

Newsletter April 2020

Local news and services

Adult Befriending Service Coronavirus Update

At the Adult Befriending Service, it has definitely not been a case of business as usual since the coronavirus outbreak. However, in a very short period of time, we have established new ways to support our clients as much as possible through these difficult times.

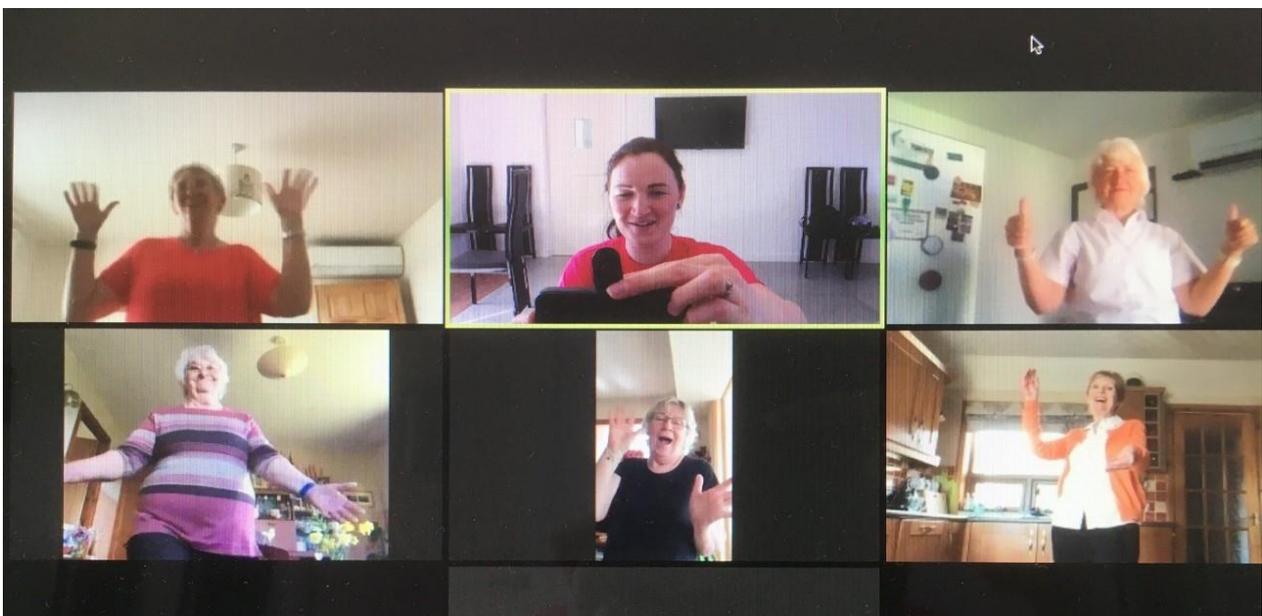


Our dedicated 1 to 1 volunteers have shown their ability to be flexible by moving from face to face visits to telephone calls, where possible.

At the beginning of March 2020, we had just newly established our Telephone Befriending Service. This service has quickly expanded to meet the increased need created by our current situation and it now supports 8 telephone befriending matches. Each befriender receives a weekly call lasting up to an hour from their befriender for a friendly chat and catch up.

The Adult Befriending Service staff are supporting our group attendees by phoning them each week/fortnight for a chat and to see if they need any help. We are supporting approximately 65 people in this way. As well as having a chat, we have managed to help them get prescriptions and deliver them, give advice on how to make a shopping order over the phone and signpost to other services.

Our BALL Groups (Be Active Long Life) are managing to keep going in an online environment with their own Facebook page. Their monthly dance sessions with Jo Sutherland from Just Dance have switched from face to face classes to online. This has proved so popular that they are now going to have a weekly session with Jo. Here's a session in action:



We continue to update our Orkney Adult Befriending Service Facebook page which helps us reach a wider client base in Orkney. We regularly post local information, quizzes, fun activities and advice. If you'd like to check this page out click [here](#).

We still have telephone befrienders available, so if you think you know somebody who would benefit from a telephone befriender please get in touch. An older person can self-refer to the service or they can be referred by a family member, friend or agency, as long as they have the person's consent. Please contact the team below for more information or to make a referral.

Alison 07748 905 127 alison.guthrie@vaorkney.org.uk
Kasia 07552 600 658 kasia.gorzowska@vaorkney.org.uk
Susan susan.wishart@vaorkney.org.uk

Connect Project update

The Connect Project continues to be open and responding to the changed circumstances at this time. The current trainees have continued to engage with project staff and each other in a variety of new ways. There is still a focus on next steps and readiness for changes happening in the community while maintaining strong relationships and current wellbeing. New referrals can continue to be sent in to request support for any vulnerable young person (16-21) for the short or longer term. Please email us at connect@vaorkney.org.uk for more information.

