates, a health and hygiene certificate and an adult learning achievement. I am now very settled in life and living with my partner and his children who are all very supportive. My confidence is higher than it's ever been and I look forward to a brighter future."

We would like to thank all our funders and partners for their invaluable support





apex

scotland

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engage **inspire** **improve** **sustain**

Apex Trust Scotland also known as Apex Scotland is a charitable organisation and is recognised by the Inland Revenue as a Scottish charity No SC023879 at 9 Great Stuart Street, Edinburgh EH3 7TP.