

# Newsletter February 2016

## VAO News & Services

### Voluntary organisations in Orkney contribute £20 million per annum to the local economy

The positive impact on Orkney's people and communities of large and small voluntary organisations is well known and valued. But, do we know the economic impact of voluntary sector activity? Well, we do now.

VAO, with funding support from HIE commissioned in late 2015 an economic impact survey of the sector and the report has provided impressive evidence of our, often overlooked, contribution.

There are approximately 600 voluntary groups operating in Orkney and 144 of those (24%) completed the survey questionnaire although not every respondent answered every question. However the results are quite remarkable:

**Employment impact - £14,657,500**

**Value of volunteer time - £5,415,000**

**Total income - £11,628,348**

**76% of total expenditure made in Orkney**



We hope that these findings will give the third sector credibility as a significant contributor to the Orkney economy, taking its place alongside other, local sectors.

A summary of the Report's highlights is attached with this newsletter and can also be viewed [here](#). If you would like more information or to discuss the findings please contact [Gail](#) on 872897.

### Orkney Health and Care – Development of an Orkney Peer Network

**Do health and social care issues matter to you? Would you like to get involved as much or as little as you need?**

With the establishment of the new Integrated Joint Board (Orkney Health and Care) we are building a new network for people who've experienced health and social care services in Orkney



To deliver the vision for Health and Social Care in Orkney we are establishing a new approach for working with Orkney communities and learning from their experience of health and care services.

We are looking for people who know and understand the reality of life in Orkney; we need people from all backgrounds and of all ages to become part of our network to share their experience and ideas, and the experiences and ideas of others. We are committed to listening to all and to using their stories to continue improving services for the whole community.

At the moment the network is simply a database of interested people but we aim to develop an on line forum to enable people to contribute wherever they live in Orkney. For those who find it difficult to access on line services, we will post out information, questionnaires, etc and from time to time gather people together for discussions on issues of interest.

Orkney Health and Care are keen to have as many people as possible involved in the network; you may want to receive information, comment and debate or work behind the scenes to help to make the network effective.

If you are interested or would like to find out more please contact Caron Jenkins by emailing [enquiries@vaorkney.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@vaorkney.org.uk) or calling 872897. Please click [here](#) for a registration form.

## Local Third Sector News

### Scottish Fire and Rescue Service team up with British Heart Foundation

All 356 of SFRS's fire stations recently took delivery of a British Heart Foundation-donated Call Push Rescue training kit and each station will now act as a base for local people to learn vital cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) skills and potentially save someone's life if they go into cardiac arrest.

Clearly as Orkney and the surrounding Islands are remote, any form of early intervention could potentially be a life saver.

This partnership is one part of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service's commitment to support the Scottish Government's Out of Hospital Cardiac Arrest Strategy and Save a Life for Scotland campaign. We want to contribute to saving an extra 1000 lives in Scotland by 2020.

When someone goes into cardiac arrest their heart is not pumping properly and every second counts. But performing immediate CPR, as part of the chain of survival, can keep oxygen circulating around the body until the arrival of medical professionals or a defibrillator.

The training will empower people and give them the skills they need to deliver life-saving assistance to anyone suffering from cardiac arrest, training can be delivered to up to ten people at a time and takes approximately 45 minutes to complete, if any individual or organisation is interested in receiving CPR training please contact the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service at the Orkney District Office on 01856 875428 or go to the contact page on the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service website [here](#).



The training can be carried out at the local fire station (if suitable) or at any other suitable venue provided.

### Who's behind the Blue Door?



<b>South Ronaldsay &amp; Burry Guides</b>	29 Feb – 5 March
<b>Hoy Kirk</b>	7 March – 12 March
<b>Orkney Heart Support Group</b>	14 March – 19 March
<b>Blue Door Volunteers</b>	21 March – 26 March
<b>Smiddybrae Activities Association</b>	28 March – 2 April

## Focus on.....Home-Start Orkney

'Home-Start Orkney do not supply furniture, nor do we tend to cars that have broken down' advises Erika Copland, Senior Co-ordinator at Home-Start Orkney. 'What we do do, is support parents and their young children in challenging times, times of adverse stress and difficulty'. In the fourth of our interviews with members, we met with Erika to find out more about the work of Home-Start Orkney and the recent expansion of their services.

