I am delighted to have the opportunity to introduce the Development Trust’s Annual Report, for 2017/18, and to thank you for your support of the University.

I’ve met many members of the University of Aberdeen community since taking up my role in August, and hope to meet many more over the coming months. Together, we have an important role to play to ensure that we continue to flourish as the open and free space for learning that Bishop Elphinstone imagined when he set down his founding charter back in 1495. His ambition was to create a university which would be open to all and dedicated to the pursuit of truth in the service of others. That continues to be as true today as it was more than 500 years ago.

Attending the University as an undergraduate student was a completely transformative experience for me and it is an opportunity I am passionate about extending to as many people as we can. In today’s language, being ‘open to all’ translates to an inclusive university that enables its students to reach their full potential.

I have been impressed not only by the quality but by the breadth of work undertaken at Aberdeen. And I am thrilled we have been recognised as the Scottish University of the Year in The Times and Sunday Times Good University Guide 2019.

Of course, the University could not achieve any of this or continue to innovate without you – our alumni, supporters, partners and friends. Please enjoy this annual report. And thank you again for all that you do to support our work.

Professor George Boyne
Principal and Vice-Chancellor
Our Research

Different Singing Memories
In March 2018 four novice singers gave it their all at an event organised by long-term supporter Charlie Bain in aid of the University’s dementia research. The four brave performers included Charlie himself along with Carol Benzie, Sylvia Halkerston and Bob Keiller. They all received a crash singing course from the University’s composer-to-royalty Professor Paul Mealor and Dr John Hudson and on the night their performances helped raise over £60,000.

Charlie and his wife Carol have organised a number of events to support the University’s dementia research since their 2012 Funny Memories event and have now raised over £210,000 for cutting-edge equipment and a PhD studentship dedicated to dementia research. Both of their fathers succumbed to dementia within weeks of each other and this spurred the couple on to make a difference in the fight against this horrible disease.

Northern Picts Project
Development Trust and Alumni Relations staff experienced a team away day with a difference in the summer to see first-hand the impact donors have had on archaeology research at the University. They scaled the dizzy heights, all 294m, of Tap o’ Noth near Rhynie in Aberdeenshire, to view the second highest Iron Age hillfort in Scotland. The team were ably led by Head of Archaeology, Dr Gordon Noble, whose Northern Picts project includes excavations of a major and undocumented Pictish royal centre at Rhynie. The project, which aims to uncover the archaeological traces of the Picts, a ‘lost people of Europe’ in northern Scotland, has been ongoing since 2012 and has met with some spectacular successes including the discovery of a significant portion of a major Pictish silver hoard at Gaulcross, also in Aberdeenshire.

1: Different Singing Memories
2: Northern Picts - Tap o’ Noth
Gifts in Wills

Throughout the University’s 523 year history, gifts in wills have been crucial to enable our ongoing development. We would like to thank every single person who has pledged to make such a significant commitment as well as those who support them including family and executors.

The University received an exceptionally generous anonymous gift in a will to support the study of Chinese culture and civilisation. It has enabled the University to fund a lectureship post in Chinese Archaeology held by Dr Joshua Wright. Dr Wright, who received his PhD in Anthropology from Harvard University and MPhil from Cambridge University, has carried out field research in several regions of China and Eurasia. His current research focuses on the economic and political landscapes of the Liao Dynasty and the Eurasian Bronze Age. He lectures on East Asian prehistory and heritage and is an Honorary Curatorial Fellow of the University Museums working towards using the Asian collections in teaching and exhibitions. The bequest also included more than 70 volumes on Asian art and archaeology which were added to the holdings of the University’s Museums & Special Collections, enabled the purchase of further volumes on Asian archaeology and prehistory and supported student participation in field expeditions to Mongolia.

A New Approach to Women’s Health

With the support of donors from around the world the University of Aberdeen is aiming to help women live healthier, happier and longer lives by vastly enhancing our research capability in the area of women’s health.

