

Early sighting of Santa's elves in Kirkwall

Shoppers reported the first sighting of Santa's elves recently in Kirkwall. A number of red and green small (and not so small) elves were seen handing out sweets and fliers in the street as part of the annual Charities Christmas Bazaar. 22 groups had stalls at the ever popular event in Kirkwall Town Hall, selling a range of Christmas goods, cards, gifts and baking. Organised by Voluntary Action Orkney, the Bazaar offers local voluntary groups the chance to fund raise in the run up to Christmas.

To make sure everyone got in the festive spirit, VAO introduced a stall competition, with prizes for the most festive and best overall. After deliberation by the judges, Samaritans of Orkney were awarded the Best Overall Stall.

Gail Anderson, VAO Chief Executive awarded Gavin Cullen, Chair of Samaritans of Orkney, with their certificate, with the help of some of Santa's elves.



Age Concern Orkney were awarded Most Festive Stall. Pictured receiving their award are Sue Ward, Rachel Peace and Brian Kirkness.



Santa's Grotto proved to be a hit with the younger visitors to the Bazaar and volunteers also provided live music on the day. VAO would like to thank all the stall holders and public who supported the event, as well as the volunteers who helped out on the day.

Befriending Week Lunch

To celebrate this year's Befriending Week the Adult Befriending Service organised a "thank you" for their Befriender's and Befriender's in partnership with "The Get It Together" project which aims to help local people access the internet, learn new skills and realise the benefits of being online.

Janette from Get It Together introduced i-pads for everyone to have a shot on. We learnt you can play all our favourite games on them such as scrabble and snakes and ladders. We were delighted when our MSP Liam McArthur joined us for some fun with the Wii.

Everyone enjoyed a soup and sandwich lunch before Janette showed us some of the great websites that could be accessed.

With a bit of help from Liam in another location, skype was demonstrated.

Bringing IT into lives of our community is very important to help ease social isolation and could give a new way and valuable way for people to keep in touch with their families out with Orkney.

One of our Befriender's went home absolutely delighted. Gavin is visually impaired and has not been able to access a computer for some time. With help from Janette he was playing games and placed the skype call to Liam. Gavin's family are all south so the prospect of being able to communicate with them in this way was very exciting and very achievable for him.

Without our volunteer Befriender's we wouldn't be able to provide this very valuable service for our community.

As a mark of our gratitude Liam McArthur presented all the Befriender's with Befriending Week certificates.



Orkney Youth Awards Ceremony



The accomplishments of Orkney's young people were showcased earlier this month in a special awards ceremony, at the King St Halls with around 120 people attending .

Saltire Awards comprised over half the certificates presented, with eight of these young achievers receiving the Saltire Summit Award, for an outstanding contribution to volunteering. In total, young people were recognised for over 6000 hours volunteering time. Dynamic Youth and Youth Achievement certificates were also presented at the Awards.

Laura Leonard, who had a major role in organising the event, commented: "I was really delighted with the turnout. It shows how much the efforts young people make in our community are appreciated."

Assisting Laura and CLD staff from the council in organising the night were the Connect project and the VAO ROAR group. The night was hosted by Orkney MSYP Iona Torbet and Katell Roche. A real team effort!

The special guest was MSP for Orkney Liam McArthur, and the event got a special mention in his e-newsletter 'Holyrood Highlights';

"Rather than attend the Politician of the Year Awards in Edinburgh, I was delighted to be handing out the prizes at the Orkney Youth Awards Ceremony in Kirkwall instead. A packed King Street Halls saw further evidence of the phenomenal contribution young people in Orkney make to life in these islands. Whether in music, sport or a staggering variety of volunteering, young Orcadians are doing remarkable things. It was an honour to be invited by VAO to join in the celebrations of that success last night."

ASH Scotland training

"Voluntary Action Orkney has been asked to help ASH Scotland - the national charity taking action on smoking and health - to determine if there would be interest amongst community and voluntary organisations in Orkney to attend Tobacco Awareness-Raising Sessions (TARS) in late March 2014.

TARS are meant to help an organisation's staff and/or volunteers consider the ways in which tobacco might be affecting their service users; it is not formal training, more of a chance to discuss various aspects of tobacco use.

