

Newsletter February 2017

VAO News & Services

The Laird of Dial a Bus!

Hazel Aim of Dial a Bus was delighted to present Matthew Laird with his 300 hour Saltire Volunteering Award. Matthew has volunteered for Dial a Bus for 3 years and rarely misses a shift!

Matthew helps with assisting passengers onto the bus, operating the lift on the bus, carrying shopping and luggage on and off the bus for passengers, greeting passengers and passenger safety.

Matthew also volunteers with the Cat's Protection Shop in Stromness and is a great ambassador for volunteering in Orkney.



Your Island Your Choice Mainland Fund

VAO has been awarded funding from the Community Choices Fund, with contributions from community planning partners, to deliver the Your Island Your Choice small grants participatory budgeting programme where island residents decide for themselves which project should receive funding.

Who can apply?

- Any community/voluntary group, even informal groups, can apply for funding from £200 to £6,000
- You don't have to come from an existing group or constituted organisation to apply for funds but all the activities have to happen in more than one non-linked island to benefit their communities
- Your ideas need to meet one of three identified key themes: Positive Ageing; Healthy and Sustainable Communities; Vibrant economic environment
- Your project must benefit as many people as possible
- Your project must help make the isles a better place for everyone (excludes Orkney mainland and the linked islands)
- Large or small, single or collaborative projects welcome

How to Apply?

If your idea fits in with one of the identified themes please complete and submit the [application form](#) to Voluntary Action Orkney, who may contact you for additional information.

If the application meets the criteria then island representatives will vote for their favourite projects at an event to be held in the Pickaquoy Centre, Kirkwall on 25 March 2017. At that event you will be required to do a short 2 to 3 minute presentation about your project/activity and the difference it will make to island communities.



For more information please click [here](#) or contact [Meghan](#) on 872897. The deadline for applications is **5pm Friday 3 March**.

Local Third Sector News

Relationships Scotland Orkney to extend support service for families affected by drug and/or alcohol misuse

Relationships Scotland Orkney (RSO) have been successful in an application to the Small Test of Change fund directly from the Scottish Government, supported by Orkney's Alcohol and Drug Partnership, to extend their support service for family members and carers affected by a loved one's alcohol and/or drug misuse.



The project will evaluate the delivery of an evidenced based support programme called CRAFT (Community Reinforcement and Family Training) which is designed for family members and carers affected by someone else's alcohol and/or drug misuse. Its 3 main goals are:

- To encourage your loved one to get help
- To reduce your loved ones alcohol/drug intake
- To increase your own happiness and wellbeing regardless of whether your loved one enters treatment

The funding will allow another worker to train in the CRAFT approach and to co-deliver CRAFT sessions in groups or on a one-to-one basis. If you are interested in finding out more please contact [RSO](#) on 01856 877750.

Orkney Folk Festival receive Quality Volunteering Award

As part of the Collaborative Creative Communities Project, a Festivals event was held recently in Stromness. VAO delivered three sessions on volunteering and volunteer management and the day culminated in the Orkney Folk Festival being presented with their Quality Volunteering Award. Pictured are Leslie Burgher, Chair of St Magnus Festival and the chair for the event; Francesca Couperwhite, HIE; Elaine Grieve of Orkney Folk Festival; and Fraser Devine, VAO.

For more information about the Quality Volunteering Award please contact [Fraser](#) or [Rob](#) on 01856 872897



New staff member at OACAS

OACAS are delighted to announce that Annita Taylor will be joining their Youth Counselling Service as a part time counsellor. Annita has been volunteering for OACAS for a number of years now, and they look forward to welcoming her on board. The youth service will continue to see anyone from birth up to age 25, with Annita and Heather splitting the clients between themselves. The team at OACAS wish Annita every success in her new adventure.

Who's behind the Blue Door?



