

Newsletter May 2020

Local news and services

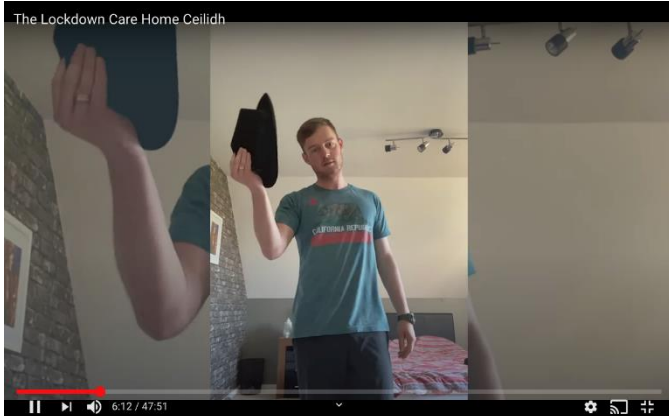
The Lockdown Care Home Ceilidh

Young musical volunteers have been busy recently, putting together a virtual concert for the residents of Orkney's care homes.

VAO have strong ties with our care homes, with many young volunteers attending regularly to take part in activities or entertain residents. As this is a particularly tough time, with no visitors allowed, it was felt that something should be done to help brighten things up a bit.

So, the homes were contacted, and requests gathered from residents, then distributed to young musicians across the county. Performances were duly undertaken and sent back. In some homes across the county, siblings teamed together to perform, many braved the camera with a solo performance, and some flexed their technological muscles with a spliced multiple-location video. All show tremendous spirit and warmth in their contributions.

Fionn McArthur donated his services to the project, and in a few short weeks, it was ready to go. The final concert is available to view on YouTube, and you can see it for yourself [here](#).



Clockwise from top left: The Aim family performed a selection of weel kent tunes; Maggie and James Nicolson sang a James Taylor song; Josie Gibbon does the Highland Fling; Camron Dowell performs Ain't that A Kick in the Head?

Volunteers' Week

This year's Volunteers' Week comes around in extraordinary circumstances. Whilst most community and volunteering activities have been suspended due to the pandemic, it is still a chance to say thank you for the contribution hundreds of volunteers have made, and continue to make, in Orkney. No more so than the contributions made by the hundreds of volunteers who have stepped forward to take on coronavirus-related volunteering roles to help communities cope with the many consequences of the disease.



Keep an eye on our [Facebook](#) page where each day this week we will highlight a volunteer's experience. Here's a sneak preview of Monday's feature on Anna:

My volunteering situation is slightly different to others perhaps, in that I came to Orkney on holiday to visit a friend, with the intention of working my usual job in London remotely for a week or so... then my London office closed, so I continued to work remotely from Orkney, then I put myself forward to be furloughed. My job involves planning cycling events and holidays around the world - pretty tricky to work as normal when all hotels are closed for the foreseeable future.

So I've stayed in Orkney, I'm not sure when I'll return to London - perhaps I'll end up working remotely again, and stay here for a while longer!

During this period of Lockdown however, at a distance I've made many connections locally, mainly with older residents - often dog walkers - the dog is a great conversation starter!

I've had some great chats, and learned a lot about the locals and Stromness where I'm currently living. I love having chats with people. Volunteer befriending is definitely something I'll look at taking.

Coronavirus and your mental health – Where to find help

The Caring for People Group have produced a leaflet Coronavirus & Your Mental Health – Where to Find Help. The leaflet provides details of local and national support organisations and some tips on how to look after your mental health.

Click [here](#) for a digital copy of the leaflet.

If you would like to order printed copies, please contact [Ingrid](#) at VAO stating the number of copies you would like and an address for delivery. Please note that copies will be provided on a first come first served basis.

CYP SODA: Children & Young People, Survivors of Domestic Abuse

Women's Aid Orkney have dedicated email and phone support for Teens aged 13 and over who are experiencing or have experienced domestic abuse.

Free and confidential chats are available by:
Calling Monday 2-4pm on 07551 125205 or Thursday 2-4pm on 07584 900277
Emailing m.lochore@nhs.net confirming you're 13+
You can also arrange an online face-to-face chat

Don't forget Childline Scotland 0800 1111 and always call 999 in an emergency

Click [here](#) for a poster with more information.