As everyone knows, being a parent can be stressful, but the families supported by Home-Start are facing extra challenges. For parents who are feeling isolated, struggling to cope with their child's or their own illness, experiencing relationship problems, or are simply exhausted and unhappy, Home-Start are there to provide a bit of help and support. 'Our Volunteers support parents both emotionally and practically in areas that have been identified by the families as most beneficial to them', explains Erika. 'In essence', she says, 'we offer family befriending'.

The support offered by Home-Start benefits both parents and their children. Children may benefit from help with their speech and language, helping, Erika explains, to get them nursery ready. But the real benefits come from helping parents put a bit of fun back in their lives and therefore in the lives of their children. 'Sometimes when people find themselves in very stressful situations, life can seem flat, worrying...and people don't feel like laughing much', explains Erika. 'Our volunteers help parents to re-ignite relationships, see things from their child's perspective, do fun things with their children....basically, put the joy back into life.'



Alongside the support provided in people's homes and the community, Home-Start run a weekly drop-in session for parents and children. Erika explains that toddler groups can sometimes be intimidating for parents, 'especially if you suffer from anxiety, depression, low self-esteem....you're just not going to go there', she says. The Home-Start drop in (held every Thursday morning) provides a safe, secure place for parents to meet and for their kids to play and interact. Erika explains that the staff and volunteers spend a lot of time playing with the kids, allowing the parents to chat and support each other.

There are dozens of examples of how Home-Start have helped families in Orkney, but we don't have the space to detail them all here! One of the examples Erika gives is of a mum who 'was totally focussed on her child and, as mothers often do, put her child's concerns before her own. One of the services supporting her child (who had additional support needs) contacted us as they were concerned that mum didn't have anything for herself.' Erika explains that mum was single and not from Orkney and therefore had a limited support network. She was referred to help her integrate into the community. The Home-Start volunteer accompanied mum to various local services, including toddler groups, Jungle World and Church. 'Gradually', Erika tells us, 'mum's confidence developed, she made friends and was fully integrated into the community. The need for our support ceased but mum and the volunteer remain really good friends.' The best thing about working for Home-Start, Erika explains, is 'seeing the real difference that the volunteers make in the lives of the parents and children that they're working with. There will be some families who need ongoing support because of their situations, but most are helped to get to a point where they can cope themselves with the circumstances they're in.'

Home-Start has been operating for almost 15 years in Orkney and have helped over 30 families during this last year alone. They were recently awarded Big Lottery Funding to expand the service to the outer Isles and are now able to provide support to families across the whole of Orkney. Erika explains that the Isles will present their own unique challenges, compared to supporting families on the mainland, but that it will be a very positive learning curve for all involved. When we ask if they are looking to recruit volunteers on the Isles for the new service, Erika advises that while they certainly would be interested to hear from people on the Isles looking to volunteer, it might not necessarily suit families to have someone so local to support them. 'It might be better to have volunteers coming from the mainland (this has previously been done on Shapinsay) as well as making more use of digital technology such as skype. Our intention is to be able to support any family who is referred to the service in a way that works for them' explains Erika.



Currently Home-Start have 18 home visiting volunteers and given that the service is expanding, are actively looking to recruit more. The volunteers, explains Erika, are aged from 30 to 70 plus, are male and female and have a huge amount of experience. ‘Once we’ve got a volunteer they tend to stay with us’, says Erika, ‘some of them have been with us for 12 years and it’s great to have such continuity.’ There’s a great team at Home-Start, explains Erika, ‘the staff team (there are four paid members of staff) and volunteers are very much a big family sharing the same goal – to help support families and children’. Anyone with parenting experience (which can include responsibility for looking after siblings, other children in the family, fostering...) can volunteer, explains Erika, and training is provided (the next course is planned for April).



L-R: Erika Copland, Elsie Cooper, Isobel Currie and Sandra Leslie

Erika is a huge advocate of volunteering. ‘I am where I am today because of volunteering’ she explains. ‘Between leaving school and having my first child I did voluntary work at the after school club, which eventually led to paid employment there. Working with the children at the after school club gave me the confidence and skills to go for the job at Home-Start’. Erika has been with Home-Start from the very beginning, starting work as the administrator in late 2000 and has been the co-ordinator for the last 11 years. ‘I am in a really fortunate position that I really love my job’, she says, ‘it’s a great team here and we get to work with and meet some great people.’