ASH Scotland have developed a quick online survey to gauge interest in these sessions; they will be offered in both Kirkwall and Stromness. The survey should take no more than five minutes to complete and can be accessed by clicking on the hyperlink which will remain open for responses until Thursday 12th December: https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/TARS_Orkney_vol_orgs_March_2014

If you have any queries please contact Linda Bates (ASH Scotland Development Officer) at lbates@ashscotland.org.uk or phone 0131 220 9481.

New Skills Website for Charities and Social Enterprises

Charities and social enterprises throughout the UK can register now for a new interactive online skills platform that will launch in early December.

Skills-Third Sector has created the first interactive online skills platform to help charities and social enterprises find training to develop their workforce.

The skills platform will be the first comparison site for the charitable sector. Organisations will be able to access sourcing skills, compare offers and work together to find relevant, well priced local training. Trainers, consultants, employers and practitioners will be able to help each other out through a new concept of 'Shout Outs' to request a meet-up, collaborate with other users to share costs, write invitations to tender or call for help with a task.

For more information visit: <http://www.skillsplatform.org/>



Need space for your next meeting?

Our central location and competitive rates make VAO an ideal venue contact us for rates...

Dates for your Diaries

December 3rd Protection of Vulnerable Group Training VAO 2.00-4.30pm. To book a place call 872897 or email enquiries@vaorkney.org.uk. A fee will apply.

December 3rd First Aid Training – delivered by the Red Cross, times to be confirmed.

December 4th Support & Supervision - do you have staff and have a responsibility to offer support & supervision, not quite sure if you're doing the right thing? VAO are holding a session from 6.00-8.30pm, a fee will apply.

December 5th Domestic Abuse & Child Protection – held in the King Street Halls 9.00-12.30pm. To book a place contact peter.connolly@orkney.gov.uk

December 11th Outcomes Training – Funding applications, funding reports, What are they, how can you measure them? VAO are holding a session from 3.00-5.00pm, a fee will apply.

FREE INTERNATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES & FUNDING TRAINING

Xchange Scotland is a charity based in Glasgow which primarily works to provide affordable and accessible international volunteering and non-formal education opportunities. Our aims are to promote international volunteering and our goals of active global citizenship and inter-cultural understanding.

We have recently received funding from Youth-Link Scotland to offer free training opportunities to third sector organisations. These sessions will provide your organisation both the information and space to explore how adding an international dimension to your work can benefit your staff and those that you work with.

Training will be offered in:

- How you can send volunteers on funded or low cost international projects.
- How you can benefit from groups of international volunteers assisting your work.
- How fully funded training opportunities can be accessed for you and/or your staff.
- How to access funding through the new Erasmus+ programme for Youth Exchanges and other International work

We would like to run a full day session in Kirkwall in January or February and are at the point of gathering information about interested parties in order to book an appropriate venue.

For more information and to find out how you can book a space on a session please contact Martin on martin@xchangescotland.org or on 0141 237 4767.

CLD Standards Council for Scotland Registration Scheme for CLD launched

Open now for all practitioners including volunteers. True to the collaborative approach of the CLD Standards Council for Scotland, the new CLD registration scheme has been developed for the sector, by the sector. Shaped by the views and experiences of a wide range of CLD practitioners, the CLD registration scheme will continue the culture of dialogue and debate, championing a shared sense of identity amongst practitioners, providing a national voice for the sector, and reaffirming the importance of CLD in Scotland.

Become a member and you can engage in professional dialogue, nationally and locally, drive forward new developments in our sector, support and evolve peer-led learning opportunities, be involved in Standards Council events and activities, play a lead role in shaping the future of the Standards Council and have a key influence on policy initiatives and responses

The Register is open to all CLD practitioners who demonstrate the values, principles, competences, Code of Ethics and commitment to CPD that underpin the sector, with two types of membership, based on qualifications and experience, Registered associate members and Registered members.

For more information visit www.cldstandardscouncil.org.uk/Registration or contact registration@cldstandardscouncil.org.uk or call 0141 282 5263

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