New staff at VAO

Two new staff members have joined the VAO team since lockdown began and have been busy meeting new colleagues and service users via telephone and video conferencing calls.

Kirsty Rochford (below left) joins us at VAO from sunny Glasgow, and brings with her highly-valued communication skills and event management experience. Having worked with young people on cruise-liners in the past, she is looking forward to focussing on her new role as Youth Development Worker, bringing exciting and innovative ideas to the VAO team.



Katherine Rendall (below right) joins VAO as a Co-ordinator for the Young People's Befriending Project, after volunteering herself with the Project for nearly 2 years. Her warm and caring nature make her a great fit for working with young people, and she's already settling in brilliantly to her new role.



National support services

Helping Hands – advice from Trading Standards Scotland.

Trading Standards Scotland have issued advice for those wishing to help others in their community and for dealing with unsolicited callers while self-isolating. Click [here](#) for a poster. For more information please visit the Trading Standards Scotland [website](#).

Help for women who sell/exchange sex or images online

A brand-new helpline has been launched for women who sell/exchange sex or images online.

The Helpline number is 0300 124 5564 and is available during the following times:

Tuesday: 3pm-5pm

Wednesday: 11am-7pm

Thursday: 6pm-9pm

Saturday: 12pm-2pm

The helpline is run by Click Scotland which is a women-led safety and wellbeing service for any woman selling or exchanging sex or sexual activity online. Their aim is to improve the provision and accessibility of frontline support services for women involved in selling or exchanging sex in Scotland, particularly those advertising online and working indoors.

Please visit their [website](#) for more information

Funding & Finance



Independent Age Grants Fund

Independent Age has released funds to help smaller organisations across the UK working with older people hardest hit by the virus. Their Grants Fund will comprise of four separate funding rounds and organisations can apply to receive up to £15k each. Deadline 4 June. Read more [here](#).

Resilience & Recovery Loan Fund

Applications for the new Resilience and Recovery Loan Fund (RRLF) are now open to charities. The £25 million emergency fund, which will provide repayable finance to UK charities and social enterprises directly affected by the COVID-19 crisis. Click [here](#) for more information.

Have your say



Children's Parliament

Children's Parliament is working with children to share their experiences of Coronavirus. In the latest edition of their [Corona Times Journal](#) children write about learning in lockdown and reflect on the return to school, including that important transition to secondary school.

On 1 June they will publish the report on the May edition of the How are you doing? survey and launch the June survey. Click [here](#) for more information.

Impact of COVID-19 on the rural economy and connectivity in Scotland

The Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee is inviting all interested individuals and organisations to submit written evidence on the impact of COVID-19 on the rural economy and connectivity in Scotland.

Your response to this call for evidence will help to inform the Committee about the specific issues and questions they should be raising at future evidence sessions with Scottish Government Ministers. Please access the Committee's call for evidence [here](#). You can send your response, ideally in Microsoft Word, to rec.committee@parliament.scot

This is an open call for views, and there is currently no deadline for responding. Before making a submission, please read the Policy on Treatment of Written Evidence [here](#).

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.

The latest opportunities are:

<https://www.zooniverse.org/projects/usct/african-american-civil-war-soldiers>

<https://www.zooniverse.org/projects/dwhiter/aurora-zoo>

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

Training opportunities



Scottish Drugs Forum online training

The Scottish Drugs Forum have added more free online training modules added to their training website. The new courses are as follows:

Staying Alive:

1 June am

10 June am

15 June pm

Introduction to Motivational Interviewing:

2-3 June am

11-12 June pm

22-23 June am

Everyone has a Story – Children Affected by Parental Substance Use:

8-9 June am

16-17 June am

25-26 June am

The morning sessions are 9.30am– pm and the afternoon sessions are 1pm-4.30pm. All of the training sessions have an e-learning component that must be completed prior to the course. To access these free training modules you will need to register on the SDF Training [website](#) - on which you can also book on to the modules.

Online Learning from the Social Enterprise Academy

So many third sector organisations are facing some big questions at present - about how to manage change, lead teams and rebuild income streams. The Social Enterprise Academy is offering some excellent learning opportunities, including coaching support and three online learning programmes that seek to help with the big questions. Check out each programme by clicking the link below;

[Managing Change](#)

[Leading Remotely](#)

[Rebuilding Income Streams](#)