

OAMOCA

ORKNEY ANNUAL MEETING OF COMMUNITY ASSOCIATIONS

INTRODUCTION

The eighth Annual Association of Community Associations event was held on 2nd May 2009 in Stenness and once again was a resounding success. Although numbers were slightly down on previous years there was still a good turn out from both independent halls and community schools around the County. The Stenness Community Association provided a wonderful lunch easily managed to maintain the well earned reputation gained by the host halls for putting on a great spread, which included the best bannocks ever tasted!

HIGHS AND LOWS

Once again we started the session discussing the success stories from halls in the past year. The only difference this year was that we split the independent halls and Community Schools into two groups to allowing discussions to be more relevant to participants.

Positive things happening in the past year included; Holm-a-mia, a caravan club using the hall and field, High Teas using local produce, numerous successful fundraisers, local newsletters, thriving youth clubs, plenty volunteers, and even some young blood.

It is always felt that discussing problems or issues with other community Associations is very useful. Some of the issues raised included; concerns over the new licensing laws, requirements of OSCR, lack of volunteers, lack of young people and men on hall committees, storage, and access to Community School kitchens.



2009 PROGRAMME

10.15am: Registration and Refreshments
Welcome and Introductions

10.30am: What's New for You?
Current issues for your hall
Information sharing session

11.15am: Water Rates – Discussion Group Swimming Pools /Healthy Living Centres- Kieran Henderson, OIC

11.45am: Insurance – Discussion Group
Representative from Clark Thomson
Insurance Brokers with Kerry Spence
& Walter Gorman

12.15pm: Lunch

1.15pm: Funding for Community Associations
Barbara Robertson
Voluntary Action Orkney

2.15pm: “Where Now?”
Issues & Action for the future

3.15pm: Evaluation and Close



WATER RATES

At last years event the issue of Water rates was raised as it became apparent that some halls have received exemptions while other halls are still paying water rates. Kerry Spence spoke with someone from Scottish Water's Business Stream who gave the details of the exemption criteria and a direct contact for further enquiries.

For exemption you will need the following:

- ⇒ Your property must have had charitable relief as of 31st March 1999
- ⇒ Your property must not be occupied by a local authority
- ⇒ Your property must not have a permanent liquor licence
- ⇒ Your net annual income must be less than £50,000

Some halls have been successful in gaining the exemption and also received a rebate.

Licences for septic tanks is also an issue. All septic tanks must now be registered. If done before 31 May it is free for private households.. Halls are now wondering do halls have to register and if so can they get it done for free before a certain date? Kerry agreed to contact SEPA for further details and is sending out information on both the water rates exemption and the registering of septic tanks to all independent halls. If you have not yet received this information please get in touch on 873535 ext 2425.

CLD and VAO are there to help so please contact us if you have any queries. We can also draw in MSP Liam McArthur if any problems arise as he has helped some halls with these issues in the past.

INSURANCE FOR COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

The new guidelines produced for the updated Community Schools Handbook were distributed. This states that public liability cover is only provided for activities promoted and controlled by Orkney Islands Council. It does not provide indemnity for the legal liability of independent individuals or organisations, (including any independent constituted bodies on the Association), not part of any Orkney Islands Council arranged activities carried out at the Community School and Centres.

Activities and events organised and run by the Community Association will have public liability cover but it is more unclear when you are only charging for the hire of the room.

SWRI and other national organisations are likely to have their own insurance.

Things are less clear for other groups who simply hire the room such as Mothers and Toddlers, bowls. These groups may need to get their own insurance in place.

There were many questions raised which CLD agreed to take back to the Council and try and get clarity on for Community Schools.



Insurance workshop

This workshop for independent halls was led by Kevin Hancock, Associate Director, Clark Thomson, Insurance Brokers Ltd. All the halls represented in the group were members of the Village Halls Scheme, which Kevin explained was available in many areas of Scotland for community halls and brought different kinds of cover, of particular relevance to community halls, under one umbrella scheme. Points highlighted in this information and discussion session included:

- Halls need to be sure that their building and contents cover is adequate. If it is not, halls are in danger of not having a claim met in total. Kevin recommended getting a valuation done.
- If alcohol is being held in a hall this needs to be written in to the policy, as does the lending out of any equipment.
- Groups which hire the hall have to have their own public liability insurance. This does not include groups which are part of the hall's own programme, nor individuals eg for a wedding. Groups concluded that having a 'conditions of hire' sheet would be necessary.
- Committees must have all the appropriate checks in place eg Fire Risk Assessments, health and safety checks and electrical inspections and all the appropriate legislation with regard to the protection of children.

Kevin emphasised that if anyone had any doubts re. hall insurance cover, they should contact their insurers.

