



Voluntary Action Orkney

AUGUST 2014

NEWSLETTER

Local News & Events

The Big Charity Do

The Big Charity Do took place in The Albert hotel on 31 July. Organised by The VAO ROAR group, the young

volunteers raised £688 to be shared between Crossroads Orkney and the Orkney Island Games Association. Many young volunteers also performed on the night, with

some bands formed especially for the occasion. Performers included Broken Stings, Free Beer, Hybrid Constellation, Kyan, Low n Co, No Soond and Rachel Hirst.



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'Future-proofing' the Neolithic Archaeology Galleries

Orkney Museum has recently launched a new project that will pilot the redesign of the interpretation and display in the Neolithic galleries. Orkney Islands Council would like to gather feedback from locals and visitors on the current display of its world-renowned Stone-Age artefacts and discover what they would like to see being developed.

It has been 30 years since the Neolithic galleries at Orkney Museum were last updated. Since then Archaeological excavations and research have led to significant changes in understand-

ing about Stone-Age life in Orkney, launching the Islands onto the world stage of Archaeological discovery.

Jenn Allison is the Museum's recently-appointed Archaeology Project Officer. She said: "We want displays to be able to reflect the amazing developments and discoveries to date, and to enable up to date stories well into the future, in a way that really engages our visitors.

"We would really like to

know what local people think of the current Neolithic Archaeology galleries at the Museum and what they'd like to see included as part of the improvements."

From the end of August and throughout September, Jenn will be conducting market research surveys to gather the thoughts and opinions of local people and visitors, including an online survey.

As part of this, she will be travelling with the Orkney Islands Council Library van service as well as conducting interviews in Kirkwall and Stromness town centres in coming weeks.

She also hopes to hold several focus groups to discuss in greater detail the poten-



tial developments of the new Neolithic galleries with local people who have a keen interest.

The online survey is available on the Council homepage www.orkney.gov.uk, along with details of the dates and locations of Jenn's interview sessions in the isles and in Kirkwall and Stromness.

To get hold of a paper copy of the survey, or to register your interest in taking part in

a focus group, contact Jenn at the Council on 01856 873535, extension 2522 or email jennifer.allison@orkney.gov.uk

Jenn is also looking for volunteers to help out by conducting market research surveys in their local area. Any amount of time anyone can give would be greatly appreciated. Perhaps, you would be interested in con-

ducting surveys among your friends and family? Or, conducting surveys in your community? Or perhaps, you work in a shop, visitor attraction or community centre, and would be happy to put surveys out for your customers and visitors to fill in? If you are interested in helping out, please contact [Rob](#) or [Fraser](#) at Voluntary Action Orkney on 01856 872897.

VAO News & Services

Dounby Show

A great time was had by all at this year's Dounby Show where VAO had a stall and a resident cow to promote volunteering opportunities.



Lunch Clubs Get Together in August @ VAO

Venivere, videre, edere (they came, they saw, they ate) – some of Orkney's Lunch Clubs organisers met this August to learn more about funding, clubs activities and the type of help that is available from VAO. The meeting

was very informal and our guest speakers were asked to share not only their professional insights but also more personal

things. Some of them were no doubt surprised when they were asked about their hobbies or things they hate doing. Nevertheless, all rose to the occasion and we now know a bit more about Caron (Age



Concern Orkney), Ann (Dementia Friendly Orkney), Rosemary (OIC), Lindsey (Adult Befriending Service, VAO) and Eve (Frozen Meals Service, OIC). All found the event very informative, useful and enjoyable and they left with lots of new connections and new ideas for future activities.

Community Planning Improvement Programme

VAO has been chosen as one of five Third Sector Interfaces (TSIs) to pilot the Community Planning Improvement Programme (CPIP). CPIP is funded by Scottish Govern-

ment and led by Voluntary Action Scotland and the Improvement Service.

The programme will involve a self-assessment process to a) improve TSI (ie VAO) and third sector engagement with community planning and b) to

develop tools and techniques that can be used to support the remaining 27 TSIs to undertake the programme in 2015-16.

The first part of the process will be to gather information from all community planning partners,

They came, they saw, they ate

VAO to pilot
Community
Planning
Improvement
Programme

including third sector organisations, which when analysed will identify those areas that we need to work on. Around the beginning of September the Improvement Service will send all partners, including VAO members and Third Sector Forum members, an online 'check list'. It is quite comprehensive and will take approximately one hour to complete so help is on hand if needed. The survey is anonymous and analysis will be carried out by the Improve-

ment Service. Once results have been compiled meetings will be held in Orkney to decide priorities and to agree by the end of December an improvement plan. From January to March 2015 the plan will be implemented and progress monitored. All partners will be kept informed and involved throughout the process.

