

Newsletter January 2017

VAO News & Services

Youth and Philanthropy Initiative – Get Involved!

Would you like to raise your charity's profile, potentially recruit new volunteers and be awarded a £3000 grant toward your charity?

Voluntary Action Orkney has been approached by Secondary Schools to help identify eligible charities to participate in the Youth Philanthropy Initiative.

The Youth and Philanthropy Initiative (YPI) is an active citizenship programme (supported by the Wood Family Trust) that raises awareness among young people about philanthropy. S3 pupils from secondary schools throughout Orkney will be involved in the project to consider the needs of their local community and identify a grassroots social service* charity they believe make a positive contribution.

Participating students will work in small teams and learn how to study the charities management, budget, strategy and staffing arrangements. Students will aim to build relationships with representatives from their chosen charity while being taught in school about investigating, teamwork, public speaking and presentation of findings. The group judged to have made the most compelling and thorough presentation wins a £3000 grant to award to their charity.



Awards given in 2016 are as follows: Kirkwall Grammar School - Y People (£3000); Stromness Academy - MS Society (£3000); Westray Junior High - MS Society (£3000).

The 2017 Charity Fair Dates are:

Wednesday 1 March 2017 11.30-2.30 - Stromness Academy

Friday 21 April 2017, 10.00-12.00 - Kirkwall Grammar School

If you would like to register your organisation to be involved please contact [Laura](#) at VAO on 01856 872897

**Please note: Eligible charities: All social service charities registered in Scotland through OSCR are eligible, there are no limits to how many teams you work with or how many YPI grants you receive.*

Young People 'Get Ready to Volunteer'



Four young people from Kirkwall Grammar School are gaining experience of volunteering through the Get Ready to Volunteer Course and have successfully participated in various placements.

The aim of the Get Ready to Volunteer course is to build confidence, identify what volunteering is, explain what the roles and responsibilities are as well as plan, deliver and evaluate a suitable volunteering opportunity to suit the individual. All four

young people - Katie Gorn, Morgan Gunn, Aaron Hume and Malcolm Gorn - have been supported to attend weekly sessions by staff at Kirkwall Grammar School and Laura Leonard, Youth Development Worker at Voluntary Action Orkney. Sessions have included dog walking, delivering activities at Gilbertson Day Centre, finding out about Orkney Soap and spending time learning about the Orkney Foodbank.

All of the group have achieved their Saltire Team Award alongside their 10 hours Saltire Award, Katie has achieved her 25 hour with the others well on their way to the milestone. Each has shown enthusiasm, commitment and a willingness to be involved. When asked how they felt volunteering had benefited them they commented that it has 'given them confidence in talking to new people', 'helped me work as a team' and 'volunteering made me feel calm'.



The group are continuing to volunteer and hope to keep gaining experience, growing in confidence and involving themselves in the community.

Legislation & Guidance

Solicitors for Older People Scotland: Access to Legal Aid for the over 60s

Despite cuts to services, legal aid can help many pensioners. Unfortunately too few Scottish pensioners are aware that they can get legal aid and consequently many are missing out on an important and useful opportunity for them and their families.

This relatively unknown scheme is extremely easy to access and covers lots of issues of critical importance to the older generation.

Solicitors for Older People Scotland (SOPS) are dedicated to providing legal advice to older and vulnerable people in a caring and sensitive way. Member firms, which include the [Herd Law Practice](#) in Orkney, are committed to providing home visits, hospital visits and care home visits FREE of charge and they will assess ALL clients over the age of 60 for Legal Aid Advice and Assistance. For more information call 0800 152 2037 or visit the SOPS [website](#).



Funding & Finance

Your Island Your Choice Funding

Do you have an idea that will make the non-linked islands a better place for everyone, under the themes of:

- 1) Positive Ageing
- 2) Healthy and Sustainable Communities
- 3) Vibrant economic environment

Do you need £200 to £6,000 to put your idea into action? If the answer is "YES"! Then this could be your opportunity to make your idea happen!