Eighty years after Professor Sir Dugald Baird transformed reproductive healthcare services in Aberdeen, the University is taking inspiration from his innovative work with plans for a new Centre for Women’s Health Research well underway. It will be based in the new Baird Family Hospital which will provide fantastic facilities to help us advance our pioneering research.

1: Her Excellency Dr Sheikha Aisha Bint Faleh Al Thani 2: Student Field Expedition, Mongolia
The Centre was launched by Her Excellency Dr Sheikha Aisha Bint Faleh Al Thani, chairperson and founder of Al Faleh Educational Group in Qatar, during an official visit to Aberdeen in March 2018 and has already received hugely generous support from Sir Dugald’s son and daughter-in-law Euan and Angelica.

A number of awareness raising events have been held in the UK and overseas while the 2017 Ladies’ Lunch raised over £7,400 with guests hearing about our exciting plans to transform the care of women and their children in Scotland and across the world.

Benefactor to the University Award

Sir Gerald H Elliot FRSE, renowned Scottish businessman and honorary graduate of the University, received the Benefactor to the University Award at a private celebration with family at the New Club in Edinburgh in December 2017 in recognition of his philanthropic giving.

Sir Gerald has since sadly passed away but through the Binks Trust, the Elliot family’s charitable foundation, he provided exceptional support for the University via generous donations to a range of major projects including the Sir Duncan Rice Library and an ambitious research initiative within the School of Engineering. Binks Trust funding will enable at least 15 visiting fellows to collaborate with some of the world’s top engineering institutions.

Staff Giving

We could not be happier that more and more University staff are getting involved in fundraising for the University’s medical research. In March 2018 Student Support Assistant, James Power (aka Séamus McSpud), along with his friend David Harrison, raised £1,300 for Chloe’s Fund by taking on the impressive challenge of cycling 100km and climbing Ben Nevis, all the while dressed as leprechauns and carrying their inflatable friend Paddy.

Both James and David’s families have been affected by cystic fibrosis and during a visit home to Ireland, James devised how he could assume the character of Séamus to raise awareness while raising funds – and raise awareness and funds they certainly did as they were cheered all the way from Inverness to Fort William.

Chloe’s Fund was established by Professor Tom Baxter and his wife Grace to support the research being undertaken at the University after they lost their daughter Chloe to cystic fibrosis. Thanks to donor support our researchers are making great strides in their efforts to improve the treatment of cystic fibrosis and ultimately to help find a cure.
Our Heritage and Culture

Dr Joan MacCormack Lecture Series

The third lecture in the biennial Dr Joan MacCormack Lecture Series featured as part of this year’s May Festival. Professor Jane Ohlmeyer, Erasmus Smith’s Professor of Modern History at Trinity College, Dublin delivered a fascinating lecture entitled *India and Ireland: Connected Imperial Pasts* to a rapt audience. The Dr Joan MacCormack Lecture Series, made possible through a generous donation, was established in memory of a former colleague and leading light in cultural history, Dr Joan MacCormack. The next lecture in the Series, designed to ensure that Joan’s dedication and passion for teaching, learning and collaboration continues, takes place in 2020 when Professor Alexandra Walsham, Professor of Modern History at Trinity College, Cambridge will take the floor.

King’s College Chapel

Many of our donors give to the University in memory of someone special. We recently received a generous donation from Dr Campbell Murray who commissioned a wedding table for King’s College Chapel in memory of his wife Flora Gow Murray. Dr and Mrs Murray were married in the Chapel in 1956 and the wedding table will hold an engraved plaque commemorating Mrs Murray and their marriage. It was installed during a memorial and dedication service attended by Dr Murray and his close family in March.