Rotary Club	27 February – 4 March
Orkney Amateur Swimming	6 – 11 March
MS Therapy Centre	13 – 18 March
Relationships Scotland Orkney	20 – 25 March
Blue Door Team*	26 March – 1 April

*The Blue Door Team raise funds for local charities unable to use the shop themselves.

Legislation & Guidance

Updated factsheets from the Child Poverty Action Group

The Child Poverty Action Group in Scotland has recently updated the following [factsheets](#) in their series.



- Benefits for new refugees
- Benefits for disabled students
- Benefits for young people in further education or training
- Parents claiming for young people in further education or training
- Benefits and tax credits for students
- Employment and support allowance and studying
- Welfare reform and carers
- Disabled young people

Dementia and the Workplace – a guide for employers in Scotland



Being Dementia Aware

With state pension age rising and abolition of the default retirement age, people will increasingly experience early stage dementia while at work. Many employees are also juggling work with caring for a family member or friend who has dementia.

Surveys show that people would often be reluctant to tell their employer were they diagnosed with dementia. They are also far less likely to seek medical advice for problems with thinking, memory and communication than for physical symptoms. It is possible to live well, and work well, with dementia – but both employers and employees need to acknowledge the issue, and approach it in the right way, for that to happen.

The Early Stage Dementia Project addresses the issue of dementia in the workplace by:

- Delivering dementia awareness training for workplaces (to find out more contact ESDTeam@agescotland.org.uk)
- Promoting better support for employees with dementia, employees with caring responsibilities, and help for employers in addressing these issues.
- Providing information for business on how to provide better support for customers who have dementia.

Please click [here](#) for more information. Age Scotland may be willing to come to Orkney to deliver these sessions for a very small fee per person. Please contact [Edwina](#) at VAO on 872897 to find out more.

Greater Power for Scotland's Communities

A new law will make it easier for communities in Scotland to take over land or buildings that are currently in public ownership.

The asset transfer section of the Community Empowerment Act (Scotland) 2015 has come into force recently. This allows community-led organisations to request to buy, lease or use any land or buildings belonging to local councils, Scottish Ministers, and a range of other public bodies. They must show how they will use the land to benefit the community. Requests must be agreed unless there are reasonable grounds for refusal.

This is the latest section of the Act which gives more power to Scotland's communities to have their voices heard in decisions that matter to them, and to take action for themselves. Click [here](#) for more information.

Scottish Government Analytical Exchange Programme 2017

The Scottish Government is inviting bids from voluntary organisations in Scotland for very short, sharp projects (up to 10 person days) where statistical or analytical skills could make a difference to their organisation. Individuals or small groups of Scottish Government analysts (one or two people) act as an analytical consultancy to solve problems in your organisation and would be delivered at no cost.

Over the last five years Scottish Government analysts have supported around 100 projects providing a total of well over 350 days of support to third sector organisations. Most placements were about either (a) evaluation methodologies – how you measure success (b) bringing together evidence around a subject or (c) data management/making the most of data you collect.

Click [here](#) to find out more. [Email](#) applications must be received by Friday 3 March 2017.

Funding & Finance

Banking Guidance for Charity Trustees

Thinking of setting up or switching your charity's bank account? Don't forget to check the [Banking for Charities Guide](#) before you do. The guide includes advice on choosing and opening the right bank account, understanding banking charges and fees, and how to switch bank accounts. It also sets out key questions to ask banks and options to help charities navigate the banking environment.

Water and Sewerage Charges Exemption Scheme

Charities and community amateur sports clubs are able to keep more of the money they raise under an exemption scheme.

Since 2015, the Water and Sewerage Charges Exemption Scheme has helped more than 7,700 charities and amateur sports clubs to save around £4 million every year. The scheme means eligible charities registered with the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator, as well as community amateur sports clubs with an income of less than £200,000, do not need to pay water and sewerage charges. Those with incomes between £200,000 and £300,000 will pay a reduced rate.

Charities and community amateur sports clubs must apply each year to the Scheme. Applications can now be made for 2017-18. Applications for 2016-17 can continue to be made up until 31 March 2017. Click [here](#) for more information or contact your Licensed Provider.