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 the identified key themes
- 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

Interested? Then click [here](#) for more information or contact [Meghan](#) on 872897. Please note the deadline for applications is **3 March 2017**.

Repsol Sinopec and Liam McArthur, MSP, Small Grants Scheme

Voluntary Action Orkney (VAO) is grateful to Repsol Sinopec for their donation which the VAO Board has decided to disburse as grants in order to support the work of small, community groups. VAO is also grateful to Liam McArthur, MSP, for his continuing donations which have been added to the Repsol Sinopec donation to increase the amount available.

Grants are offered to voluntary and community groups through the Small Grants Scheme, administered by VAO Board of Directors. Groups with charitable objectives (excepting party political groups), are eligible to apply for a maximum grant of up to £500 for a project to help their community.

Please click on the links for an [information leaflet](#) and here for an [application form](#). Please note that the deadline for applications is **17 March 2017**.

Local Third Sector News

Free Cycle Training for Community Groups & Volunteers

Would your community group or organisation like to arrange cycling activities such as riding for beginners, bike maintenance and bike recycling? If so, Cycling UK can offer help and support. Click [here](#) for more details.

Who's behind the Blue Door?



OACAS

30 January – 4 Feb

Orkney Snooker Association

6 – 11 February

Friends of Happy Valley

13 – 18 February

Cromarty Hall

20 – 25 February

Rotary Club

27 February – 4 March

Volunteering opportunities

Help Home-Start Support Local Families

Home-Start is a national charity available in hundreds of local communities. They recruit and train volunteers to help families with young children. Home-Start in Orkney need volunteers who would like to train as a family visitor, visiting families in their home once a week for a couple of hours. Full training is provided and volunteers are supported throughout.

Home-Start also need two new trustees who will be willing to give some time to help this much needed charity to continue providing a valuable community service. If you are interested in being a volunteer trustee or home visitor please contact [Rob](#) on 872897 or Erika on 870770.



Orkney Fossil Centre Needs Volunteers

Orkney Fossil Centre are on the hunt for new volunteers to assist in the café and kitchen when the museum reopens in April. Volunteers who are interested in admin duties and book keeping are also required. The café and kitchen duties will involve a variety of tasks including baking, laundry, dish-washing and shopping. The admin role will involve basic admin duties whilst some experience would be an advantage for the book keeping role. Full training and an induction will be offered to all new volunteers. For more information please contact [Rob](#) on 872897.

Supporting Victims of Crime

Victim Support Orkney need volunteers who can provide emotional and practical support to those who have been affected by crime including those affected by past crimes. The support is community based through telephone, email or home visits where possible.

Victim Support aims to ensure people are fully supported through the criminal justice process and have access to support in order to rebuild their lives. Volunteers must be reliable, sensitive, non-judgemental and have the ability and confidence to help distressed and vulnerable people.

Strict confidentiality must be adhered to at all times. Training takes place over three days in Inverness and Victim Support would expect volunteers to commit to a minimum period of 12 months volunteering after training. For more information contact [Rob](#) on 872897.



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

Third Sector job opportunities

Child Contact Centre Support Workers

Are you interested in childcare or social work but need some experience? Are you looking to do something worthwhile with your time?

[Relationships Scotland Orkney](#) are expanding their Child Contact Centres and recruiting more Support Workers who are key to delivering this service. You will be trained to work as part of a team that provides a neutral, welcoming, safe, child-focused environment to facilitate contact between children and the parent they do not live with.

The Contact centres are currently open on Wednesdays and Saturdays. Working hours will vary but are usually between 9am & 5pm.

If you are interested in this opportunity please contact Relationships Scotland Orkney at enquiries@rsorkney.org.uk or on 01856 877750.



Have your say.....

Third sector digital information and training

Digital [training](#) work was undertaken by SCVO and One Digital in 2016 in Orkney - you may have been part of the initial session and the following Meet Up back in September and hopefully gained a lot from these sessions.

The next stages of the project are being planned and to make sure that SCVO and One Digital know what is important to YOU here in Orkney, VAO have put together a simple 3 question [survey](#).

