

Newsletter June 2020

Local news and services

Update from the VAO Adult Befriending Service

During June, the VAO Adult Befriending Service issued 111 [Friendship Activity Packs](#) to our befriendees. Included in the pack was a variety of activities to help keep busy: puzzles, colouring in and even a recipe. In addition, there were some great contributions from the Connect Project. If you received one of our activity packs we hope you enjoyed it.



June
2020

Friendship Activity Pack

The Adult Befriending Service is delighted to send you this activity pack. It has been prepared in conjunction with the young people from the Connect project. We hope you enjoy it.

Currently, we are unable to offer 1 to 1 or group befriending; however, we are still operating our Telephone Befriending Service for people aged 60 years or over. If you'd like a weekly call from one of our friendly telephone befrienders please get in touch with us:

Alison	07748 905 127	alison.guthrie@vaorkney.org.uk
Kasia	07552600658	kasia.gorzowska@vaorkney.org.uk
Lynn	07570341303	lynn.taylor@vaorkney.org.uk
Susan		susan.wishart@vaorkney.org.uk

Resource for young people

Shetland Rape Crisis Young People's Group has produced a fantastic resource about coping in a pandemic (generally - and with a special focus on survivors of sexual violence). Orkney Rape and Sexual Assault Service (ORSAS) 100% agree with them that it's really important at the moment to provide supportive information, with eg. increased pressure to send nudes and sexualised images, increased use of social media and online channels, and increased opportunities for online grooming, access to pornography etc.

This is also a time where some people will have been in lockdown with their abusers, and also where there has been increased time alone to reflect on past experiences.

ORSAS has endorsed the resource, with a special virtual sticker on the front cover with ORSAS contact details. Please click [here](#) to view. If you could make this available to the young people you know and work with that would be great!

Third Sector Interface Network – Coronavirus Survey Report



The Third Sector Interface Scotland Network, of which Voluntary Action Orkney is a member, has polled more than 1,000 organisations of all sizes across the country.

The Third Sector Interface Scotland Network carried out a national poll to gauge the issues that voluntary sector organisations are facing as they battle through the coronavirus crisis.

The study took place over a two month period and questioned community groups, charities, social enterprises, and the people and communities they support. A total of 1,184 organisations took part, from local neighbourhood groups to national level organisations, across Scotland's 32 local

authorities. A quarter of participants defined themselves as community groups, 61% as voluntary organisations and 14% as social enterprises.

It found social enterprises are facing considerable immediate challenges. The financial situation of social enterprises as a consequence of Covid-19 was described as perilous, and the study concludes many will not recover without financial support. The vast majority (81%) of social enterprises are experiencing a reduction in income from trading and 86% of social enterprises expect their financial position to worsen.

More than two thirds (68%) of organisations who responded said they expected their financial position will worsen and 45% said their income from fundraising has decreased.

On the plus side, 77% of organisations said they are doing well or coping with the crisis, and half of all organisations have changed what they do, or have modified delivery support to their community/ service users. Some social enterprises (9%) have started online trading during this time.

The study highlighted the cessation of the Job Retention Scheme as a key pinch point for the financial recovery of organisations. More than half (58%) of social enterprises and 39% of voluntary organisations with staff have furloughed workers, and support will be required to avoid job losses.

VAO's Chief Executive, Gail Anderson, thanked local organisations for contributing to the survey. A report of Orkney responses will be produced shortly and will be very helpful in determining what support the local third sector will need to ensure the sustainability of vital local services.

Click [here](#) to read the full report.

National support services

Cruse Bereavement Care Scotland

Despite lockdown and social distancing, Cruse Scotland's services have remained open and been available to anyone bereaved, anywhere in Scotland.



As social distancing measures are relaxed, Cruse anticipate that this may lead to an increased demand for bereavement support. Some people may surface from lockdown struggling with their losses, and even be expressing signs of complicated or disenfranchised grief.

Cruse Scotland has built capacity to cope with an increased demand in this event, and would encourage local organisations to signpost clients to them, who might benefit from our support.

Although Cruse are unable to meet with clients on a face to face basis meantime, our clients are offered the option to receive support via telephone counselling or online counselling, using the NHS platform: Attend Anywhere.

At the time of writing all clients requesting bereavement support are allocated to one of our counselling team within a two week period, regardless of where they live in Scotland.

