

Newsletter April 2017

VAO News & Services

School volunteer celebrations

Over the course of a school year, many pupils get involved with volunteering through Voluntary Action Orkney and the Saltire Award. Some of these young volunteers gathered at Stromness Academy and Kirkwall Grammar school to accept framed certificates of thanks on behalf of their respective schools this week.



Clockwise from top right: Isla Tait (Friday Friends at Eunson Kloss), Shannon Drever (Netball), Esme Andrews (Guides) and Kelly Budge (Guides, Sth Ronaldsay Church and Police Scotland) receive their Saltire Awards for volunteering; Stromness Academy; Kirkwall Grammar School; Jane Wishart volunteered at Stromness Primary School; The ROAR committee, comprising S6 pupils from KGS, raised a total of £985 for MacMillan Orkney and Home-Start Orkney at two events during the school year.

Top O' The Pops

A healthy turnout of around 80 folk squeezed into the Holm Hall games room for the Top o' the Pops concert on 30 March.

Organised by volunteers taking part in Voluntary Action Orkney's ROAR project, the whole night had a very youthful feel about it, with young acts outnumbering the old timers by 2 to 1 on the night. Hadrirgaan opened the evening, followed by old hands Saltfishforty, before Kayla and Samantha from the organising committee finished off the first half. A fine supper of home bakes, tea and coffee, and a good raffle ensued during the break. Into the second half and Holm's Connor Hancock played a set alongside Stella Kirkpatrick from Hoy. Rachel Hirst from the village was introduced as the only 100% Holm act of the evening, before veterans Hullion finished the evening off.



Each act had been tasked with performing a number one chart hit and all embraced the spirit of the evening with enthusiasm, with number ones from Elvis, Gloria Gaynor, Lorde and Britney Spears amongst others. Hullion's set consisted entirely of number ones, including a tune from Acker Bilk, A Beatles classic and 'Hello Dolly' featuring Billy Jolly.

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Lastly, a special mention to the young volunteers who ran the evening so well, organising the raffle, baking, taking tickets, setting the hall up, compering, running the kitchen, not to mention contributing so much to the music. Thanks to Ilona Foubister for her photos.

A total of £539 was raised for MacMillan Orkney.

Pictured: From top: Stella Kirkpatrick with Connor Hancock; Host, Sarah Firth; Rachel Hirst.



Local Third Sector News

Who's behind the Blue Door?



Macular Society

1 – 6 May

Junior InterCounty

8 – 13 May

Kirkwall City Pipe Band

15 – 20 May

Riding for the Disabled

22 – 27 May

Orkney Traditional Music Project

29 May – 3 June

Also in the news

Scouting Continues to Grow in Scotland

Scouts Scotland have recently announced that Scouting in Scotland has grown for the 11th year in a row! Total membership in Scotland now stands at 50,081, including 38,636 youth members and 11,445 adult volunteers. More adult volunteers have been recorded than ever before in their 110 year history, which includes a 9.1% increase in leaders who work directly with young people. Youth membership in Scotland has grown faster than the rest of the UK this year.



The Cub Scouts are the most popular section with 13,000 members, growing by an amazing 2.4% during the year of centenary celebrations. Explorer Scouts grew the fastest in the past year, with numbers increasing by 4.5%, showing that more young people are recognising the value of the skills for life that Scouting provides.

However, as Scouting continues to grow in popularity, so do waiting lists. Over 3,400 young people are now waiting to join, a figure larger than ever before and 9.4% higher than last year.

Although Scouting has an incredible number of adult volunteers across Scotland, the number of young people waiting to join means that they now need even more volunteers to lead groups and provide life changing opportunities for more young people. If you're interested in volunteering they would love to hear from you, click [here](#) to find out more.

Legislation & Guidance

Out of Harm Toolkit

The Out of Harm Tool Kit is a resource for family, teachers and other professionals who have contact with a young person they are worried about. The aim of this resource is not to teach you everything you need to know about self-harm, but instead to build confidence in approaching the issue with young people and laying the foundations for learning more about an individual's experiences.

The toolkit has been developed through a creative collaboration with young people from Penumbra's North Ayrshire Self Harm Project with experience of self-harm, therapeutic storyteller Wendy Woolfson, photographer Lisa Craig and illustrator Josie Valley. It consists of a conversation guide, a full toolkit with background information and links to further resources, photographs, films and stories. The Toolkit can be downloaded [here](#).