Rediscovering Mysterious Hidden Gems

A set of five large paintings of Old Testament scenes which, until recently, were completely hidden, are now well on their way to being restored thanks to support from alumna and long-term benefactor to the University Anne Harper. Students, staff and visitors will soon be able to wonder at their beauty and fascinating but mysterious history as they are brought into the public domain and displayed at the Sir Duncan Rice Library. Often nicknamed ‘The Black Paintings’, they are now thought to have had key national political significance in the mid-1600s when King Charles II was living in Scotland. One painting is now fully restored and during a visit to the WASP Studios in Glasgow, Anne was told by artist and restorer Brian McLaughlin that they are thought to be the oldest oil paintings on canvas in Scotland (circa 1540). It is hoped that two paintings...
will return to the University early in 2019 with the others following in the summer.

**University of Aberdeen Chapel Choir**

Music is embedded in the history and culture of the University and dedicated support for our students, including the Chapel Choir, and our facilities helps maintain our national and international reputation.

Long-term supporters, Margaret Carlaw and Professor Derek Ogston, continue to enable students to benefit from amazing experiences, not just in Aberdeen but around the world. The Chapel Choir is able to travel to a wide range of events and perform under the Directorship of Professor Paul Mealor.

In July the Choir represented Scotland as part of the BBC Proms Youth Choir at the Royal Albert Hall and also performed at both Three Ships carol concerts in Aberdeen and London.

Professor of Composition, Paul Mealor, also continues to support students while building an international reputation as one of the greatest living composers. His work has been premiered around the world to great acclaim and he continues to be commissioned to perform for members of the Royal Family, with the Chapel Choir, including Her Majesty The Queen and TRH The Duke and Duchess of Rothesay.

1: Dr Campbell Murray and Family  
2: Three Ships Celebration of Carols
Cancer Research Programme

Over the past year a vast number of individuals, companies and organisations have supported the University’s Cancer Research Programme through donations, event participation or organising their own events to not only raise funds but to raise awareness.

With experts predicting that the number of people diagnosed with cancer will rise from one in three to one in two in the future, it has never been more vital to accelerate the University’s cancer research and every single person who has been involved in raising funds whether it has been £10 or £1 million, is making a difference.

Working in partnership with Friends of ANCHOR and The NHS Grampian Endowment Fund, both of whom have donated substantial funds, our research will be undertaken in both the new ANCHOR Centre and the Baird Family Hospital in Aberdeen. These two outstanding new facilities will provide fantastic opportunities for us to greatly enhance our cancer research capabilities, making sure that we improve how cancer is diagnosed and treated and, critically, discover more about how it can be prevented.

We have had so many people taking part in and organising community events this year with all of the following raising funds for our Cancer Research Programme.

In April, 23 members of staff and volunteer fundraisers took part in 5K and 10K races at Run Balmoral raising almost £6,000. This included a team from Anderson Anderson & Brown who took part for the second year in a row and raised over £1,100 and dedicated volunteer fundraiser Irene Black who raised approaching £1,500 for GASTROCAN by taking part for the sixth year in a row in memory of her husband Roy. Irene is an inspiration and has raised over £15,000 since 2013, not only by taking part in Run Balmoral but by organising events in her home town of Turiff.

In June, the Development Trust organised for staff and friends to take part in the Aberdeen Kiltwalk for the first time. The team raised almost £6,000 after walking distances of five, 14 or 26 miles along the Deeside Way.
In the Pink ladies raised £7,000 to support breast cancer patient care within the new Baird Family Hospital. This inspiring group organised a Bubbles, Boobs ‘n’ Bakes Afternoon Tea raising an amazing £7,000 in memory of their dear friend, Margaret Adams, who founded and led the group for years.

In May an intrepid group of staff and friends undertook one of the most gruelling challenges in the UK by cycling the North Coast 500 trail. This saw the group tackling a number of the toughest roads in the UK while raising almost £30,000 as well as holding awareness raising events. To support this feat, medical students took on their own challenge by doing the notorious three peaks challenge in three different countries in under 24 hours and raising £5,272.

Further staff support came when a team from the dental and medical schools got very cold and very muddy doing the Beast Race and raising over £700.

Think Pink supporters in Mintlaw in Aberdeenshire organised a ladies’ lunch and raised over £3,000 by having great fun with a disco and various entertainers.