Helpline: 0845 600 2227

Email: support@crusescotland.org.uk

Website: <http://www.crusescotland.org.uk/>

Ronald McDonald House – Glasgow

Ronald McDonald House Glasgow keeps families together when it matters most. Providing a safe, welcoming, cost-free 'home away from home' for families whose child is being treated at the Royal Hospital for Children, Glasgow and other hospitals in the West of Scotland.

The House is located minutes from the hospital, open and staffed 24 hours a day, 365 days a year - enabling the child's family to stay close by for the full duration of their child's treatment.



Families travel the length and breadth of Scotland for specialist care that the hospitals in the West of Scotland provide. With stays varying from a few days, to weeks, months or for some even years the House is a haven throughout difficult times.

Best of all the House gives a family the chance to remain together to concentrate on the most important thing – the health of their child.

Throughout 2019 Ronald McDonald House Glasgow accommodated a total of 504 families across the country, as shown by the red dots on the map.

Each of the families had their own personal journeys whilst using the House, some families got to take their little ones home at the end of their stays, others did not.

However, they cherished the time that they had available and were thankful for being so close during some of the most difficult times in their lives.

If you would like to find out more about the work of Ronald McDonald House please visit their [website](#).



Funding & Finance

Connecting Scotland



Connecting Scotland is a Scottish Government programme set up in response to coronavirus.

Connecting Scotland is a partnership between the Scottish Government, local councils and SCVO. It's supported by a [range of organisations](#) from across Scotland and the UK. The Scottish Government funds the programme.

It provides iPads, Chromebooks and support to develop digital skills for people who are all of the following:

- digitally excluded – do not have an appropriate device and/or are not connected to the internet at home.
- on low incomes so cannot afford to buy a device or pay for internet access.
- at risk of isolation due to coronavirus because they're in the extremely high vulnerability group or the higher risk of severe illness group.

To reach these people, Connecting Scotland collaborates with local councils, public and third sector organisations who are already working with them.

Organisations and local councils get support from the Scottish Council of Voluntary Organisations (SCVO) This includes:

- Kit – internet enabled devices
- Connectivity – through mobile data
- Training and Support – for staff and volunteers to become 'digital champions' to support people to use the internet confidently and safely.

Getting online will help them access the services and support they need. It will also help them to keep in contact with their friends and family.

An application has been sent in on behalf of the Orkney Corona virus Hub and VAO has recruited thirteen digital champions who will be trained by SCVO to deliver the support on behalf of the Hub if the funding is forthcoming.

Organisations who are working with those eligible to apply on their behalf can also still apply. If they are able, they will provide the support to the individuals as they already have a relationship built up with them. Where they do not have the capacity to provide this support those volunteers who have expressed an interest in the project can hopefully step in.

If you are interested in applying have a look at the on-line portal [here](#). Please note that the closing date for applications is Friday 3 July.

Scotland's Towns Resilience and Recovery Fund

This fund will support immediate concerns and actions to help prepare towns, their communities and businesses for the gradual easing of lockdown rules. Where you can agree a recovery strategy for your town with your local authority, the Towns Resilience and Recovery Fund exists to help resource your project delivery. Deadline 24 July. Click [here](#).

Miss Agnes H Hunter's Trust – Main Grant Programme

The Agnes Hunter Trust was established to support registered charities delivering health and social welfare projects in Scotland. Applications must fit within one of the two policy areas: charities that

help disabled people; charities that assist with the education and training of disadvantaged people aged 16 years or over who have left school. For more information please click [here](#).

Baillie Gifford Community Awards Programme

Grants are available to support small community organisations across Scotland that are running programmes focused on children and families, elderly people, education, the environment, health, people who are physically disabled, homelessness and women. Additionally, there is a budget for projects involving grass roots sports. Deadline 24 August. More information [here](#).

Funding to help Museums Reopen

As museums consider reopening as lockdown eases, the Museums and Galleries Scotland (MGS) has launched a new Covid-19 Adaptation Fund. The fund will open for applications as soon as the Scottish Government guidelines for museums, galleries and heritage attractions guidance is published later this month. Click [here](#) for more information.

Rural Social Enterprise Digital Hub

This new digital space is a focal point for research and development activity on rural Social Enterprise in Scotland and further afield. It is an online space for collaboration, peer to peer learning and knowledge exchange between all those committed to thriving rural social enterprise. It is also a space to showcase the contribution social enterprise makes to our rural communities. 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.

The latest opportunities are:

<https://www.zooniverse.org/projects/crea-mont-blanc/wild-mont-blanc/about/research>

<https://www.zooniverse.org/projects/welldone/american-wwi-burial-cards>

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