



Newsletter December 2019

Local News

Charities Christmas Bazaar

This year's Charities Bazaar was held at the Kirkwall Town Hall on Saturday 2 November.

22 organisations took part and there was plenty on offer from lovely home bakes to raffles, from crafts to tombola.

The most festive stall was awarded to Samaritans Orkney and all together an amazing £3366 was raised for local charities. Thanks to everyone who took part.



New BALL group for Shapinsay



Following successful groups in Burray and Holm, the Shapinsay BALL (Be Active Live Longer) group started on 11 November. The Group, who meet weekly on Mondays from 10.30-12.30, have so far enjoyed meeting new people, tap dancing, salsa, curling and making hedgehogs! Jo Davies has been out twice with VAO's Susan Wishart to deliver classes which have gone down very well. For more information on the BALL groups please contact [Susan](#) on 872897.

New team for VAO's Connect Project

We are pleased to introduce the new team at our Connect Project. From left to right: Craig Nisbet (Support Worker), Caroline Evans (Outreach Worker), Helen Doyle (Support Worker), Karen Mack (Project Co-ordinator).



Festive fun at the Evergreen Club

This week the Evergreen Club had a visit from the Salvation Army for carols and a telling of the Christmas Story.



Who's behind the Blue Door?



Pony Club

6 – 11 January

Orkney Traditional Dance

13 – 18 January

Deerness Community Association

20 – 25 January

Orphir and Stenness Kirk

27 January – 1 February

VAO Christmas Closure

VAO will close on Tuesday 24 December and reopen on Friday 3 January 2020. Happy Christmas from all the staff and Directors at VAO.

Also in the News

People give presents with a purpose at Christmas

It's the season to be charitable according to new research, which finds over half of us (53%) plan to donate this December, with nine in ten intending to give the same amount or more than last year.

And this is something many are also asking of others, with over half (54%) of people preferring to receive a charitable donation on their behalf than a festive gift.

Nearly three quarters (72%) believe Christmas has become too commercial, finds PayPal, which conducted the research.

Read more in [Third Force News](#).



Volunteers in Scotland

Comprehensive new research has given an insight into what volunteers in Scotland look like.

Volunteer Scotland has used data from the Scottish Household Survey to present an analysis of the types of people that give up their time to help the community. The study shows that 27% of Scots took part in volunteering in 2016, a total of 1.2 million adults.

The link between volunteer participation and deprivation is clear, with 35% of those living in the least deprived areas of Scotland volunteering compared to 18% of those in the highest areas of deprivation.

Feeling engaged in the community also comes across as a key factor, with those who volunteer more likely to feel like they can help make decisions in their area and wanting to be more involved in making these decisions.

Read more in [Third Force News](#) or click [here](#) for the full report.

Community Jobs Scotland success stories

Community Jobs Scotland is an employability programme with a difference - it supports voluntary sector employers with additional resource and helps unemployed young people find work, all while helping charities support their communities. Click [here](#) to read more about the programme.

Legislation & Guidance

Strengthening in Children's Rights in Scotland

The Deputy First Minister, John Swinney, has set out the Scottish Government's intention to incorporate the United Nations Convention of Rights of the Child (UNCRC) in Scotland. They have also published an analysis on the responses to the consultation on incorporation and Progressing the Human Rights of Children in Scotland: An Action Plan 2018-2021. Read more [here](#).

Have your say.....

Community Wellbeing: What Matters to You?

The Local Government and Communities Committee at the Scottish Parliament is asking the people of Scotland what matters to you in your community. What would help make a healthy and vibrant community? Join the online conversation to share your ideas. You can discuss and vote on ideas already suggested and introduce new ideas. You can comment as part of a group or as an individual. Some suggested priorities are community transport, greenspaces, local decision making for example.

By helping the committee to understand what community wellbeing means to you, and who you think plays an important role in that, you can help them to understand which issues they should focus on in the coming months in order to make a real difference.

Find out more or take part [here](#) before 20 January 2020.

Volunteering Opportunities

Be a British Heart Foundation Heart Star!



The British Heart Foundation are holding a weekend-long fundraising blockbuster in Tesco stores across the country on Friday 7 and Saturday 8 February 2020. BHF need cash collecting, bucket brandishing stars like you to make this very special weekend a smash-hit in Kirkwall!

Sign up to give 2 hours of time as a volunteer collector [here](#).

Education & Training

Children in Scotland — Study Visit to the Netherlands

Bookings are now open to attend the Children in Scotland study visit to the Netherlands on 2-4 March 2020.

According to Unicef's report on child well-being in rich countries (2013), Dutch children are rated the happiest in the world. Children in the Netherlands are ahead of their peers in childhood wellbeing, including material wellbeing, health and safety, education, behaviours and risks, and housing and environment. In comparison, the United Kingdom came 16th compared with 29 other rich, industrialised countries.

The study visit will explore the why and how of the Netherland's success, exploring its health, care and education system, cultural changes and innovative approaches.

The trip is open to anyone engaged in education, childcare and welfare of children, young people and families - from early years practitioners to educational psychologists, head teachers, academics and administrators.

Click [here](#) for more information or to book your place.

Dates for your diary

Pre-register for The Gathering

SCVO want you to get the most out of [The Gathering](#), so this year they're doing things a little differently. You can now [pre-register](#) your interest in attending the event on 19 & 20 February and let them know which topics interest you most, and in return you will receive a personalised email with all the top events relevant to you, along with a link to book in advance of the official programme launch (which means you'll get first dibs on your favourite events!).

SCVO also recently held their Gathering competition, offering one lucky organisation the chance to win an exhibition package worth over £1200 at next year's event. The winner was [Cancer Support Scotland](#).

Focus on.....Star volunteer Kelly Budge

On 24 September 2019 we gathered at the Hope school for a special award ceremony. Kelly Budge has been volunteering with various community groups for a long time and she's reached the top Saltire Award milestone of 500hrs volunteering. As well as the genuine warmth and gratitude from those who gathered to mark the occasion, Kelly also received complimentary tickets for the cinema and swimming pool courtesy of the Picky Rewards scheme. Representatives from each organisation Kelly helps had a few words to say about their star volunteer:



Wilma Currie – South Ronaldsay Church

Kelly was a member of Sunday club for a long time and once she outgrew that she was invited back to help as volunteer which she was very keen to do. Kelly was very helpful and the children all really liked her. I'm impressed by all the other things she does as well, and really pleased to see her getting this award.

Lorna Kirkpatrick – Girl Guides

Kelly started coming to Guides in February 2014 and she's been with us since then. She started as a young leader and has gone on to train as an adult leader. She helps out with all our trips, and she takes turns at organising the programme [for weekly sessions]. She's a big help



Simon Hay / Sarah Sanders – Police Scotland Youth Volunteers

Kelly joined PSYV right at the very beginning in January 2017. Again, she progressed from being a youth volunteer to becoming an adult helper. You've been an absolute diamond with all that we do. You always arrive on time with a great attitude and you're always willing to help. A lot of the youths look up to you and think this is someone we strive to be like. On behalf of PSYV, you're an absolute blessing to us. You thoroughly deserve this award and recognition - if something needs to drop, don't let it be PSYV!!

Kelly Budge - volunteer

I've gained a lot of experience, and without these guys I wouldn't be able to do that. Thank you all very much.

Well done Kelly!