Also this year, another outstanding fundraising feat was achieved when cancer survivor Geraldine Emslie and her husband Jim completed their 1,048 mile cycle challenge from Land’s End to John O’Groats in just 17 days raising over £2,200.

Outwith community fundraising we have been fortunate to receive very generous support from the Baxter Foundation while guests at a number of University events, such as the 2017 Three Ships Celebration of Carols in London and the world premiere of Professor Paul Mealor’s Requiem: The Souls of the Righteous, were extremely supportive when collections were taken.

We cannot thank donors to our Cancer Research Programme enough – you truly will help to save lives.
Our Students

**Student Perspective**

“Aberdeen University Students’ Association (AUSA) wishes to thank all the donors who support our students through the University of Aberdeen Development Trust. Your generous donations have continued to support and empower our students in diverse and positive ways. Previous and recent testimonies from Societies and Sports Clubs that have benefitted from your kind donations show that student experience has seen significant improvement and it is definitely worth mentioning that by your philanthropic gestures, you all inspire in us a crucial culture of giving back to the community and society. This marries with the University’s purpose of being “open to all in the pursuit of truth for the good of others.” So again, on behalf of all students, I want to thank you.”

**Lawson Ogubie**, Student President
Aberdeen University Students’ Association

**Life-changing Scholarships**

US-based businessman Dave Cormack, his wife Fiona and their family established the Cormack Family Charitable Foundation to support a large variety of charities around the world and recently gifted over £270,000 to the University to establish the Cormack Family Foundation Scholarship Programme. This is enabling talented and aspirational students from widening access backgrounds to realise their dreams by studying medicine or business courses at Aberdeen.

“It was a huge relief when I found out I had been chosen for the scholarship. This will allow me to study effectively without too much worrying about money. I’ll now be able to focus on my ambitions to work in acute medicine and come out of university with the best degree possible.”

**Sebastian Siegrist**, 1st year medical student

**Celebrating Corporate Scholarships**

The Development Trust’s annual Corporate Scholars’ Reception takes place to recognise the vital support of our corporate partners and to celebrate the success of the scholarship programme.

Our event this year was hosted by the Senior Vice-Principal, Professor Mike Greaves who welcomed speakers Kathryn Neale from Nexen and Sean Clark who benefits from a Repsol Sinopec scholarship. Nexen is a long-term supporter of University scholarships and the company also regularly supports TAU Racing, a team of engineering students who take part, very successfully, in a global student engineering and racing competition.
Regular Giving –
The Difference You Make

Every year the Development Trust receives significant cumulative support from donors around the world who give regularly.

Often they have re-engaged with the University and our students through our alumni telephone campaigns which enable us to establish, maintain and renew the support of our alumni community. The 2017-18 telephone campaign was a huge success, running for nine weeks and raising a total of £271,510. The funds raised supported scholarships, areas of greatest need, student experience, women’s health research and our Cancer Research Programme. Forming a life-long relationship with our graduates and providing them with the opportunity to give back is vitally important to the Development Trust and contributes to the ongoing success of the University.

Thanks to our regular givers, an extensive range of student projects have benefitted over the past year.

The Aberdeen Law Project (ALP) continues to reduce the gap in access to justice for the community of Aberdeen, including students. The society was awarded funding for their project, Casus Omissus or “gap in the law”, which supports individuals who cannot afford to seek legal advice and may not be able to obtain legal aid. One of ALP’s volunteers successfully defended a client against a £3,000 claim which would not have been possible without the Development Trust’s funding.

“The practical experience gained by the student volunteers is second-to-none thanks to this funding. It provides real experience of the law, and how it works, and has made a significant difference to those we set out to help.”