There really are only THREE questions and 3 minutes of your time would be greatly appreciated! Please let us know your thoughts by 10 February 2017 and we will pass these on to SCVO and One Digital.

Visitor Management Survey

Orkney Islands Council and Highlands & Islands Enterprise have commissioned consultants to develop ideas and recommendations for visitor management on Orkney. This is in response to the increasing numbers of visitors coming to Orkney, particularly day visitors arriving by coach and cruise ship. The aims of the study are to ensure that Orkney continues to attract a balance of different types of visitors and to deliver the best possible visitor experiences on the islands.

The consultants are keen to gather views, comments and ideas from tourism related businesses and organisations across Orkney in order to identify what locals think are the main challenges and opportunities arising from the growth in visitor numbers. They have compiled a short online [survey](#) with a series of questions which should take no more than a few minutes to answer.

If you have any questions relating to the survey please contact [Douglas Ritchie](#) on 07827963092.

News from OSCR

Are you registered to file online with OSCR?

OSCR's shift to digital filing has been a resounding success – with nearly every Scottish charity now filing their information electronically.

If you're one of the remaining 1,215 organisations, OSCR encourage you to sign up for its online system.

If you haven't already done so, click [here](#) to register for OSCR online.

New OSCR Logo



www.oscr.org.uk

The Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) has created a new logo for charities to display on their websites and email signatures to show they are a registered charity.

The registration logo has been designed to help charities show the public they are entered in the Scottish Charity Register. The charity registration logo can be downloaded free of charge to use by a charity from the OSCR [website](#) alongside a media pack with usage guidelines.

Also in the news

Get involved in the World Health Organisation's Let's Talk campaign

The World Health Organisation (WHO) have added several new materials to their Let's Talk Campaign [website](#).

Want to get involved? Here's how you can:

- Share their campaign materials and create your own
- Start planning activities that support the campaign objectives: workshops, exhibitions, wellness events and fundraisers are just a few ideas. Tell them about your plans through the engagement platform

- Engage your organisation's champions in the campaign – it could be as simple as asking them to share a tweet or record a message.
- Share their social media posts (<https://www.facebook.com/WHO> and <https://twitter.com/WHO>) and talk about your own work on your own social media channels, using #LetsTalk and #depression

House of Care Programme publish learning report

The Report captures stories from people living with long term conditions and staff from across Scotland who have been involved in collaborative care and support planning conversations, and in wider person centred approaches.

The learning from across Scotland's House of Care adopter network shows that:

- people living with long term conditions are feeling the benefit of the collaborative care and support planning approach and feel more in control of their conditions
- staff feel reconnected to the reasons why they came into primary care; and that has helped them rediscover a sense of purpose in their role.

Click [here](#) for a copy of the report.

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

First Aid Training

Emergency First Aid session with Safe Isles Services

22 February 2017 1.30-4.30pm at VAO, Anchor Buildings, Kirkwall

This half day First Aid training course will cover the following:

- Safety
- Basic Life Support (DR ABC)
- Bleeding
- Medical Emergencies
- Unconscious Casualty
- Recovery Position
- Practical Assessment
- Written (MCQ)

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

Fast Forward training

22 & 23 February

'Fast Forward' are providing a Free Training opportunity for all organisations on how to use drama to look at risk taking behaviour with young people.

These workshops are aimed at volunteers, practitioners and leaders who work directly with young people in a variety of different Youth work projects, organisation and groups. The 2-3 hour workshop will explore how to use drama to address health and wellbeing issues so the Youth workers and practitioners can with confidence and experience return to their organisations and use theatre to look at risk taking behaviour. The workshops will be co-delivered by young volunteers aged 18-25 years old, who have been upskilled in how to deliver and use drama/theatre in looking at risk taking behaviour, and an experience drama and youth work practitioner.

Two sessions will be held in Orkney:

[22 February 2017, 1.30-4.30 - Stromness Community Centre, Stromness](#)

[23 February 2017, 6.30-9.30pm - King Street Halls, Kirkwall](#)

For more information or to book a place please click on the links above or contact [Kai Peacock](#) on 0131 554 4300.