Get Informed – Social Investment for Boards campaign

The funding landscape for charities and social enterprises is changing and more are exploring social investment (repayable social finance) as an alternative tool to finance their organisations. Big Society Capital has launched the Get Informed–Social Investment for Boards campaign. The campaign aims to provide charity trustees and social enterprise non-executive directors with the essential knowledge they need to make informed decisions on social investment and support their social missions. Read more in [Third Force News](#).

How Community Development Happens

Community Development Association Scotland has published a new booklet 'How Community Development Happens: Why stronger communities matter and what it takes to develop them' which invites people to think about what it takes to develop and support stronger communities. It may be useful as an introductory guide in a wide variety of settings. Click [here](#) to read.

New Mental Health Strategy

Scottish Government have recently published their new ten-year Mental Health Strategy, which focuses on improving access to services and supporting earlier intervention. The strategy has steps to improve delivery of child and adolescent mental health services – including an audit to look at concerns over rejected referrals, and action taken as a result. Click [here](#) to view the strategy.

Funding & Finance

Comic Relief Community Cash

Comic Relief is working with Foundation Scotland to distribute £100,000 to support community groups across Scotland. The funding is aimed at small organisations that are working to help local people living disadvantaged or deprived areas in Scotland.

Grants of between £500 and £1,000 are available for projects that help people of all ages feel more included in their community, builds their skills and increases their sense of achievement.



Examples of eligible activities include:

- Parent and toddler groups.
- Dad and lads groups.
- Youth groups.
- Elderly groups.
- Community garden/in bloom groups.

Grants can support a wide range of costs, including running costs, project costs, or equipment. Only groups with an income of £100,000 or less in the previous financial year are eligible to apply. Click [here](#) for more information.

The deadline for applications is 5 May 2017.

Cycling UK – Big Bike Revival

The Big Bike Revival in Scotland is an initiative to support the Scottish Government's vision of 10% of journeys by bike by 2020. They are looking for 100 organisations across Scotland to run a range of Big Bike Revival events and led cycle rides that engage locals during May and June. Small grants of £1000 available until 2 June to help you deliver the following: opportunities to get bikes fixed, and people taught how to maintain them; events that showcase a range of bikes that meet different needs; cycle training to help people feel more confident to cycle on the road; led rides that help people find and use their local cycle paths and low traffic routes. Click [here](#) for more details.



Job opportunities



Connect Project Support Worker

VAO's Connect Project provides individually customised skills development, training and volunteering opportunities for young people aged between 15 and 21 who require more choices and more chances to support positive transitions from adolescence to adulthood. Young people are supported to build resilience, confidence and transferable skills through a range of one to one, group work, complementary activities and community participation.

The Project Support Worker will work closely with the Co-ordinator to devise and deliver a range of individual development opportunities including volunteer placements. You should have the ability to relate to young people and understand the issues that affect them and a flexible and sensitive approach to dealing with individual needs. You must be flexible, motivated and have the ability to work collaboratively within a small staff team. Click [here](#) for more information.

Fossil Centre Heritage Tearoom

The Heritage Tearoom at the Fossil Centre are looking for table waiters. If you're interested in joining their team, please contact [Tamsin](#) for more information.

Discharge and Care Co-ordinator

To work in partnership with statutory and third sector colleagues to explore all options to meet assessed care needs and create a safe package in a community setting. This will require the post holder to take a creative approach to ensure that Third Sector preventative health and social activities are fully integrated into the patient's discharge programme. Click [here](#) for more information.

Volunteering opportunities



Volunteer Receptionist needed

One of our volunteer receptionists at VAO is taking a sabbatical for a few months which means there will be a vacancy for a receptionist at VAO between May and September 2017. VAO are looking for someone who would be able to commit to volunteering every Wednesday afternoon between 12.30 and 5pm during that period.

Ideally the volunteer would have some admin skills and experience working with the public but VAO would train the right person and a full induction and ongoing support will be given to the successful applicant.

This would suit someone who is looking to update and enhance their skills in a customer facing environment and possibly someone who is looking to get back into the job market. If you think this is an opportunity that would suit you please contact [Peter Donald](#) or an informal chat on 872897.

VAO Trustee Vacancies

Due to rotational retirement VAO wishes to recruit at the AGM in June, 4 trustees to join our skilled and experience Board.

We require dynamic and motivated people who will contribute actively to the organisation at a time of change and opportunity by giving strategic direction, setting overall policy, evaluating performance and ensuring financial stability.

We are keen to have wide range of people on the Board representing the diversity of the local third sector

Nomination forms will be issued to members shortly along with notice of the AGM but for more information and an informal chat please contact [Gail Anderson](#) on 01856 872897.