Volunteering opportunities

Weekly Games Group Volunteer

VAO's Adult Befriending Service is looking for volunteers to help with a new weekly games group for older adults to be run on Thursday afternoons. The volunteers will help out with teas, coffees and games. The games will include indoor bowls, boccia, quoits and skittles. There will also be board and card games. No experience of working with older folk is needed but a caring nature and good communication skills along with the ability to support and encourage older people to take part would be great.



So if you feel like spending your Thursday afternoon's playing games and having a brew with some lovely older folk please contact [Linsey](#) or [Arlene](#) on 872 236 or 872 229.

Fertility Network Scotland need Volunteers



Fertility Network Scotland (FNS) provide advice, information and support for anyone affected by fertility issues. They also work to raise awareness of the impact of fertility problems and to campaign for fair provision of fertility treatment throughout Scotland.

FNS are looking to increase their volunteer network across Scotland and in particular areas such as Orkney.

The local volunteering roles are; Main Contact Volunteer; Local Contact Volunteer; Student Ambassador Volunteer; General Volunteer and Support Group Volunteer. Some of these voluntary roles involve peer support and are therefore restricted to those who have experience of fertility issues. Other roles are more general such as the Student and General volunteers.

If you are interested in finding out more about FNS and how volunteers can get involved please contact [Gillian McLaughlin](#) on 07909 686874.

Plant survey volunteers

Plantlife Scotland co-ordinate the National Plant Monitoring Scheme (NPMS) in Scotland, and are looking for volunteers in Orkney. The NPMS is a new UK-wide plant monitoring scheme designed to build up data on habitat health. It is organised and funded by a partnership of the BSBI, Plantlife, the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology, and the JNCC. Anyone interested in nature who can identify plants, or who is keen to learn, can take part.

Volunteers adopt a kilometre square and survey small plots within this kilometre. Plantlife occasionally has opportunities for Flora Guardian volunteers but there are none currently in Orkney. For more information contact [Jill Williams](#) at Plantlife Scotland on 01786 479382 or visit the [website](#).



Maps of available survey squares are at the VAO office or from Jill Williams. Volunteers will be supported by a mentor for the survey based in Orkney (identification of species and habitats; general survey advice; field sessions).

CLAN Shop Retail Volunteer

The CLAN shop are looking for a couple of volunteers to volunteer at the shop. One of the shifts would be on Saturday afternoon and both shifts would require the volunteers to do till work. If you like the idea of volunteering at one of Orkney's leading charities and also gaining some experience of a retail environment then this opportunity could be tailor made for you. Don't worry if you haven't done till work before as full training will be provided. If this is an opportunity that you are interested in please contact Kayleigh at the CLAN shop on 873393 or [Rob](#) on 872897.



Samaritans Volunteer Publicity Officer



Samaritans of Orkney need a volunteer to be their Publicity Officer. The role involves liaising with the Orcadian newspaper and writing very small articles occasionally to raise awareness about the work that Orkney Samaritans do and their ethos and values. The successful applicant should be able to use email and the telephone confidently and will have to pass the Samaritans selection procedure. A full induction will be provided. For more information please contact [Rob](#) on 872897.

International Citizen Service

Applications are now open for the Y Care International Citizen Service programme for young people aged 18-25 to volunteer overseas for up to three months and make a difference in some of the world's poorest communities.

Projects with Y Care International will be youth focussed and working in YMCAs in Bangladesh, Togo, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Liberia. Apply by March to fly in late June.

Please visit their [website](#) to apply or contact Y Care International by [email](#) or phone on 0203 841 2013 for more information.

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

Have your say.....

Code of Fundraising Practice Consultation

The Fundraising Regulator has opened consultation on the Code of Fundraising Practice which applies across the UK.