Home-Start Orkney have very close links with a number of statutory and third sector organisations, ‘it’s important to have a good relationship with other organisations to benefit the families. It benefits everyone if all groups are working together for the same aim, supplementing, not duplicating, each other’s work’. Between 50 and 60% of their referrals come from Health Visitors and they also work closely with the Council’s Home-Link team. They also refer families on to other organisations and services, for example referring older children to VAO’s Young Peoples Befriending Project and work closely with the Orkney Charitable Trust and the Children’s Trust, helping families fund essential items such as white goods, prams and fire guards – things that many of us take for granted. ‘We’re just one small bit of the jigsaw helping people determine better outcomes for themselves’, explains Erika.

While the demographics of Orkney can help families through such close agency working, for many, there is a negative side to life in a small community. ‘This is Orkney and people sometimes have preconceptions about others. I’ve had folk say to me that they feel like they’re living in a goldfish bowl, it can feel very claustrophobic, especially if you think you’re always being watched and judged. Probably the most important thing I’ve learnt working in this job is to never judge a book by its cover – never judge a person by how they appear or by stories that you may have heard. You have no idea what’s going on behind the closed doors of somebody’s house, what pressures folk are facing.’

Although Home-Start has been operating in Orkney for almost 15 years, there are still people who haven’t heard of them. With the recent expansion to the Isles, Home-Start is now there for all families in Orkney who may need their support. But those families need to know that the support is available and Erika and her colleagues are working hard to spread the word - appearing in March’s edition of Living Orkney (as well as the February edition of the VAO newsletter!). ‘If you know of someone who might benefit from our support, please mention us’, says Erika, ‘people need to know that the help is there’.

If you would like more information about the services provided by Home-Start Orkney or would like to join their team of volunteers, Erika and her colleagues would love to hear from you.

## Funding & Finance

### Fund now open – Talisman Sinopec Small Grants Scheme (incorporating the Liam McArthur Awards)

Does your group need help to buy equipment or is there training you want to attend but don't have the funds? The Talisman Small Grant Scheme could be what you're looking for. Aimed specifically at small groups, the Talisman/Sinopec Small Grant Scheme is easy to apply to and can award grants of up to £500. Projects must have local impact and priority will be given to groups that aim to address inequalities, e.g. geographical, social, health, etc.

Click [here](#) to find out more including the application form and full criteria details.

The closing date for applications is Thursday 24 March 2016.

## Legislation, Guidance & Support

### Regulator announces new focus on protecting charity assets and reputations

From 1 April, the charity regulator will increase the information available on the [Scottish Charity Register](#), by starting to publish annual reports and accounts for larger income charities and charities that are Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisations (SCIOs).

The annual return form completed by all charities will see changes in the type of information gathered, while reporting requirements for smaller charities will be kept to a minimum.

A new 'notifiable events' procedure will see charities required to alert matters such as fraud, allegations of abuse, investigation by other agencies such as HMRC or the Police, or substantial donations from an unknown source where these occur, or to confirm that they have not.

For more information please see OSCR's [website](#).

### Path to Impact-New Planning and Resilience Tool to Support the Third Sector

Path to Impact is an exciting new project in partnership with the Big Lottery Fund, Chief Officers Third Sector (CO3) and the Association of Chief Officers of Scottish Voluntary Organisations (ACOSVO). The Path to Impact Project will provide organisations with access to an online diagnostic tool, the Core Capacity Assessment Tool (CCAT). 50 organisations in Scotland will be able to access this support for FREE, with ongoing assistance throughout the process. Please click [here](#) for more information.

## Volunteering Opportunities

### Volunteer Hosts – Poppies Weeping Window Exhibition

VAO has been approached by Orkney Islands Council to support a recruitment drive for volunteers who will help care for the spectacular display of ceramic poppies to be installed at St Magnus Cathedral in the spring.