Laila Kennedy, Bachelor of Laws student and ALP Treasurer

1: Dave & Fiona Cormack and Dr Sarah Cormack-Patton with Scholars
2: Student Callers
3: TAU Racing
The Antibiotic Guardian Conference & Awards 2018 hosted by Public Health England saw undergraduate medical student Euan Carter shortlisted in the Student of the Year category for his work on various public engagement projects on the topic of antibiotic resistance. Funding enabled Euan to represent the University and present his poster at the conference as well as attend the awards ceremony. He won the Highly Commended Award in the Student of the Year category and met with Professor Dame Sally Davies whose book inspired him to choose his field.

“I got to meet some great people in the field, including Prof Dame Sally Davies which was special to me as her book was what first got me interested in the area. In the end I won an award, and got to go up on stage to receive it which was a lovely bonus.”

Euan Carter, 5th year medical student

‘Spotlight on Her’ was a three-day event held to celebrate female performers. It was organised to coincide with International Women’s Day in March. The event, which took place in various venues, was supported by regular donors and consisted of performances and workshops. It enabled top-class, professional performers to come to the city, not only to perform, but to allow people to take part and learn from their expertise, ultimately enabling participants to develop their own performance. The majority of it was free, making it extremely accessible to many of our students and the wider community. Events such as this greatly add to the cultural life of the University and the city and funding ensured that this event was of an extremely high quality, therefore attracting sizable audiences.

Sporting Success

Thanks to our donors, Development Trust Sports Bursaries provided support for a total of 20 students in 2017/18. Support included cash awards, Aberdeen Sports
Village membership and access to training, physiotherapy, seminars, yoga and exclusive training kit.

Highlights from their achievements included the selection of Kelsey Stewart, a third year Exercise and Health Science student, for the Women’s 4 x 400m Relay Team Scotland squad at the Commonwealth Games held on Australia’s Gold Coast in April 2018 and second year engineering student Kim Beattie taking silver as part of the GB team in the double mini trampoline event at the FIG Trampoline Gymnastics World Championships in Sofia, Bulgaria in November 2017.

The new John Robertson Sports Scholar, Francesca Butler, takes up the baton from former scholar and international athlete Zoey Clark. Francesca, studying for a degree in Geology and Petroleum Geology, has played hockey for England U17 and competed for the University of Aberdeen Ladies 1s at the Scottish Universities International Tournament in Belfast in April. Her ultimate ambition is to represent Scotland at the Commonwealth Games.

**Jazz Afternoon Tea**

In March the Alumni Relations team held a Jazz Afternoon Tea in conjunction with the Alumnus Association at Elphinstone Hall which raised over £3,000 towards the University of Aberdeen Alumnus Association Scholarship. Since 2012 this scholarship has supported four students and guests were delighted to hear from one of their scholars, Mirshad Ahani, who talked about the impact the scholarship has had on his studies. Mirshad graduated in June with a first class honours Bachelor of Laws and it is wonderful to know that the scholarship is helping students like Mirshad to achieve their academic ambitions.

**Santander Mobility Awards**

University of Aberdeen staff and students continue to benefit from Santander Mobility Awards and Scholarships. This initiative, inspired by Santander’s aspiration to be useful to the communities they serve, has this year allowed 8 staff and 8 students to gain international experience in Germany, Spain, USA, China, Poland, Singapore, Argentina, Mexico, Russia and Italy. In addition, Santander International Postgraduate Scholarships 2018 has enabled students from Russia and Colombia to study in Aberdeen.

**Aberdeen Boat Race**

Thanks to the continued support of Aberdeen Standard Investments the Aberdeen Boat Race took place in March with the University of Aberdeen up against their annual rivals Robert Gordon University. In 2017’s nail–biting race, the University of Aberdeen clinched victory, winning by four lengths and ending RGU’s five-year winning streak. However, 2018 saw RGU triumph again by two lengths, making the 2019 University of Aberdeen team more determined than ever to succeed.
University of Aberdeen Foundation

Established in 1994 by a dedicated group of alumni, the University of Aberdeen Foundation is a 501(c) 3 not-for-profit corporation, (EIN#52-1970587) dedicated to charitable and educational purposes. Donations to the Foundation are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law (US). Thanks to US donations to the Foundation, the University has benefited by receiving many generous grants in the past year.