This first consultation, which closes on 28 April, seeks views on the following areas: Charity trustees; The fundraising ask; Solicitation (disclosure) statements; Raising concerns about fundraising practice (Whistleblowing); People in vulnerable circumstances; Charity collection bags; Third parties and General questions on the Code. Click [here](#) for more information.

Your Voice | Self-Directed Support

[Audit Scotland](#) is an independent public body that investigates how well public authorities implement policy & legislation. They are currently conducting an audit to find out how well the Self-Directed Support Act is being implemented, in practice, by local councils, Health & Social Care Partnerships and the Scottish Government.

Self-Directed Support legislation gives people more choice & more control over the support and care they require and receive.

Audit Scotland would like to hear from people & carers who have experience of Self-Directed Support, so if you or someone you work with would like to share their experiences why not take part in the survey [here](#) or contact the team by [email](#).

News from OSCR



Changes to OSCR's website

To improve your experience of using www.oscr.org.uk they have recently made the following changes:

- Their news is easier to find – a dedicated news section on their homepage will always have their latest stories on it for you to view, and they've changed their news page to contain more stories in a cleaner, simpler format.
- The Scottish Charity Register search is more prominent – many of their users weren't able to see that they could search the Scottish Charity Register from their homepage because it was too far down. It is now right at the top so you don't miss it.
- You can connect with them better on social media – in addition to their Twitter account, we've recently created a Facebook page and a YouTube library. If you want to view their channels, there are social media links on the top bar of every page, and they've put a link to their helpful blogs in there as well to make them easier to find.
- Incorporated charities have better register entries – register entries will now contain information of incorporation going forward, so you can see if a SCIO used to be another organisation.

If you have any feedback on their website, OSCR would love to [hear from you](#).

New booklet on the basics of Scottish Charity Law

This month, OSCR unveiled a brand new booklet to make the basics of Scottish charity law easier to understand.

['Being a Charity in Scotland'](#) sets out the key points charities need to know about Scottish charity law. Within the guide there are links to detailed guidance pages contained on our website and it also has information on other organisations that can provide help and advice to charities.

Also in the news



Evaluation of Scotland's Third Sector Interface Network Model and Voluntary Action Scotland

As a first step towards strengthening local third sector infrastructure Scottish Government commissioned an independent evaluation of the existing Third Sector Interface model and Voluntary Action Scotland. The evaluation report is intended to provide robust evidence to be used as part of a broader engagement process with the network, the wider third sector and with public and private sector partners on the future infrastructure model at a local level.

The vision is to have the most effective and most efficient local third sector infrastructure for Scotland from 2018 onwards. Click on the links for the [full report](#) and [executive summary](#).

Contactless charity boxes are set to replace traditional cash fundraising

Contactless charity boxes are set to replace traditional cash fundraising after a successful trial saw donations from the public soar.

Having no change will no longer be an excuse as the technology utilises the same point-of-sale systems used by credit and debit cards. It could be the answer charities have been looking for as a recent trial undertaken by organisations including Oxfam and NSPCC gave three time more than they would have had they donated cash.

Barclaycard, which developed the hi-tech donation boxes, said contactless spending grew by 166% last year and more than half of adults now make a transaction with a contactless card at least once a month.

According to YouGov research commissioned by the company, one in seven people have admitted to walking away from a donation because they did not carry cash on them. Barclaycard said the technology could earn charities an extra £80m a year. Read more [here](#).



New Website: How Charities Work

NCVO (National Council for Voluntary Organisations - England, Wales & Northern Ireland) has launched a new website www.howcharitieswork.com. This site is intended as a resource for members of the public who have questions about charities, and is designed to provide clear and accessible information for a non-specialist audience.

The website explains how charities raise and spend money, how they are regulated and has a section dedicated to explaining the role of trustees. The site has been launched as a test version to get feedback and ideas from the voluntary sector before it is promoted more widely to the public.