This is an exciting opportuni-

ty to improve joint working between VAO, the third sector and Community Planning. VAO is currently recruiting a development worker to help to deliver the programme in Orkney, see Job Opportunities on page 5 for more details or visit the VAO [website](#).

More information about CPIP and the related Making Quality Count programme please contact [Gail](#) at or call 01856 872897.

Funding & Finance

The Funders are coming!

The Robertson Trust and the Big Lottery are coming to Orkney! The Robertson Trust will be here on **8 September**. It is anticipated that the session will fill up pretty quickly so if you are interested, please register your attendance with VAO as soon as you can.

The Robertson Trust's main priority areas are: Care; Health; Education & training;

Community arts; Community sport; Alcohol misuse; Criminal justice.

If you have a project that might fit into one of these themes why not come along and speak with the funder directly? The session will be in the VAO offices from 10:00am. There will be a short presentation by the Robertson Trust on their activities and funding priori-

ties followed by an opportunity for questions.

The Big Lottery will be in Orkney on **24 September**. They will be giving information about their various funding streams including the new Awards for All programme, the Communities and Families Fund and the Growing Community Assets programme.

To book your place please contact [Meghan](#) at VAO.

Scottish Water: Charity Exemption Scheme

Earlier this month the Scottish Government agreed the Scottish Water Exemption Scheme for the period 2015-21. Broadly speaking, the Scheme will exempt, subject to certain conditions, all charities and community amateur sports clubs with annual incomes of less than £200,000 from the payment of water and sewerage charges. Those with incomes between £200,000 and £300,000 will receive a 50% discount on their wholesale charges. For those charities set to lose their current exemption as a consequence of the changes, a two year transition period will be put in place. We will bring you more information on the Scheme when available from the Scottish Government.

Childcare for Children of Benefit Recipients- Confirmation of Benefits

From August 2014, the Scottish Government is providing 600 hours per year (the equivalent of 16 hours per week) early learning and childcare provision for certain categories of children. One of the key priorities of the change is to support parents to work, train, study or provide opportunities for employment.

One of the key areas that impact is the introduction of support for 2 year olds where a parent is in receipt of a benefit, as Local Authorities will need confirmation that applicants are in receipt of one of these benefits.

A simple process has been agreed whereby applicants (claimants) will produce, to Job Centre Plus, a generic proforma, indicating which of the qualifying benefits they receive. Job Centre Plus will confirm this and then sign, date stamp and office stamp the proforma before returning it to the claimant to present to their local authority or childcare provider. For more information contact Rhona Shearer, JobcentrePlus, 01856 885307.



Robertson Trust &
Big Lottery visits

Water exemption
scheme

Historic Scotland funding for the voluntary sector



The voluntary sector is recognised as a fundamental part of Scottish society and a varied list of organisations have long provided crucial support to the Scottish government in its efforts to con-

serve the historic environment. The provision of grants to voluntary bodies are an essential part of Historic Scotland's wider efforts to safeguard Scotland's historic environment and promote its understanding and enjoyment.

Voluntary Sector Organisations that provide services or input to the Historic Environment Sector are invited to apply for funding. Applica-

tions for funding assistance must be submitted by 30 September each year and are appraised against Historic Scotland's agreed priorities. Informal decisions should be notified to applicants by 30 November and formal offers of grant will follow thereafter. For further details and to apply, please visit their [website](#)

Social Enterprise

Social Enterprise Conference 6 October 2014

A recent study commissioned by the Big Lottery has shown that there are well over 100 enterprising organisations in Orkney. An enterprising organisation is one that supplements or replaces grant income by charging for services or goods or securing contracts or they may have an asset like a building. The important distinction between private and social enterprise is that the latter uses their income for community good. If this sounds like your organisation or if you are looking to start earning money by buying, selling or trading, please come along to the Pickaquoy Centre on 6 October for the So-

cial Enterprise Conference. This full day event will look at what's already happening in Orkney, where the opportunities are and what connections can be made. The event is free and a light lunch will be served. To find out more or to book your place please contact [Meghan](#) at VAO.

UHI Business Idea Competition - 2014 Round Open (North of Scotland)

Entrepreneurs in the north of Scotland are being invited to submit business ideas to win cash prizes in the 2014 Business Idea Competition. CRE-ATE (Centre for Enterprise and Innovation at Inverness

College UHI), together with various other sponsors, is offering cash prizes to aid business development. The competition is open to anyone over the age of 16 with a strong business idea who currently lives in the Highlands and Islands, Moray or Perthshire.

Successful applicants will be asked to meet a panel of judges to answer questions about their idea, including who the intended customers are, what would help make the idea a reality and what inspired the idea. A total prize fund of £8,000 is available. The closing date for entries is 29 October 2014. See the [website](#) for more details.