For details of other volunteering opportunities, please visit the [VAO website](#) or contact [Rob](#) on 872897.

Have your say.....



National Awards for Play in Scotland

Could you be a Nancy Ovens Trust Award winner? The awards celebrate and encourage those providing stimulating and innovative play experiences for children. Winning an award is a great achievement and shows that you have raised the bar to make play an outstanding experience for children in your home, project or community.

The awards recognise the innovation in play in communities around Scotland. Individuals and community groups can now apply for awards in play at nursery and school, in the home, in the community and for positive support for play. Click [here](#) for more information.

Third Sector Forum



Thursday 18 May – Help to make the Forum relevant and effective for you

Following on from our recent survey, we have developed a new approach to facilitating a forum for the third sector in Orkney.

The forum's current role is to provide a platform for an independent network of third sector groups, facilitating a co-ordinated voice for Orkney's third sector, allowing all of us to have a stronger influence in the issues that affect our organisations and communities in Orkney.

The new approach does not seek to change this overall focus but to strengthen the process and to develop a range of options for organisations to link in to the forum. We also want to improve information flows across sectors and wider partnerships by taking into consideration:

- the diverse range of third sector groups,
- their interests and areas of work,
- their capacity to engage,
- alternate method(s) of communication and
- the range of strategic partnerships across Orkney that third sector organisations can support through collaboration and influence.

Membership is open to all third sector organisations, groups and volunteers across Orkney. We aim to increase the opportunity for groups to participate and would welcome those who have not previously attended the forum to become involved. We want to develop wider involvement through this revised structure, through electronic communication and by offering virtual links (skype and phone) to support Isles' engagement at meetings.

The first step in implementing this new approach is to hold an open event for all to attend, with facilitated sessions to get this up and running. The new structure will be reviewed after 12 months.

The event will take place on **Thursday 18 May** from 11- 3pm (venue to be confirmed) with light lunch provided. At this initial stage it is essential to get as broad attendance as possible, so we do hope you and your colleagues can come along, hear about the plans and help shape a Third Sector Forum for the future.

If you would like to attend please let [Cecily Cromby](#) on 873937 by Friday 5 May.

Education & Training



Domestic Abuse Training

10 – 11 May, Kirkwall

Aimed at frontline officers who deal with reports of domestic abuse, or with members of the public who may be affected by domestic violence or abuse. For more information or to book a place please contact [Lorraine](#) on 01856 873535 ext 2609.

Recognising and Realising Children's Rights training

Monday 15 May, 2.00 – 5.00, Kirkwall

The Recognising and Realising Children's Rights resource supports the development of rights-based values, attitudes, skills and practices among those adults working with young people in Youth Work.

The training is free but places are limit. For more information or to book a place please contact [Sarah Robertson](#) on 0131 313 2488.

Healthy Young Lives – Training for Trainers course

Tuesday 16th May, 10.00 - 3.30, Kirkwall

Healthy Young Lives is a half-day foundation workshop which aims to increase the knowledge and skills of youth work, social care and CLD staff around how they can promote healthy behaviours, encourage healthy lifestyles and help address the physical, social and emotional factors which impact on the health and wellbeing of young people with whom they work.

This Training for Trainers course will be of interest to youth work, social care, and CLD staff who have a training remit within their sector or organisation and who wish to deliver 'Healthy Young Lives' to others.

The course costs £35 (plus VAT) for YouthLink Scotland members and £50 (plus VAT) for non-members. Lunch is provided.

For more information or to book a place click [here](#) or contact [Sarah Robertson](#) on 0131 313 2488.

Orkney Minds: Eating Disorders

16 May 2017, 7-8pm, King Street Halls, Kirkwall

Orkney Minds would like to offer the opportunity for anyone with an interest in, or affected by an eating disorder, to get together informally over a cup of tea. This is to gauge interest in this area and discuss possibilities for the future.

Information from b-eats (an organisation which supports people with eating disorders) will be available on the night.

If you would like further information please contact edorkney@gmail.com

Dementia Awareness week: NHS workshop

30 May, Kirkwall

NHS professionals will be available at Gilbertson Day Centre on Tuesday May 30th 2017 between 3.30 and 5pm to provide sessions on practical positive strategies for dementia.

This will involve practical tips for personal care, oral care, sleep, medication, cognitive rehabilitation, aids and adaptations, speech and language and dietetic advice.

The sessions are designed for anyone who supports people with dementia – both in a personal or professional role.