It follows the recent announcement by 14-18 NOW, the UK's official arts programme for the First World War centenary, that Poppies: Weeping Window will go on display at the Cathedral from 22 April to 12 June 2016 to commemorate 100 years since the Battle of Jutland.

Orkney Islands Council is working with Voluntary Action Orkney to recruit Volunteer Hosts to help out during the poppies' time in Orkney.

*'We are looking for friendly, outgoing people who can spare some time to help us look after the poppies while they are in our care,'* said Karen Greaves, the Council's Head of Leisure and Lifelong Learning.

*'The volunteers will be on hand to welcome visitors, answer questions and provide information. This will be a wonderful opportunity to talk to and interact with the people who come to see the poppies – and to share in their thoughts and reflections as they experience what will be a very moving tribute to those who lost their lives during the First World War.'*



Full training will be given and the Volunteer Hosts will be supported by Cathedral staff.

Poppies: Weeping Window is from the installation Blood Swept Lands and Seas of Red – poppies and original concept by artist Paul Cummins and installation designed by Tom Piper – by Paul Cummins Ceramics Limited in conjunction with Historic Royal Palaces.

The installation was originally at the Tower of London in 2014 where 888,246 poppies were displayed, one to honour every death in the British and Colonial forces of the First World War.

At the Cathedral, Poppies: Weeping Window will be open seven days a week from 9am to 8pm, and volunteers are needed for the following shifts:

- 9am to 1pm
- 1pm to 5.30pm
- 5.30 to 8pm

The aim is to have a minimum of two volunteers covering each shift. The artwork will be in Orkney for several weeks and volunteers are welcome to take part in one or more shifts.

If you would like to volunteer and be part of this unique opportunity, please visit the VAO offices in Bridge Street, Kirkwall, OIC Customer Services in Kirkwall, or the Warehouse Buildings in Stromness, to pick up a volunteer registration pack. Alternatively, an online registration form can be completed [here](#).

For further information please contact Fraser Devine or Rob McGregor at VAO. Phone 01856 872897 or email [enquiries@vaorkney.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@vaorkney.org.uk)

## Silver Line Scotland

Silver Line offer a 24 hour confidential helpline for older people and their telephone befriender volunteers work from their own home telephones. Launched in November 2013, the charity expect to have received one million calls by June 2016, with about 10% of calls coming from folk in Scotland.

Silver Line Scotland are looking to recruit a volunteer ambassador in Orkney to ensure that our local community are aware of this 24 hour support.

For more information please visit the Silver Line [website](#). If you would like to volunteer, please get in touch with [Moira Gallagher](#) on 0203 793 9192.



## Third Sector Forum

The Third Sector Forum will be meeting this month on **Thursday 24 March** at 11am in the McGillivray Room, Kirkwall Library & Archive. If you would like to join the Third Sector Forum please contact Cecily on 873937 or visit the VAO website for further information.

## Education & Training Opportunities

### Scottish Mental Health First Aid – 9 & 10 March 2016

Following the well-received sessions of mental health training offered in the county last year, a further session of this training will be happening in Orkney in March. The Blide Trust and VAO are working in partnership to facilitate these sessions which will be delivered by Ken Dinwoodie from The Richmond Fellowship Trust and our own local trainer, Fiona Tully.

The following is a brief outline of what is covered on the course:

- guidance on being a Mental Health First Aider
- attitudes to mental health issues
- the recovery message
- the impact of alcohol and drugs on mental health
- introduction to suicide intervention
- understanding depression
- how to offer first aid to someone experiencing depression
- understanding anxiety
- how to offer first aid to someone experiencing anxiety
- understanding psychosis
- how to offer first aid to someone experiencing a psychotic episode.

Mental Health First Aid is an initial response to distress and all participants on the course understand that this help is given only until other suitable or professional help can be found.

For more information or to book a place, please contact VAO on 872897.

## Dates for your Diary

### The Archaeology Institute University of the Highlands and Islands Open Day Friday 4 March 2016, 1pm to 4pm

Interested in studying Archaeology? Then pop along to the open day at The University of the Highlands and Islands Archaeology Institute. You can visit their academic departments, talk to staff and current students, view their learning facilities, and experience workshops on aspects of practical archaeology.

For more information please click here, or contact Mary on 01856 569225.