

# Voluntary Action Orkney

DECEMBER 2014

## Christmas Newsletter

### End of another year.....

As the end of 2014 grows closer it's good to reflect on the challenges and the many successes that we have all had during the past year. Despite constant change, reducing resources and increasing demand we in the third sector continue to achieve excellent results for the individuals and communities we work with. That is wholly due to the outstanding commitment, skills and experience of our staff and volunteers and the diversity of responsive services that we offer. We wish you all a very happy and healthy festive season! A snap shot below of VAO's year!



*"I just wanted to express my thanks for your hospitality and assistance. It's people like you that really make a difference in the sector. I absolutely loved Orkney and really feel that I have a much better understanding of the way things work in the islands and the challenges you face"*

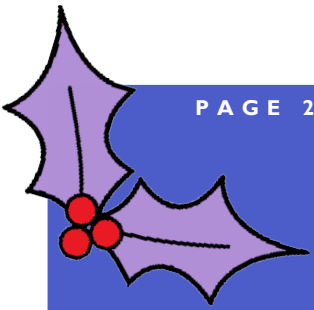
OSCR representative

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- VAO 2014 highlights 1
- Reading for Well-being 3
- Advice & support over Christmas 3
- Child Protection Committee 3
- Connect Project 4
- Dates for your diary 4



The Connect Project and Befriending Service winning a YOUNG SCOT AWARD for their Intergenerational Befriending work, pictured here at the Awards Ceremony in Glasgow.



The winning photograph in the national Generations Working Together competition.

*"Meeting new people, getting out among people, as I felt I had closed myself away for too long"*

**Volunteer**

*"Very helpful in getting me in touch with the organisation I wanted to volunteer with. This charity (VAO) does a fantastic job in Orkney"*

**Volunteer**



Some images from the popular Crofting courses, organised by VAO and run in liaison with the Scottish Crofting Federation.

*"Thanks very much, I really enjoyed the day and feel inspired!"*



# Local News & Events

## Reading for Well-being



The main aim of Reading for Wellbeing is to break down the stigma surrounding mental illness. It's not something that only happens to other people: we all go through times where we feel out of sorts and find it

hard to cope. Reading can help. There is a wealth of research that proves the benefits of "bibliotherapy", highlighting that reading can help us when we are struggling as well as promoting our positive wellbeing.

A list of books has been compiled and copies purchased for the local libraries so that members of the public can access them. People can still be sign – posted to specific titles by clinicians or can be just in-

formed about the scheme generally. A collection of titles has been developed which were highly recommended by members of our local community. The collection which now includes novels, poetry and creative non-fiction as well as self-help books can be found at your local library.

Fancy some relaxation, an escape or adventure? Come along... browse, borrow and enjoy! For more information please ask at your local Orkney library.

## Advice & support over Christmas

Over Christmas 2014, Scotland's Police and OADP have put together a window display to alert people to the dangers of alcohol and legal high misuse, not only in personal terms, but also the effect on family, friends and working life.

Christmas can be a stressful time, so remember, there are groups out there who can help. It's good to talk.

**Samaritans** – 08457 90 90 90 (anytime) or 01856 875875 Tues 8pm to midnight, Weds and Sat 10pm to 2am

**Silverline** (through Age UK) – 0800 4 70 80 90

**Blide Trust** – 874874 (open 11.00-3.00 over the Christmas period)

**Childline** – 08001111

Alcoholics Anonymous – 0845 769 7555

**Salvation Army** – 872302

**OIC Social Services** - 873535. (Out of Hours 888000)

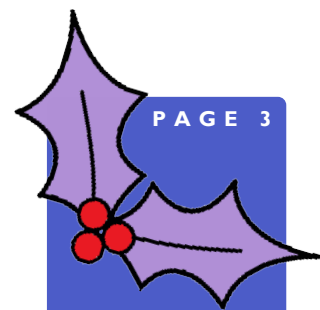
**Police** – 101



## Child Protection Committee Website

The Child Protection Committee have recently updated their website. Please click here to [visit](#). The site contains a number of useful documents and links for professionals, parents, family members and young people involved in the child protection process, members of the community interested in child protection, and people wishing to report a concern.

If you have any comments or suggestions please get in touch with James Henry, Principle Social Worker, Orkney Health & Care, 873535 ext 2672.





## VAO News & Services

### The Connect Project

Congratulations to Kara Leslie, Connect Project's Autism Support Worker who has recently completed a Post Graduate Certificate in Autism.

Kara says: "It was really beneficial to be able to study part-time at the same time as developing the Autism Support role here at Connect, and to be able to take the time to look at the growing evidence base around Autism Spectrum Disorders,

explore how Autism impacts on individuals and families, and apply this understanding to the work I do supporting young adults here at Connect."

If you're a young adult aged 16-19 with an Autism Spectrum Disorder the Connect Project can support you in a range of ways – developing independence, confidence and daily living skills as well as working with you on social communication skills and supporting you to gain new skills

and qualifications. Contact Kara at the Connect Project [kara.leslie@vaorkney.org.uk](mailto:kara.leslie@vaorkney.org.uk) to find out more.



## Dates for your Diary

### VAO Christmas Closure

VAO will close on Wednesday 24 December and reopen on Monday 5 January 2015

### Young People's Befriending Project

VAO's Young People's Befriending Project are planning to be in Tesco's foyer during January to talk about the project and hopefully recruit some volunteers. If you're interested in the service or want to find out how you could use your interests to make a difference in the life of a young person then come along for a chat. The date will be advertised on VAO website and Facebook page as soon as it's confirmed.

### Postponed: Social Enterprise Networking Event: 'Partnership for Enterprise'

The Social Enterprise networking event which was originally being held on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> December has been postponed until Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> February at the St Magnus Centre with the main theme being around partnership/collaboration. Full details will be given in the New Year.

**Best wishes for Christmas and the New Year  
from the Directors, Staff and Volunteers at  
Voluntary Action Orkney**



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