

OAMOCA 2010

ORKNEY ANNUAL MEETING OF COMMUNITY ASSOCIATIONS

INTRODUCTION

The ninth Annual Association of Community Associations event was held on 29th May 2010 in the Cromarty Hall, St Margaret's Hope. The day was again a resounding success with committee representatives from independent halls and community schools attending from around the County. From Papay to Stronsay, from Holm to Harray they came along to the event which provides useful advice, help and support for community halls. It also offers the invaluable opportunity to engage with agency representatives and perhaps most importantly to meet and exchange problems, ideas and solutions with other halls. The Cromarty Hall provided a wonderful lunch which not only maintained, but possibly 'upped the ante' for the well earned reputation gained by the host halls for putting on a great spread!

PROGRAMME

- 10.15am Deeds & constitutions discussion - Lows Community School Insurance - OIC
- 10.45am Fire Safety Risk Assessments, Kevin Tait, OIC
- 11.15am Current Hall Issues (Post it exercise)
- 11.30am SCVO Village Halls Website & Toolkit, VAO
- 12.00pm Lunch
- 1.00pm Village Halls & Social Enterprise, Lindsey Kelly, Social Enterprise Academy
- 1.30pm Licences, Fiona MacDonald, OIC
- 2.00pm Hall Charges & Cromarty Hall tour
- 2.30pm Coffee, Round-up, and Evaluation
- 3.00pm Close

SOME OF YOUR COMMENTS

What did you like about today's event?

"A nice group of people / Friendly atmosphere"
"A great deal of information given"
"Shortish sessions and meeting others was good"

Do you feel you learnt anything today?

"Lots – almost too much information"
"Yes – social enterprise"
"Yes – licences and website information"
"Learnt something from most sessions"
"Yes- fire safety"
"What everyone charges for halls and licensing"

Is there anything else you'd like to know more about?

"How other halls run"
"How halls charge for use"

Other comments

"Well balanced event"
"Very informative"
"Wonderful relaxed venue with super lunch and homebakes – Thank you".



DEEDS AND TRUSTEES

With many independent Halls currently looking into their deeds and constitutions it has become apparent that there are issues over trustees and who actually owns the hall that Community Associations are busy running. Alistair Bruce, a Solicitor from Lows, Kirkwall came along to give some information on the situation and how Associations can deal with this matter.

It appears that most, if not all of the Community Associations in Orkney have evolved from bodies set up under a kind of model Trust deed which was circulated around 1949 by the Scottish Council for Social Services (now SCVO). These deeds provided for a group of Trustees, typically the local Minister, Head Teacher and District Councillor (ex officio) to hold the title of the hall with the management carried out by the committee.

This raises 3 issues:

1. The 1949 Trustees have title to the property. This is complicated by the fact that as a matter of Council policy the local Head Teacher or Councillor can not accept appointment as a trustee. This therefore leaves many halls with only one trustee.
2. The "1949" committee have been replaced in practice by the Community Associations, but the Trustees still hold the title so there is something of a conflict.
3. The Community Association runs the hall but actually has no title and possibly no right to do so.

These issues raised many questions, not least over insurance cover.

Halls must firstly find their halls title deeds. They could be with your bank, one of the local firms of solicitors, OIC or on file.

It was suggested that if many halls were looking into getting their deeds changed it would be worthwhile applying en masse for an OIC Community Development Fund grant to help towards the costs. To be able to do this we need to know how many halls need their deeds altered. So please let Kerry or Edwina know if you are interested in getting your hall deeds updated.



INSURANCE IN COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

At last year's event many questions were raised over Community School insurance. These were answered as clearly as possible but should you have any further questions please contact your local Community Learning Officer.

- The new guidelines produced for the updated Community Schools Handbook gives clear advice and information on what insurance is provided and who it covers. It 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 independently constituted bodies on the Association) arranging 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 when a group are simply hiring a room they would not be covered.
- A group would be covered if they pay their subs to the CA, but if they have their own constitution and bank account it would be hard to argue that they were being promoted and controlled by the Community Association, even if they have a rep on the CA.
- Finance Dept would like all Community Associations to provide an annual declaration of activities that are being promoted and controlled by the CA on behalf of the Council.
- Groups looking for insurance could apply en masse for insurance but they would need to investigate this with an independent insurance adviser.
- Private function bookings - An example of the booking form used by the Kirkwall Community Centre is available for anyone to look at. It puts the onus back onto the person hiring the room. If there was a fault with the fabric of the building it would come back to the Councils insurance. It would depend on what activities groups undertake but at a minimum it is thought they should arrange public liability cover.
- For Lunch Clubs the above applies (if promoted and controlled by the Community Association). If food is provided by OIC Catering Services then Orkney Islands Council insurance would be in force.
- Slipperine has not been banned by the Health & Safety Executive (but should be used with care).