6 Oct 2014 Social
Enterprise
Conference,
Kirkwall

Have your say....

Blether for Change— The Scottish Rural Parliament in Orkney

The Scottish Rural Parliament is inviting people in Orkney to contribute to their discussions next month. Events are being held throughout Scotland and Voluntary Action Orkney is arranging a local Rural Parliament event here which is

open to the public to attend. The event takes place in the St Magnus Centre on **Thursday 11 September** from 11.00 am to 3.00 pm. A light lunch will be provided and times have been set to try to fit in with ferry timetables as much as possible.

Attendees at the event will have the opportunity to discuss some of the key topics

for the Rural Parliament including:

- Rural businesses and employment
- Land use, planning and land reform
- Transport infrastructure
- Protecting our natural assets and adapting to environmental changes
- Broadband and connectivity
- Support for communities to lead with confidence

11 Sept 2014
Local Rural
Parliament event

Please contact [VAO](#) to book a place so that we can get an idea of numbers for the lunch.

The very first [Scottish Rural Parliament](#) will be taking place later this year in Oban, Argyll & Bute. The three day event, from 6 – 8 November, will bring together 400 decision-makers, organisa-

tions and people from rural communities across Scotland. The Rural Parliament will produce a shared vision for rural Scotland with identified actions to be taken at community, regional, national and EU level, whilst celebrating the strengths and achievements of rural communities.

Unlike most Parliaments, a Rural Parliament is a bottom-up process of discussion and debate which anyone can participate in, rather than people being elected to represent other people's views. This is our chance to make sure Orkney's views are heard and we would encourage as many people as possible to attend.

Job Opportunities at VAO

Support Worker – Connect Project

35 Hours. The Project Support Worker will work closely with the Co-ordinator to devise and deliver a range of individual learning opportunities, volunteer placements and routes to employment.

Outreach Worker – Connect Project

14 Hours. This post requires an experienced, flexible and motivated person to design and deliver an intensive 1 to 1 Person Centred Programme, delivered initially

with an outreach approach, to young people aged 16-19, who are not in employment, education or training.

Development Worker – Community Planning and Engagement

35 Hours. The Community Development Improvement Programme is being led by Voluntary Action Scotland and the improvement Service and is funded by Scottish Government. This one year post will assist VAO to develop and implement a community development improvement plan

to ensure that the third sector and the wider community is effectively engaged with and involved in community planning.

Closing dates for all positions are **Friday 12 September at 5pm.**

More information is available online at www.vaorkney.org.uk and application packs are available at Voluntary Action Orkney, Anchor Buildings.

Volunteering Opportunities

Mentoring training

An opportunity has arisen for mentoring training (SMN Mentoring Qualification), to be offered to six people in Orkney in October this year by the Wise Group's PSP programme. Thereafter the trained mentors will be contracted on a 'spot purchase' basis to deliver a support service to young men returning to Orkney from custody. The training will be offered free of charge.

The training will take place at VAO, Anchor Buildings, Bridge Street, Kirkwall and will be held over 2 days on **14 and 15 October 2014**. Please contact [VAO](#) to book a place. Further information is available from [Edwina](#) or on the Wise Group [website](#)

Adult Befriending Project – Time Limited Support

In November 2013, Voluntary Action Orkney successfully added a new strand to their Adult Befriending Service. As well as delivering one to one, community and intergenerational befriending sessions, the Service now provides support to older people either on their return from a hospital stay, or to enable them to remain in their own home, without the need to go into hospital. This service is delivered by a team of trained and dedicated volunteers.

The roll out of this strand of the Befriending Service has been a real success and the impact on the people who

have benefited from it is clearly evident:

".....Everybody's visit is a help when you first come home from hospital, though I don't mind being on my own you don't like to ask too much from family and neighbours...."

".....It gave me time to settle back in at home and helped till other things were organised like a home help and the daycentre....."

".....Just having someone to speak to was the best thing of the lot....."

This partnership project, funded by the Change Fund, liaises closely with Orkney Health and Care and other statutory and third sector colleagues to ensure the ser-

*Would you like to
work at VAO?*

*Could you spare
some time to be
an adult
befriender?*

vice meets the needs of each individual.

Jacqueline Dennison, Support Worker, said: "We help to bridge the gap between hospital and home, increasing individuals' confidence to remain in their home or to return home. The service

provides two weeks of daily visits starting on the day of a person's discharge from hospital, ensuring that their home is prepared, providing practical support and social contact. The service relies on volunteers so I am very keen to hear from anyone who is

interested in volunteering for this valued service."

Anyone interested in finding out more about this service or who would like to volunteer should contact [Jacqui](#) at Voluntary Action Orkney: 01856 872897.