The State of Child Health

The Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health have launched a report on the State of Child Health in the UK. The State of Child Health brings together data for the first time on a comprehensive list of 25 measures of the health of UK children, ranging from specific conditions such as asthma, diabetes and epilepsy, risk factors for poor health such as obesity and a low rate of breastfeeding, to child deaths. The data provide an “across the board” snapshot of child health and wellbeing in the UK.

Nearly one in five children in the UK is living in poverty and inequality is blighting their lives, with those from the most deprived backgrounds experiencing much worse health compared with the most affluent. Despite some improvements in the health of UK children over the last decades, there is clear disparity with Europe, and major cause for concern.

Read more and download the report [here](#).

Childline contacted every 11 minutes about mental health problems

The NSPCC report that there were over 50,000 Childline counselling sessions about self-harm, suicidal feelings, mental health or depressive disorders last year.

Of over 92,000 Childline counselling sessions with children and young people about mental health and wellbeing in 2015/16, over 50,000 related to suicidal feelings, self-harm, mental health or depressive disorders. This is an average of 1 counselling session every 11 minutes. Click [here](#) to read more.

Future Me: Talking to children about their dreams for the future

A new campaign encouraging parents or carers to talk to children about their dreams for the future was launched this month by the Scottish Government.



The [Future Me](#) campaign aims to raise the aspirations of children and improve vital literacy and numeracy skills which will last a lifetime.

Parents or guardians are being asked to discuss the future with young people and share their ambitions either online on Scotland's giant dream wall or using the Future Me postbox at their local library.

The campaign is part of the wider [Read, Write, Count Initiative](#) which aims to improve key numeracy and literacy skills among primary school children across Scotland to tackle educational inequalities and raise attainment in the early years and beyond.

The Future Me website provides parents and carers with tips and advice about fun and interesting ways to encourage children to realise their dreams. Every family taking part will receive a certificate and a place on the digital dream wall for their child.

Third Sector Forum



The next meeting of the Third Sector Forum will take place on **Thursday 23 March** at 11am in the McGillivray Room, Kirkwall Library. For more information the Third Sector Forum, please visit our [website](#) or contact [Cecily](#) on 873937.

Education & Training



Developing Social Enterprise Ventures 24 February, Kirkwall

The Social Enterprise Academy will be in Kirkwall on 24 February to deliver training on Developing Social Enterprise Ventures. This FREE training will help you: gain clarity on the vision and scope of your social enterprise; shape an action plan on how to realise, develop and grow your organisation; collaboratively find solutions to challenges your venture may face.

Please click [here](#) for more information or to book your place.

Training for effective partnership working 3 March, Kirkwall

Working with people from other organisations and agencies is imperative to provide the best care, support and outcomes for your clients, customers, residents, or service users. It can be a little difficult however, to see your passion from another's angle! Multiagency working may be seen as successful, co-operative, enabling OR frustrating, challenging, maybe even plain uncomfortable.

Please join us on 3 March at the Life Centre, East Road, Kirkwall to explore relationship building from new perspectives using a range of highly effective and fun strategies. If you are interested in attending this FREE training, please click [here](#) for more information.

Digital Boost training

Business Gateway and partners are running a number of training sessions in Orkney over the coming months. If your group needs training on digital marketing including the use of Facebook and Twitter click [here](#) to find out more.

CPD opportunity – UK Disability Inclusion Training from Scottish Disability Sport 10 March 2017

Charlie Forbes from Scottish Disability Sport is visiting Orkney in March. He has kindly offered to deliver a UK Disability Inclusion Training course free of charge. The course will be held on Friday 10 March from 4 - 7pm at Kirkwall Grammar School.

The course is suitable for teachers, coaches, volunteers, young sports leaders (aged 16 or over) and any other staff who work with young people or adults with a disability.

This introductory workshop into disability sport in Scotland provides delegates with the following opportunities:

- To recognise and influence how perceptions and experience have on interactions and our expectations of others
- Identify appropriate disability-specific terminology, etiquette and communication
- Articulate the principles of current legislation and know who to contact for further information
- Outline the barriers which may need to be challenged in order to create opportunity
- Identify the participation opportunities within disability sport
- Recognise how to influence (even change) practices and facilitate inclusion

If you are interested in attending the training please contact [Katrina Garson](#) by 4pm on Friday 3 March.