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.

Volunteer management training

8 March, Edinburgh

This course aims to make recruitment, management and, most importantly, engagement of volunteers easy. It encourages you to look closely at the motivations of volunteers and the organisations that use them, and draws on contemporary approaches including co-production and the use of non-hierarchical teams. The following topics will be covered:

- Why people get involved in volunteering and why understanding motivations is so important
- Creating roles for volunteers
- Recruitment & Publicity
- How to share examples of what works well and why
- Keeping people involved, happy and excited about the role they play
- Volunteering and the Law
- Concepts of co-production and working with volunteers in non-hierarchical structures

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

Full-time course now offered to meet local social care need at Orkney College UHI

It is widely known that Orkney, like the rest of the UK has an ageing population. At present the health and social work sector accounts for 1700 jobs in Orkney and this number is expected to only increase.

Orkney College UHI is now in a position to offer the Higher National Certificate in Social Services fulltime, previously it had only offered as a part-time course. For more information please click [here](#).

Information on funding available for Further and Higher Education courses at UHI

Thinking of studying at UHI Orkney College? Wonder how much it will cost? Click [here](#) for information about funding and fees.

Dates for your Diary



The Robertson Trust in Orkney

Following the announcement of their new Funding Strategy, [The Robertson Trust](#) will be in Orkney on 3 March for an afternoon and evening session. To find out more or to book your place, please contact [Meghan](#) on 872897.

The Gathering

22 & 23 February, Glasgow

Scotland's largest event for charities, social enterprises & voluntary organisations is being held in Glasgow on 22 and 23 February. Click [here](#) for more information on The Gathering 2017.

Voluntary Arts Festival 2017

5 - 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.

You could hold a taster session, open day, pop-up event or simply advertise your regular activity and make it welcoming to new people. Staging an event as part of the Voluntary Arts Festival is a great way to attract new members, raise your profile in local media, celebrate your achievements, and feel part of a nationwide event celebrating community-led, creative cultural activity. Click [here](#) to find out more.

Focus on.....Advocacy Orkney



This month Andy Spence-Jones tells us about her role at Advocacy Orkney.

Please sum up the main role of your organisation

Our role is to support someone's voice when for whatever reason they cannot speak up for themselves. The provision of independent advocacy for certain groups is a statutory entitlement.

Now sum up in three words

Support, empower and safeguard.

What are you working on just now?

Various plans, Human Rights Training and collective advocacy in addition to our day to day cases.

How many staff and volunteers does your organisation have?

We have 3 paid staff, one vacancy and 8 volunteers which includes our Board of Directors who are all volunteers.

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

Yes, we would like anyone interested in fundraising or admin support to contact us. Our work is highly confidential but may appeal to those with a strong sense of social justice and so can be very rewarding.

Roughly how many people use your service annually?

Between 150-200

How long have you been operating in Orkney?

I believe Advocacy Orkney was established in 2003.

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

We recently advocated for a client who was facing a change in their private tenancy agreement to that of a short-term tenancy, meaning it was possible that they could be served notice to leave every six months. Despite initially being advised that there was no medical entitlement for our client to be rehomed, we were delighted when the relevant personnel clearly understood that the impact of this scenario could result in our client not being able to hold down their job because of increased anxiety. If they became unemployed and unwell this would be of even greater concern and much harder to correct.

We were then advised, that upon reconsideration of the request for social-housing, that a property would be made available to our client which has a secure, life-time tenancy. When we see people, who are doing their very best, get this sort of support, it is the best feeling in the world. It is social justice in action and preventative interventions between ourselves and the Local Authority and or other services are described as life-changing by our clients because that is exactly what they are.

How do you think people perceive your organisation?

I know there are still some people who do not understand what independent advocacy does or who it is for. Conversely, almost 75% of those who approach us have self-referred. Many of those have done so based on the recommendations of friends, family members or colleagues that we have supported. Our annual client feedback provides glowing testimonials, which make us all feel humble, though determined to continue to tackle the issues that adversely affect our community.