FUNDING

Barbara Robertson from Voluntary Action Orkney presented a session on funding sources for halls and had prepared an information sheet for delegates' packs. For copies of the sheet contact Barbara at VAO. Barbara presented extra information on :

Awards for All <http://www.awardsforall.org.uk/scotland/publicity.html#logo>

There have been some changes with this fund from April 2009.

- The application form and process are a bit different
- Heritage projects will be looked at differently
- There is more emphasis on the fund's priorities and on achieving the outcomes the fund wants

But mostly projects which used to fit the criteria still should !

The website, for an online application form and guidance is www.awardsforall.org.uk/scotland

And on:

SRDP (Scotland Rural Development Programme)

Some funds under this Scottish/European Programme are relevant to community groups. Amongst these are

- **LEADER**
- **RURAL PRIORITIES**



LEADER

This fund aims to

'assist communities to achieve their aspirations for economic and social development through supporting projects of an innovative nature that will increase their long term sustainability – economic, social and environmental'

Main points

- LEADER can cover up to 40% of eligible project costs
- The fund will run until 2013
- Awards are decided upon locally

For advice contact Alister Brown, Development Officer (LEADER Programme), Orkney Islands Council, School Place, Kirkwall, KW15 1NY Tel: 01856 873535 ext. 2855 Email: alister.brown@orkney.gov.uk

For more information visit:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Rural/SRDP/LEADER>

<http://www.orkneycommunities.co.uk/LEADER>



RURAL PRIORITIES

Funds for this programme come from Europe and from the Scottish Government and usually can only part fund a project.

The fund has broad funding themes and those which may be of most interest to community groups are: built and cultural heritage; public access; tourism and thriving rural communities.

Some of the projects which might be funded are: halls and public facilities; footpaths and cycle tracks; community buses; community shops and local food initiatives.

Applications must be made on line at www.scotland.gov.uk/srdp where you will also find guidance notes.

Rural Direct is a service which provides information about Rural Priorities and other funding opportunities. It can help community groups make initial applications. This service is provided in Orkney by Barbara Robertson at Voluntary Action Orkney.

FEEDBACK SESSION

- The Community Schools and Independent Halls Handbooks were felt to be useful but they should be available on-line and updated regularly, with printer friendly versions available.
- People want checklists, like what is required for health and safety or fire regulations
- Need an up to date list of local hall contact details.
- It was felt the community school / independent hall split was good
- It was suggested that we get the report out earlier

TOPICS FOR NEXT YEAR'S PROGRAMME

- Community School kitchen use
- Session on hall charges
- Fire fighting
- New licensing laws
- Community school insurance issues resolved
- Wedding licences
- Food hygiene regulations etc

VENUE FOR NEXT YEAR

Where will the next event be held? Sanday, Sandwick, Rendall, Cromarty Halls all were suggested. It was suggested that we go to Sanday for our 10th Hall event.....

WHEN ?

After some discussion it was felt that May was a good time for boats etc but it would be better a little later in the month due to lambing and calving etc. So next year we are going to try having it in mid to late May.

CONTACTS FOR OAMOCs

If you have any further comments or suggestions, ideas for future events please get in touch with Kerry Spence or Walter Gorman at:

**Community Education, Council Offices,
Kirkwall. 01856 873535 e-mail
kerry.spence@orkney.gov.uk or
walter.gorman@orkney.gov.uk**

And Barbara Robertson at:

**Voluntary Action
Orkney, 6 Bridge Street, Kirkwall.
01856 872897
e-mail fas@vaorkney.org.uk**



FEDERATION OF ORKNEY HALLS

Having this group constituted and running such as the Shetland Federation of halls was discussed. It would appear useful for lobby when problems arose but it was felt that the Association of Community Associations annual event was enough. It sets up good networking opportunities.



HEALTHY LIVING CENTRES / SWIMMING POOLS

Kieran Henderson - Assistant Director (Leisure & Culture) came along to discuss the running of HLC's and Swimming Pools in Community Schools. He informed Representatives that OIC are currently looking into tightening up the legal and financial responsibilities of Community Associations, lifeguards and OIC. A service legal agreement is to be drawn up between OIC and Community Associations.

It was agreed that a holistic health programme should be considered. Training for aqua fit and other water fitness activities is wanted, and people who would benefit medically from using the pool or HLC should receive a discount. It was acknowledged that communication over maintenance issues had to improve.



SOME OF YOUR COMMENTS ON THE DAY

What Did You Like About Today's Event ?

Meeting others and sharing ideas
Hearing about issues in other halls
Getting more funding ideas

Do You Feel You Learnt Anything Today ?

Other group's problems, how they overcame them
New ideas for generating funds
Insurance, what we need

Is There Anything Else You'd Like To Know More About ?

More Information On Funding
Contact list for other halls
Hire guidelines for halls