Home Energy Scotland – still here to help

[Home Energy Scotland](#) are an energy advice service funded by the Scottish Government. They provide free, impartial advice to help people to stay warm, make the best use of energy and save money on their bills.

Many people will see their energy bills rise because of the current lockdown, and Home Energy Scotland are keen to speak to anyone who's worried about this. Home Energy Scotland local advisors are all working from home and ready to take calls.

They can help with:

- Clear advice on ways to save energy and reduce fuel bills while staying warm at home.
- Practical help for people who find themselves without heating or hot water.
- Support for households with prepayment meters who are worried about topping up during the lockdown.
- The latest information about emergency measures from energy suppliers to make sure vulnerable people do not get cut off.



Phone 0808 808 2282 to chat to a friendly advisor. Calls are free and lines are open Monday to Friday 8am to 8pm and Saturday from 9am to 5pm. Or request a [call back](#) on their website.

The Home Energy Scotland [partnership team](#) is also keen to make links with the many local organisations doing a fantastic job supporting people in the community. To find out how you could work together, email HES-Partnerships@est.org.uk

Women's Aid Orkney post-lockdown pop-up shop



After lockdown Women's Aid Orkney will be holding a pop-up shop in Kirkwall.

If you are having a clear out they would be very grateful for donations and will be collecting after lockdown ends.

For more information please keep an eye on their [Facebook page](#).

Coronavirus information and guidance



Scottish Government Coronavirus framework for decision making

Scottish Government have published a document - Coronavirus (COVID-19): framework for decision making - which sets out challenges Scotland faces and outlines the approach and principles that will guide the Government as they make decisions about transitioning out of the current lockdown arrangements. The document is available to view on the [Scottish Government website](#).

Scottish Government Cyber Resilience Notice

As a result of the significant rise in COVID-19 related scams, over the next few months, the Scottish Government Cyber Resilience Unit will share important information. They aim to share these updates weekly. They ask that you consider circulating this information through your networks, adapting where you see fit. Advice and information is changing daily as we navigate our way through the COVID-19 crisis, so please ensure you only take information from trusted sources. Click [here](#) to read the latest notice.

Scottish Government Guidance for residential children's facilities

Scottish Government had produced guidance for residential children's houses, residential schools and secure care facilities on staffing, social distancing and self-isolation. Please click [here](#) to view.

Police Scotland guidance on phishing scams

Phishing scams are becoming more apparent during this time of crisis which Cyber Criminals see as an opportunity to make a profit at our loss. Cyber Criminals do not care about your personal circumstances - Highly perceptive, quick to act and take advantage of any situation, their Phishing emails and links therein, can take on many guises and they rely on our trustful nature to click on these links and fill in forms with our details.

Unless you are absolutely sure who is communicating with you please do not fill in online forms with your personal details and, don't click on any links or attachments as this might introduce Malware to your system.

If you receive unsolicited emails offering you support or inviting you to provide your personal details, please treat them with scepticism and ask yourself if you trust the originator, why did I receive this email and did I ask for this to be sent to me? If not, Police Scotland encourage you not to respond to it but to report it to the Suspicious Email Reporting Service (SERS) within the National Cyber Security Centre.

Below are some useful links:

report@phishing.gov.uk

<https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/news/covid-19-exploited-by-cyber-actors-advisory>

<https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/collection/small-business-guide/avoiding-phishing-attacks>

Scottish Business Resilience Centre

The Scottish Business Resilience Centre has published a useful factsheet on Zoom: Etiquette and Security. Visit their [website](#) to read the document.

The ALLIANCE interview with Iona Colvin, Scottish Government's Chief Social Work Adviser

On Wednesday 15 April 2020, the ALLIANCE interviewed Iona Colvin, Scottish Government's Chief Social Work Adviser

In the interview, Iona highlighted the importance of the third sector in supporting children, young people and families, the Scottish Government's commitment to support for the third sector through Covid 19 and the importance of maintaining good communication with the third sector during this period.

Click [here](#) to view the interview.

New Child Protection Scotland website



Child Protection Committees Scotland (CPCScotland) is a national grouping of professionals who work together to improve the protection of children in Scotland. Every child in Scotland has the right to be kept safe from abuse, neglect, exploitation and any other kind of harm that puts them at risk. With the closure of schools and nurseries during the Covid-19

crisis, Child Protection Scotland is urging everyone to keep their eyes and ears open for children who may be at risk during this time.