It may also be the case that some people think we can only provide advocacy if they have some sort of officially recognised difficulty and for adults, that is not the case. We can provide advocacy to all adults who feel they are not being heard. Equally, there may be a misconception that if you have an advocate, you are guaranteed to get the outcome you want. That notion may have arisen because we do achieve some incredible things for clients. However, our role is to amplify our client's voice, help them make informed decisions and understand the pros and cons of their choices, but not to guarantee an outcome. Sometimes it is not the case that people have not been included or heard but simply that they cannot have a hoped-for outcome, for a myriad of reasons. However, at the very least, helping someone understand that position can still help them come to terms with it and help them feel included, so in that way, advocacy support is never wasted.

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

Prioritise humanity over bureaucracy

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

Always a tough question this one! Because if the world was fair and just, we would not need independent advocates. But based on the assumption that injustice and marginalisation will sadly prevail then I think we would aim for:

Financially secure, advocating for all children, stronger presence on the Isles, employing full-time staff and influencing local policy. Advancing our reputation as one of the best support agencies in Orkney.

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

Initially, cry with joy! Employ all staff on a full-time basis, expand the service to advocate for all children and have the capacity to more widely promote the service and in turn support more people. Employ a full-time receptionist and administrator. A sum of money like that would secure our service for a further 10 years and the peace of mind that would bring to us as an employer would be invaluable. If we could focus solely on the provision of quality, independent advocacy without having to spend so much time trying to secure funding, I genuinely believe we could achieve a fairer and more inclusive society in Orkney.

What's your role at your organisation?

Service Manager

Are you a paid staff member or a volunteer?

Paid

How long have you worked at your organisation?

4.5 years

How did you end up in your job?

I wanted the experience of working in a different sector, having been a previous NHS employee in London and Orkney for the best part of 25 years. I qualified as a counsellor and Youth Worker years ago, alongside my scientific roles and felt I could bring a cumulation of this diverse experience to this role. I had also been volunteering for RSO and undertook Befriending training about the time the post was advertised and was feeling reenergised by the prospect of working closely in a meaningful way with people again.

What's the best thing about working for your organisation?

Managing a wonderful team and getting good outcomes for our clients. Seeing people smile and become lightsome again after facing difficulties is priceless.

What's the worst?

Bearing witness to injustice/ distress which is invariably preventable.

What does a typical day in the office involve?

Coffee, camaraderie, hard work, meetings, calls, emails, letter writing, diligence, integrity, persistence, humour, kindness and putting our clients first at all times. No two days are the same and we start each day with enthusiasm and a genuine belief that independent advocacy is a force for good in the world and makes a difference.

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

People. Always people. I have never met anyone not capable of something remarkable even in the face of crippling adversity. Conversely, I have been surprised that agencies like ours who are charities but providing a statutory function, must seek out funding in the way we do in order to provide a service that some people are entitled to as decreed by various Acts of Parliament. Likewise, the disparity between wealth and poverty in our community has been brought into sharp focus. Similarly, the impact of budgetary constraints on our social and health care provision is always of concern.

What's the most important thing you've learnt while working in your organisation?

I would probably have to say; just how fragile the human condition is. I have also been reminded of the sheer enormity the force of kindness has. When people make decisions in kindness, that kindness gains velocity quickly and the impact can be far-reaching. Kindness motivates and inspires, it heals and encourages. Advocacy Orkney could not achieve the successful outcomes for clients it does as a single entity. Any success we do secure is attributable to other people also being prepared to look at something again, try a different approach, apologise or view the situation from our client's perspective. In acknowledging how fragile we all are, so too are we capable of resilience and extraordinary kindness. If collectively, as the Orkney community, replace judging, exclusion, marginalisation and criticism with kindness, there is no budgetary constraint in the world that will ever make us poor.

Supporting your voice



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<http://new.orkneycommunities.co.uk/ADVOCACYORKNEY/>