Education & Training

Scottish Crofting Association Courses



Saturday August 16 saw 9 folk gathering with Dave Sneesby at St Colm's to enjoy another hands on practical session in the poly tunnel.



This time, it was shrub propagation and although the weather was somewhat changeable, the sun did shine and allow folk out into the gardens to take cuttings and plant them up after Dave's intensive direction! We learnt about times of the year to take cuttings, what type of cuttings and a handy guide to all those shrubs that can have cuttings taken from them, types of compost, trays and watering – the lot! All went home happy, thanks to a lovely Blide Trust lunch and with a trainer tray full of cuttings and set of secateurs!



"Thanks again - a terrific day and Dave is a perfect tutor. Manner, depth of knowledge and top technical skills and ability to demonstrate and transmit them."

See below for upcoming courses being offered in partnership with the Scottish Crofting Federation

- | | |
|-------------------|---|
| 16 August | Shrub propagation course, St Colm's Day Centre, Kirkwall |
| 24 August | Crofting for Wildlife, The Links Centre, Evie |
| 8 Sept | Pig butcher (intro), Williamsons, Kirkwall |
| 21-22 Sept | Entry level crofting course at The St Magnus Centre, Kirkwall |
| 4 Oct | Drystone dyking (intro), The Lighthouse, Rendal |
| 11 Oct | Intro to hen keeping, Cromarty Hall, St Margaret's Hope |
| 12 Oct | Land management, Orkney Auction Mart, Kirkwall |

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

North Alliance Conference

25 September 2014, Nairn

There are still a few places available at the North Alliance Conference 2014. Under the themes of Resilience, Local Leadership and Community Empowerment, there is something for everyone involved in Community Learning and Development and attendance is free! For more information or to book a place, please visit the North Alliance [website](#) or contact [Cecily](#).

Small Change for a Healthier You!

A free short course is being offered on healthy eating and exercise. The course will help answer questions such as: What's actually in our food? What do food labels tell us? What is a healthy portion size? What are healthy options and ways of cooking? Do I have time to get fitter?

The course starts on 6 October and is being offered in partnership with NHS Orkney, The Learning Link, Tesco and The Pickaquooy Centre. For more information or to book a place please contact Chrissie on 01856 879200.

Scottish Crofting
Federation
courses

25 Sept 2014
North Alliance
Conference

Dates for your diary

The Annual Community Halls meeting is approaching!

The Annual Community Halls meeting is fast approaching! We've got what we hope is a valuable programme of events lined up for you and have allowed plenty of time for our usual networking and catching

up. Could you please let either [Meghan](#) or [Kerry](#) know how many folk from your Hall will be attending and if you have any dietary or access requirements? This year's meeting will take place at the St. Andrew's Hall, and you can find a map and directions [here](#).

If you are coming off one of the North Isles boats and

would like to carpool, please contact [Meghan](#) to arrange. The provisional programme for this year's event includes using technology in your Hall, developing an ideas bank and much more!

We are all really looking forward to this year's event and look forward to seeing you on **20 September!**

Full of Life Festival

Do something different this October and come to the Full of Life Orkney Festival!

We will be waiting for you on Wednesday **1 October** at the Royal British Legion in Kirkwall and together we will have a grand time celebrating the impact older adults have on Orkney's life. We have invited guests from Age Scotland, Orkney Health and Care, various Community Groups and, in addition, we will have some workshops with strength and balance exercises, Thai chi, planning for the future, healthy eating and lots more.

Doors will open at 10am

with tea and coffee available from 10.30am. So if you are in Kirkwall at that time please pop in to have a look at the displays and have a



cuppa. The event will start at 11am and finish at 2.30pm, but if you need to wait for your boat back home we will be there to chat to you before you need to go.

There will be a Raffle with prizes kindly provided by our

sponsors and you will have a chance to become one of the first members of an older adults' forum in Orkney. There will be time to relax over lunch which will be served by young folk from the Connect Project (VAO).

This event is made possible thanks to the VAO Connecting Communities Project*, Age Concern Orkney, Age Concern Scotland, Orkney Isles Preserves and the Barony Mill.

If you are thinking about coming, please register on the Growing Older in Orkney [website](#) or phone Kasha from VAO on 872897 or Caron from ACO on 872438.

**funded by the Change Fund*

Arthritis Care Scotland Joint Activity Workshop

Arthritis Care Scotland are offering free self-management sessions designed to support and provide information for people



with conditions such as MS, Arthritis, Parkinsons, Heart Conditions, Diabetes, Stroke, etc.

The sessions will be held in the Stromness Community Centre and will start on Saturday **6 Sept** (10.00-12.30) and run for five weeks. For more information or to book a place, please [email](#) or call Arthritis Care on 0845 600 3756.

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