Mentally Healthy Workplace Training: Training for trainers 3 day course **20, 21 and 27 March 2017, Kirkwall**

Line Managers have a crucial role in supporting the health and wellbeing of employees. From communication, to clarity of job role, line managers can influence the success of a team. This training will prepare you to deliver training to managers which include good practice in promoting positive mental health and wellbeing as well as offering practical examples of how to support employees experiencing mental health problems.

Mental health training for managers is a core criteria of the silver and gold Healthy Working Lives awards. Attending this course can be used in evidence for your HWL Awards Portfolio. For more information or to book a place please contact ork-HB.Learning@nhs.net

Interchange – for those who use drama and theatre in their work with young people



Scotland's annual training event for those who use drama and theatre in their work with young people is being held in Inverness on **10-12 March 2017**.

Youth Theatre Arts Scotland has refreshed the format of Interchange to respond to the changing needs of practitioners. It still remains Scotland's only annual training event for those who use drama and theatre in their work with young people, but Interchange 2017 now offers more in-depth masterclasses and the chance to apply skills directly with fellow delegates and members of Eden Court CREATIVE's Young Company. For more information please click [here](#).

Next Digital Meetup in Orkney! **4 April, Kirkwall**

Please do consider coming along to this session if you have an interest in anything digital for your organisation! This FREE session will be held from 11.00-3.00 at the Kirkwall & St Ola Community Centre and lunch will be provided.

You will hear about the use of Facebook and Twitter as a communication channel for your organisation and its members, live streaming of events and a fun look at some digital tools to enhance the work you do. The RNIB will also be along to describe some of the digital work that they do too and the equipment that they use.

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

Lloyds Money for Life Programme

Money for Life is delivered by Youth Scotland in partnership with UK Youth, The Mix and is funded by Lloyds Banking Group to inspire a generation to make the most of their money.

The three year programme comprises of a new online resource hub, where young people can find expert money advice, online training, supportive forums and a crisis helpline. The programme also offers face-to-face peer education training to provide practical Money Masterclasses to young people across the UK. As well as a new savings app, Pennies to Pounds, which will launch in November 2016 to offer various tools to support financial education.



MONEY FOR LIFE

From empowering young people to feel confident and start talking openly about money to providing high-quality training and crucial support systems; Money for Life equips 16-25 year olds across the UK with the knowledge, life skills and provision needed to manage their money.

Click [here](#) or contact [Youth Scotland](#) on 0131 554 2561 for more information.

Dates for your Diary

Touched By Suicide meeting 30 March

The next meeting of the Touched By Suicide group will be on 30 March from 7-8 at the Orkney Hotel.

That afternoon, before the meeting, Linda Nicol from [Touched By Suicide](#) will visit Orkney again, arranged by the Blide Trust, to deliver a public session about the work they do, what the Orkney group is doing and a general discussion. All are welcome to attend. The venue for this meeting is yet to be confirmed. For more information please contact [Edwina](#) on 872897.

Fairtrade Fortnight 2017

27 February - 12 March is Fairtrade Fortnight and numerous events are planned in Orkney to mark the occasion. Click [here](#) for the programme of events.



The Robertson Trust in Orkney – 13 March 2013

Following the announcement of their new Funding Strategy, [The Robertson Trust](#) will be in Orkney on 13 March for an afternoon and evening session. To find out more or to book your place, please contact [Meghan](#) on 872897.

Voluntary Arts Festival 2017 – Get Creative from 5 to 14 May!