LICENSING

Fiona MacDonald, Head of OIC Legal Department came along to discuss the new liquor laws and how they affect village halls. She distributed the current guidelines from the licensing board and discussed the changes and effects they are having in Orkney.

- A Community Association can now get up to **16** occasional licences a year, but they have to be for events that are within the aims and objectives of the Community Association. You have to tie in the benefit to the community in your application for a licence.
- The licensing board is being proactive in looking at the problems of alcohol in Orkney. They also look at the issue of over provision, although it is regarded that there is currently no over provision in Orkney, it is under constant review.
- Companies Limited by Guarantee can now fall within voluntary organisations.
- Personal licences – If an individual has a personal licence they can apply for licences for private functions taking place in your hall. That person has to be on the premises for the entire function and they are accepting a lot of responsibility so should look for insurance to cover them for public liability. It is advised that Halls get indemnity for them through their insurance.
- Having a member of your Hall committee that holds a personal licence can benefit the Community Association because it shows the board that you have someone who understands the licensing regulations and will demonstrate all the principles and good management of the event in accordance with the licensing board's principles and standards. They are also able to cascade training to fellow committee members.
- Weddings in Halls would need to get a licence from either a professional caterer or from someone with a personal licence.
- It is now mandatory down south to have trained door stewards on duty at events and there is talk of rolling this out to voluntary groups. This regulation is likely to reach Orkney at some point.
- If there is a need, OADP (Orkney Alcohol & Drug Partnership) may be able to look into providing funding for door steward training and personal licence holder training. If your Community Association is interested in this training, please let us know.
- A Briefing Paper on Alcohol Legislation was issued to folk last year and has been issued again to attendees at this meeting. If you need further copies sent to members please contact Edwina at VAO.



There is also a Local Licensing Forum which looks into the licensing issues and laws. There is a lack of community and young people representatives on this forum so if anyone from your committee is interested in joining please get in touch with Edwina or Kerry for further details. We have included an application form with this report and would encourage community groups to get their voice heard amongst the pubs, hotels and clubs. Please return forms to David Miller, Committees Officer, at OIC.

FIRE SAFETY

Kevin Tait, OIC Fire Safety Officer put into layman's terms what is expected of halls under the current 2006 Fire Scotland Act. He visited the Cromarty Hall before the event and carried out a Fire Safety Risk Assessment (FSRA) on the hall. He then went through the procedures and explained in detail how to undertake a risk assessment back in your own hall.

Some useful points raised were:

- Halls have to make adjustments towards Fire Safety that are reasonable
- Curtains do need to be retreated for fire retardancy from time to time
- Fire Awareness Training can be done through Orkney College
- Keyholders must be knowledgeable in fire procedures
- Fire exits, fire extinguishers, emergency lighting & fire alarms need to be checked regularly
- Halls should all undertake a fire risk assessment on their building
- Halls should all have a fire log book to record checks, fire drills etc.
- Emergency lighting is also required outside the building but you can often use borrowed lighting (i.e. street lights)
- If there was a fire in the premises the first thing the fire brigade would ask for is the fire risk assessment and log book.

VILLAGE HALLS WEBSITES AND TOOLKIT

In the light of the fact that we no longer have the resources available to provide hard copies of updates for the Halls Handbook, CLD and VAO thought it was a more feasible and convenient for groups to get updates and information required for their hall on-line. Edwina Cook from VAO went through some of the websites that are regularly updated with current issues which are particularly useful for halls.

www.orkneycommunities.co.uk/communitytoolkit

This site was developed by Skye & Lochalsh Council for Voluntary Organisations and is maintained by them. The Policies section was co-written by Glasgow Council for Voluntary Services and VAO. The site offers up to date information on grants, good practice, being an employer, constitutions, charitable status, publicity ideas, model policies and much more.

www.scvo.org.uk

SCVO village halls website is another very useful site. It is a one stop shop for news, information, and networking for anyone involved in managing a village hall or community building in Scotland.