www.abdn.ac.uk/giving/usa

The Foundation actively works with the University’s development team to advance University interests. This includes events such as The West in 2020: A View from Europe’s Past which was held at the Bipartisan Policy Center in Washington DC on Europe and America post Brexit and Points of Departure which was supported by Board member George Patton and held in Baltimore to celebrate over 30 years of the Aberdeen Summer Study Abroad Law Program. These special events do so much to raise the profile of the University in the USA and to forge the close relationship between the Foundation and the University.

The Findlay Walker Scholarship Program continues to support American students studying at the University of Aberdeen, and the Professor David Carey Miller Scholarship has been established in memory of one of the founders of the Law Summer School, which has attracted so many US students and faculty to Scotland.

#ABERDEEN IN AMERICA, Join us on the journey…

Founded in 1495, the University of Aberdeen is woven into the history of the United States. Aberdeen doctors, clergy, scientists and philosophers where a rich source of inspiration and ideas for the Founding Fathers and many others.

Today, with over 14,500 students from 120 countries, Aberdeen is welcoming more American students to Scotland than ever before, partnering with a record number of US universities and organisations and is proud to be The Times/Sunday Times “Scottish University of the Year”.

#ABERDEENINAMERICA aims to connect and strengthen ties with US alumni and friends through imaginative US partnerships.

To sign up for more details, email aberdeeninamerica@abdn.ac.uk, and follow us on Facebook (@AberdeenUniversityAlumni), Twitter (@AbdnUniAlumni) or Linkedin.

There are many ways to give in the US and to discuss your options please contact Brendan Doyle at brendan.doyle@chapel-york.com.

University of Aberdeen Foundation, 57 W 57th St, 3rd & 4th Floor, New York, NY 10019
Since 1982, the University of Aberdeen Development Trust has been proud to raise crucial funding to support the University’s global ambitions. Thousands of generous donors have come together to help us provide many millions of pounds towards the widest range of projects being undertaken by the University. These range from life-saving state of the art medical research to life-changing scholarships for students to life-enhancing projects many of which are carried out by staff and students in conjunction with other major institutes of academic learning around the world adding so much to the international reputation of the University, our community and the broader region.

During financial year 2017-18 the Trust received donations and legacies totalling £5.1M. We are so very grateful that through the generosity of our donors the Development Trust continues to have a major impact on the work of the University of Aberdeen. While the performance over the past 12 months is rightly a source of pride for both the Trust and our very valuable team, as Chairman I am committed that this should be regarded as a stepping stone towards a future major fund raising campaign under the leadership of our new Principal Professor George Boyne.

I would like to extend my grateful thanks to every donor who has offered their support both in personal time commitments as well as financial donations during the last year. It is truly inspiring to see the impact that our collective efforts have on the University, the city of Aberdeen and beyond. Every donation is crucial in helping us to support Aberdeen’s students, staff, the University estate, and world-leading research undertaken at the University of Aberdeen.

Thank you again most sincerely for your kind generosity.

Ms Anne Minto OBE
Chairman
WAYS TO GIVE

The University of Aberdeen has ambitious plans for 2018/19 and you are our way ahead. There are many ways to give including donating securely online, leaving a gift in your will or raising funds through your community.

We’d be delighted to speak with you about what you’d like to do or to give you more information about our ambitious plans so please contact us:

visit www.abdn.ac.uk/giving
telephone +44 (0)1224 272281
or email giving@abdn.ac.uk

Please look forward and give back to help shape the future of one of Scotland’s greatest pioneering institutions.

University of Aberdeen Development Trust
Powis Gate, College Bounds, Aberdeen, AB24 3UG, Scotland, UK
t: +44 (0)1224 272281
e: giving@abdn.ac.uk
www.abdn.ac.uk/giving

The University of Aberdeen Development Trust is a charity registered in Scotland, no. SC002938.