Click [here](#) for more information on the new CPCS website.

Legislation and Guidance

Revised GIRFEC resources

The ALLIANCE Getting it right for every child team has co-produced [revised GIRFEC resources](#) which are now available. The new plain English and easy read resource take a rights-based approach and set out what children, young people and their parents should expect. The team would be grateful to you if you could pass information about our GIRFEC resources to the colleagues and families that you work with. If your organisation would like to arrange free digital GIRFEC training, please contact GIRFEC@alliance-scotland.org.uk or 0141 404 0231.

Funding & Finance

Orkney Islands Council Community Resilience Fund

Orkney Islands Council have set up a Community Resilience Fund for local third sector organisations working with:

- People aged 70 or older and those aged under 70 with underlying health conditions including people given the flu vaccination each year on medical grounds.
- Those at increased risk, particularly in relation to poor mental health and wellbeing.
- Vulnerable isolated people and families particularly those living in remote rural areas, families where a parent or both parents have lost their employment or where children are living in poverty.
- Children and young people - particularly on creative, digital projects to provide a voice for younger members of the community.

Click [here](#) for more information and to make an application.

Victim Support Victims Fund

The Victims' Fund is open to people affected by crime across Scotland, who are in urgent need of financial help. This may be especially relevant during the COVID-19 pandemic. People can access assistance worth up to £3,000, for a wide range of goods and services where they have no other access to funds.

The Victims' Fund, which is administered by Victim Support Scotland, is open to any victim of crime who is resident in Scotland who is currently accessing victim and other support services. It is also available for people who live outside of Scotland who have been bereaved by a crime that has occurred within Scotland.

Click [here](#) for more information.

Volunteering opportunities

Volunteering you can do from home

VAO realise that keeping yourself busy whilst self-isolating at home is key to getting through this uniquely difficult time. For those who are volunteers it can be very frustrating if you aren't able to help the community in your usual way.

But there is a volunteering alternative you can do from home. Micro-Volunteering describes a volunteer or team of volunteers, completing small tasks that make up a larger project. It's a convenient and easy way for potential volunteers to get involved as it can be done anytime, anywhere.

Examples include: citizen science, (activities sponsored by a wide variety of organizations so non-scientists can meaningfully contribute to scientific research), letter writing, proof reading, photo-tagging, surveys, petitions.

It differs from traditional volunteering in that the tasks are designed to take only minutes to a few hours and the volunteer does not make a long-term commitment.

It can take the form of virtual volunteering where tasks are usually distributed and completed online via an internet-connected device, including smartphones.

Micro-volunteering typically does not require an application process, screening or training period, takes only minutes or a few hours to complete and does not require an ongoing commitment by the volunteer.

Each week VAO will post links to two micro volunteering opportunities for you to consider and once you have the bug you may well want to research your own.

This week's opportunities are:

[Garden Birdwatching](#)

[Fish / Marine: shorewatch, seashell, beach finds, open water observations, marine sightings](#)

Keep an eye on our [website](#) for more opportunities in the coming weeks.



Chest Heart and Stroke Scotland (CHSS) Kindness Callers

Volunteering as a Kindness Caller means you will be helping the most vulnerable people in Scotland to stay safe and well at home.

CHSS supports people with chest, heart and stroke conditions every day and right now those people are the most at risk in the country. Many are scared, worried and isolated and need help more than ever.



Volunteering to be a kindness caller will help reduce social isolation and loneliness and provide a check in service for those who are stuck in their homes. This can be done through their new telephone check in service, text message or facetime call to their existing service users and anyone who needs them.

CHSS need volunteers who have a

- A friendly, listening ear
- Willingness to help your local community
- Willingness to follow medical advice in order to keep yourself and others safe

Chest Heart & Stroke Scotland will support you in this role providing:

- Regular contact with your volunteer line manager, who will be available for support and to answer questions
- Induction to the role, specific to your circumstances
- Training in telephone, text or facetime support
- Training in 'Roles, Responsibilities and Boundaries'

For more information please contact volunteering@chss.org.uk or visit their website at www.chss.org.uk

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

VAO Orkney Information Hub: Coronavirus – guidance, support information and resources

Don't forget to visit VAO's [Coronavirus information Hub](#) which has a wealth of resources for individuals and organisations during the lockdown. We have a range of information available - from local takeaway delivery services to sources of funding for third sector organisations.

All our staff are working from home so if you have any questions about funding, governance or any of our projects, please drop us an email at enquiries@vaorkney.org.uk