These sites were suggested by an attendee as being an excellent introduction to the whole process of running a hall to new committee members!



VILLAGE HALLS AND SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

Lindsay Kelly from the Social Enterprise Academy came up to speak about how halls can be social enterprises and be run as social businesses and make money to plough back in to the community.

A Social Enterprise was defined as “ a business with primarily social objectives whose surpluses are principally re-invested for that purpose in the business or in the community rather than being driven by the need to maximise profit for the shareholders and owners.”

It is about trading and earning and income not just relying on grants or old fashioned fundraising.

A social enterprise has to have a social objective as a core purpose. Social + income = Social Enterprise.

Village Halls as a Social Business:

Have an idea (think sideways!), research it, plan it, consider the committee's skills and leadership – do they need expanding? Does the activity fit with your aims? Will you enjoy this and have some **fun**?! As volunteers, you also need to get enjoyment out of what you do and what you give up your free time for.

4P's:

Product- Consider what you have- What you offer – How does it differ from anyone else in the area?

Price – How much it costs to run – How much we can charge – Different pricing scales (reg. user, local population etc).

Promotion – Advertising – Direct contact – PR – Networking – Brochures/flyers – Website (where most folk go to today, if no website established, they suggested www.spanglefish.co.uk, template website at £20.) If you have a good wedding, post it in Scottish Wedding Magazine!

Place – Where you are – Direct selling online, retail/events, they come to you, you go to them.

HALL CHARGES

This session took place near the end of the meeting and all were asked if they had any objections to sharing information. None had. It is interesting to note the differences but individual halls have individual circumstances. It is worth examining your own charges to see if they are adequate, particularly in view of what the SEA had to say about finding your Unique Selling Point (USP).

	Orphir	Holm	Cromarty Hall	Harray	Deerness	Stronsay	Sandwick
Local wedding	£100 +cleaning @£7.50 p/h	£300	£200	£350	£125 + £75 cleaning	£60+ meter costs	£150
Outside wedding		£300	£230	£250	£200 + £75 cleaning	£120 + meter costs	£150
Meeting Room	£8	£££	£10 (up to 4 hours)		£30	£2p/h or £5p/h	£5
Main Hall	£8		£30 (up to 4 hours) then £50	2 rates (affiliated groups & others)		£5 per hour (dance £20)	£15

SOME OF THE PROBLEMS AND ISSUES WHICH WERE FACED BY THE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION / HALLS IN THE LAST YEAR

- Need to raise money
- Cleaning of premises
- Need to recruit cleaners for halls (Caretaker)
- Lack of volunteers (Volunteer Burnout)
- Lack of storage space, school taking over the space
- Attendance at meetings (Some groups do not put representatives forward)
- Use of school kitchen.
- Heating is being controlled outwith Orkney in school buildings, leading to problems with excessive heat.
- Lack of new members
- No young people

NEXT YEARS EVENT

As previously suggested we are planning to hold the 10th Annual Halls Meeting in Sanday. We will have to work on the logistics but we hope it will be a great adventure for all who participate.

WHEN?

After some discussion it was agreed that there is never a good time to hold this event as people are so busy but we have to agree a date. We are proposing to hold this event in May again but if you have any other suggestions or ideas please let us know.

SOME OF THE POSITIVE OUTCOMES IN COMMUNITY ASSOCIATIONS / HALLS THIS YEAR AND SOME HOPES FOR THE FUTURE

- There is a keen "old" committee
- Harray Hall – Fire risk assessments done, got water rates exemption and football pitch renovations completed
- 3 young committee members in Sandwick Association
- Lots of activities going on
- Weddings are a good source of income
- Outside caterers are very happy with the facilities
- Old activities such as Treasure hunts are still very popular
- Variety of annual community events
- Good range of young and old members on their committee
- Established Community Newsletter
- Sandwick Hall – possible refurbishment



CONTACTS FOR OAMOCA

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

Community Learning & Development, Council Offices, Kirkwall.
Tel: 01856 873535
kerry.spence@orkney.gov.uk or
walter.gorman@orkney.gov.uk

or

Edwina Cook at:

Voluntary Action Orkney,
6 Bridge Street, Kirkwall.
Tel: 01856 872897
edwina.cook@vaorkney.org.uk