The sessions will run at the same time but will be repeated 4 times to allow people to attend all sessions during the event. You are welcome to attend one or all sessions depending on your interests and needs. For more information please contact [Edwina](#) on 872897.

Ever thought of trying a session of philosophy?

18 May and 8 June, Kirkwall

Philosophy: *the rational investigation of the truths and principles of being, knowledge, or conduct or an attitude of rationality, patience, composure, and calm in the presence of troubles or annoyances.*

Want to find out more? Two trial sessions will be delivered at VAO on Thursday 18 May and Thursday 8 June from 5.30 to 7.00 each evening.

Philosophy offers a way to open up dialogue through enquiry and the exploration of ideas. Participants learn that their ideas have value, and that the ideas of others have value too. Through the Philosophical Community they realise that they don't always have to be right, but they gain the confidence to ask questions and learn through discussion.

Tutor, Emma Clements, head teacher at Shapinsay School, uses this process within school and also within the community. There is an adult group in Shapinsay called "Philosophy for Community" so it works well with adults too!

For more information or to book a place please contact [VAO](#) on 872897.

Focus on.....Young People's Befriending Project



This month VAO's Hannah Rendall tells us about the Young People's Befriending Project.

Please sum up the main role of your service

The Young People's Befriending Project aims to support young people across the county who are vulnerable or isolated for any number of reasons. Befriending is a special kind of intentional friendship between a young person and a trained volunteer, built on trust, mutual respect, shared interests and compatibility. Together the young person and befriender spend time trying out new activities, introducing each other to their own favourite hobbies and interests, and getting to know one another. The key role of the Befriender is to offer a consistent and steady support to the young person, whilst they both have fun together taking part in a variety of activities. We see time and time again how this support brings stability, confidence and value to the lives of our young people.

Now sum up in three words

Supporting. Encouraging. Equipping.

What are you working on just now?

We're in the midst of a really busy spell just now. We're writing our yearly reports to our two funders, we've recently finished training 5 new volunteer so are thinking through and organising their matches, and we are in the process of reviewing all of our active matches.

How many staff and volunteers does your organisation have?

There are 2 job-sharing Co-ordinators, myself (Hannah) and Morgan, and we currently have 16 volunteers either matched or awaiting matching.

Are you looking for volunteers? If so, who are you looking for?

We are always looking for volunteers! The wonderful people who give their time to the Project are the ones who are making the difference to our young people's lives! It's amazing how just a few hours a fortnight of a volunteer's time can make a real, lasting impact. We are planning to run another training course in just a few months' time, so we're looking for enthusiastic, friendly, and caring people who want to give some of their spare time to make a genuine difference in a young person's life. It's a great opportunity.

Roughly how many people use your service annually?

We work with between 15-20 young people a year, on average.

How long have you been operating in Orkney?

The Project was first launched in November 2007, so this year will see out 10th anniversary!

Please give an example of how your organisation has helped an individual service user

It is really rewarding when we see tangible changes and developments in our young people. When Jane was first matched, she was very nervous, anxious and uncomfortable in social situations. She was too nervous to get the bus to school so relied on private transport, and had very little social contact out with school. However within a few months of her match to Ola she was growing in confidence and boldness and trying out new activities. They hit it off immediately and have been meeting fortnightly ever since, taking part in a range of different activities, allowing Jane to build her confidence and self-esteem. Fast forward a year and she is now a changed young lady. She regularly takes the bus to college where she is thriving, has lots of friends, and is looking forward to the next chapter of life. She attributes much of her new found confidence to her friendship with Ola, even going as far as to say that if it weren't for Ola's patience and care in encouraging her to take the bus alone, she would have been unable to attend college and wouldn't now be taking these steps towards independence.

What one thing would you ask people to do that would have a positive impact on the work your organisation is involved with?

Easy! Come and join our team of volunteer Befrienders! They're a wonderful and welcoming bunch who are like-minded in their desire to give something back and to play their part. We regularly meet together as a group, either for lunch or dinner, or to take part in fun activities with our young people. Befriending isn't just about the 1-1 match between a young person and Befriender, it's also about being part of something bigger.

Where would you like to see your organisation in 5 years' time?

In 5 years we hope to still be here, working hard to change young people's lives for the better - equipping them with newfound skills and interests, encouraging them to reach that bit further and enjoying the privilege of seeing them grow in confidence and self-esteem and a greater understanding of their value.

What would you do with a donation of £1,000,000?

With £1,000,000 we would be thrilled to buy a building that we could use for activities for our matches and the community. We would love to have different rooms and studios where young people could develop and share new hobbies and interests, spend time with their Befrienders, and with their peers.



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