

## ORKNEY ANNUAL MEETING OF COMMUNITY ASSOCIATIONS

On Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> September the St Magnus Centre was the venue for the 12th Annual event of Orkney's Community Associations and Halls event. This event is run every year by Community Learning & Development in partnership with Voluntary Action Orkney. Rather than the usual format of workshops and speakers, this year's event was run in a slightly different way.



From the suggestions and comments from the 2012 event it was apparent that what halls representatives actually wanted was on the ground practical training courses that will help their committee become up-skilled and more confident in their roles. Thanks to financial assistance awarded through the Strategic Community Learning Group, from the North Alliance up-skilling fund, this year saw two training sessions run simultaneously through the day. Food Hygiene and Basic First Aid were both well attended.

12 halls signed up with 17 of the 21 committee members turning up on the day to take part in the practical training sessions.

After a wonderful lunch catered by the Blide Trust, the hall committee members then gathered for an information sharing session where everyone gave a very brief update of what was going on in their hall/community and what successes they had or challenges that they were facing.

Some common challenges were:

- Lack of volunteers Committee Members
- Aging populations
- Folk who have moved into a community not having that 'community identity' or taking an interest in hall functions and events
- A decline in overall usage
- Competition from other facilities
- Parish boundaries are blurring
- Fundraising is taking a large amount of time for a decreasing amount of money



Some of the successes and 'good news' stories were:

- Some Community Associations had successfully applied for funding and were managing projects
- Associations had a good core of folk who are willing to do a lot for their hall
- A number of associations were surprised to learn how much they had in common with another halls
- Some Associations had successfully navigated the road to becoming a SCIO (for more information please contact Meghan or Edwina at VAO)
- One or two groups had some really exciting fundraising ideas 'Stodge and Stomp' was a unique idea.



After some very exciting discussions about governance issues and community engagement the Associations were asked for some ideas for next year's Annual Community Halls Meeting.

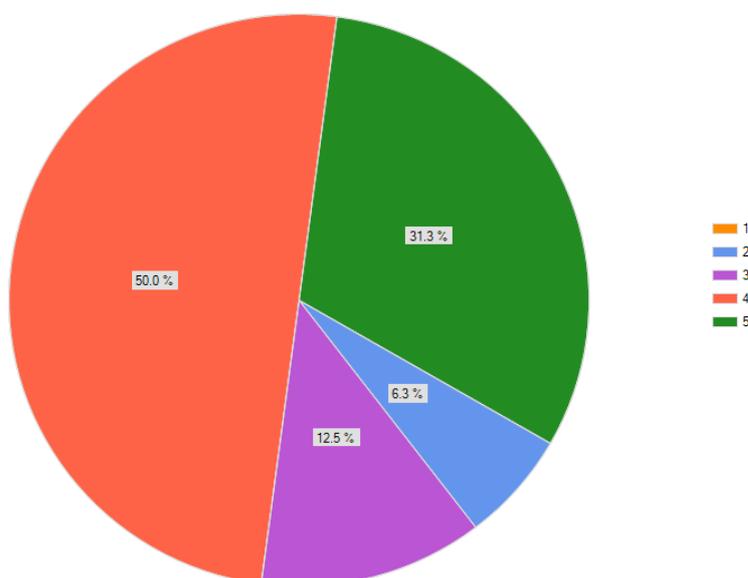
Some suggestions were:

- A session on 'How Committees Function'
- A session on 'Good Examples of Creative Thinking'
- An 'Ideas Bank' where ideas and good examples from other halls can be collected, shared and learned from.

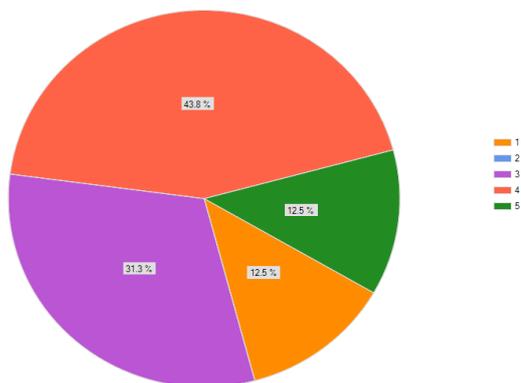
We are always looking for ways to make the day as useful to the Associations as possible, so if you have any other ideas or suggestions please don't hesitate to contact Edwina or Meghan at VAO or Kerry at OIC.

## Evaluations

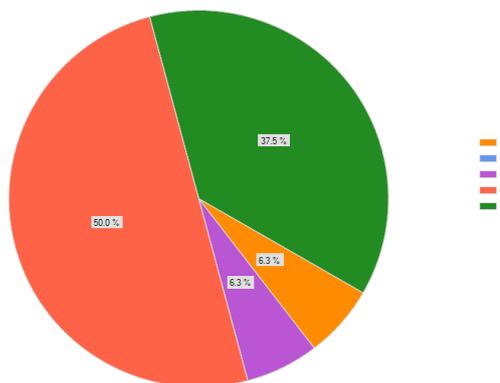
How would you rate the following? (1= Poor, 5 = Excellent) The whole day:



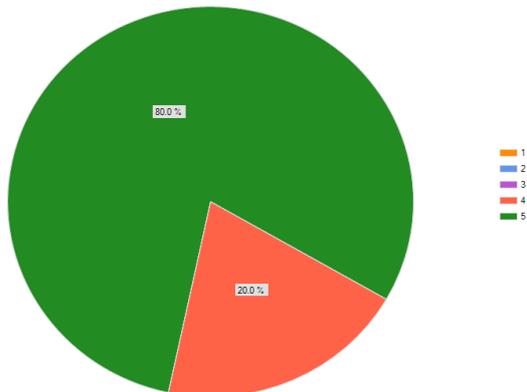
How would you rate the following? (1= Poor, 5 = Excellent)The pre-event information:



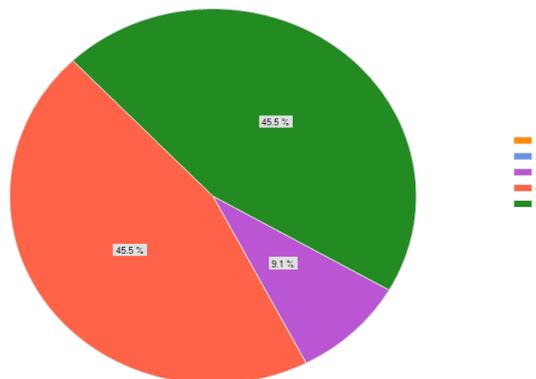
How would you rate the following? (1= Poor, 5 = Excellent)Information sharing session (Flip Chart):



How would you rate the following? (1= Poor, 5 = Excellent)First Aid Training:



How would you rate the following? (1= Poor, 5 = Excellent)Food Hygiene Training:



Feedback comments from the day included:

“Interesting that our hall has the same problems as others”

“It’s given me the will to carry on”

“Like sharing ideas”

“Good that timing was good for coming in from the isles”

“Realised we have a good committee”

“Became aware of how committees should work”

“Very good. Got people interacting”

“Day went too quickly”

“Good to hear from other communities”

It was an extremely worthwhile day and those present reported that it had been an excellent networking event as well as providing some practical skills and developing confidence and abilities for those returning to the halls in their own areas around Orkney.

For further information on the event contact:

Kerry Spence at:

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Edwina Lloyd and Meghan McEwen at:

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