Voluntary Arts Scotland (VAS) is the national development agency for all community-led creative cultural activity. The next [Voluntary Arts Festival](#) will take place throughout the UK from 5 - 14 May 2017. VAS are now contacting community-led groups throughout Scotland, encouraging them to take part in the Festival and to help promote their event(s) on their website and social media. If you're interested in taking part or would like to hear more about the Voluntary Arts Festival, contact them by [email](#) or on 0131 561 7333.

Focus on.....Victim Support Orkney



This month Jackie Fitzpatrick tells us about her role at Victim Support Orkney

Please sum up the main role of your organisation

Victim Support Orkney is an independent charity that provides confidential, non-judgemental, practical and emotional support to victims of crime (whether the crime has been reported or not) also to the victim, family members and anyone who has been affected by a crime. We can act as an advocate for the victim in meetings with other agencies. We also have a Witness Service to offer support through the criminal justice system, offering court familiarisation visits and support on the day in court. If we are unable to support you we would refer you onto an agency who can.

Now sum up in three words

Non-Judgemental, Confidential, Support.

What are you working on just now?

Building up the core service by recruiting volunteers. At present I am working on Victims Awareness Month, which is an annual Scotland wide event.

How many staff and volunteers does your organisation have?

There is currently one staff member and no volunteers in Victim Service and one volunteer in Witness Service.

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

We are always looking for volunteers who can give a year of their commitment to VS Orkney as it is costly for volunteers to be trained. Once trained at foundation level after a year they have the opportunity to do advance training in Domestic Abuse, Victims of Sexual Crime, and Support after Murder.

Roughly how many people use your service annually?

In 2015 to 2016 Victim Service helped 162 Victims and Witness Service supported 211 Witnesses through the Criminal Justice system in Orkney.

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

We help many service users both on an emotional level and also a practical one, in which we offer help with CICA (Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority) insurance claims, replace lost documents, advice on how to stay safe in your own home, and a host of other procedures. Then there is the witness side of it. We will support people attending court as a witness and again go through the court procedures which can be very frightening, so we can sit with you while you wait to go into the court room and sometimes sit with you in court while you give your evidence. For example: -- A victim was referred to us by the police and was offered emotional support throughout the time before and after the court case. The victim was then supported through the court system by another volunteer for Witness Service and referred back to the community based service (VS) and was supported through the Criminal Injuries process. With a successful award at the end of it.

How long have you been operating in Orkney?

Victim Support Orkney has had a presence for a long time, but not always with a member of staff present, it was previously run by a Service Delivery Officer in Lerwick Shetland, and covered by VS Highlands from Inverness.

How do you think people perceive your organisation? If you think they have the wrong perception, now's your chance to put them right.

People perceived the organisation as being part of Police Scotland especially when we had our office in the local police station in Kirkwall. We cannot stress enough we are an independent charity offering this confidential service. Some people are victims but their family are totally unaware that they are getting support from our service. The service is victim led meaning that any meetings, visits etc are done at the victim's pace and we try to fit in with that.

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

I would like to see the organisation redundant in 5 years' time, however I don't believe this will be the case. So I would like to think that anyone on Orkney would know who to contact in the event of a crime committed against them and feel able to make contact knowing that support is out there for them and their family.

How did you end up in your job?

I started as a volunteer, I went along to the Foundation course, and I was taken with what Victim Support offer, so that when this job vacancy came up I applied and got the post. I am still new to the organisation and I am learning something new every day. My colleagues are very helpful, and although I am in Orkney alone, a friendly listening ear is always on the end of the phone for me, so I always feel part of a team.

What's surprised you most while working for your organisation?

One of the things that struck me was there is crime all round us and people are just getting on with it! Victim Support is there to help people cope. Crime can affect you in different ways; in some in can affect eating, sleeping, working, or just feeling unsafe. We are there to help you get through a difficult experience.

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

Do not hesitate to get in touch if you feel the need to we will try and help you or your family anyway we can. Victim Support is a worthwhile Charity and people need to know we are here to help.



01856 871965

victimsupport.orkney@victimsupportsco.org.uk

www.victimsupportsco.org.uk