

Newsletter June 2021

Local news and services

What is volunteering and why do it?

VOLUNTEER



Volunteering is when someone gives their time and talents for free for the benefit of other people and their community. Volunteering is for the young, the old and for everyone in-between. You might be working, unemployed, retired, living on the Mainland or on the isles. It can be indoors or outdoors and can take from a few minutes to a few hours, a one off, short-term or long-term commitment.

Volunteering can help you learn new skills and meet new people. It can give you different experiences to help you apply for study, paid work or a new job. Not only will you be helping to improve other people's lives, our communities and environments, most of all you will have FUN! Be inspired by some of our local volunteers below and read their stories in full on our [website](#).

Volunteering with the British Red Cross Orkney



The British Red Cross volunteers here in Orkney are a vital part of Orkney's emergency response team. Since January, 20 Emergency Response and Community Response Volunteers in Orkney have contributed over 1,400 hours of volunteering – a tremendous effort!

Beverly (pictured at the Kirkwall Vaccination Centre) told us '*I enjoy helping others, chatting to them, and easing their fears. I also enjoy the social side of getting to know other people and the local community. I feel proud of having been able to be part of the vaccine delivery during this very challenging time and being able to support all those involved in the process in some way.*'

Marion, also a Volunteer with the British Red Cross said '*Volunteering gave me a focus and social opportunities when life was otherwise very restricted. It was a good experience, and I would encourage others to take part in some form of community volunteering*'.

Volunteering with HM Coastguard



The Coastguard Rescue Service is made up of volunteers and is part of HM Coastguard – the 4th emergency service - and a vital part of the Orkney emergency response to Covid-19. Imogen volunteers with the Sanday team and Jim, Lily and Myles volunteer on the Mainland.

Imogen told us that her ‘volunteering role mostly involves assisting with medical evacuations by helicopter from Sanday to hospital and I enjoy being able to contribute to my community’.

Jim has volunteered with the HM Coastguard Mainland team for over 30 years. ‘This year I volunteered hundreds of hours as part of the vaccination centre marshalling team and when the snow came, I was part of the 4x4 team ferrying carers and medical staff about. No matter what the weather we have been there to help and I know I have made a difference.’

Lily works full time at Orkney Distillery and joined the service when she was 18. ‘I wanted to make a difference in my community. Volunteering has given me friendships as well as personal and practical skills that have been so beneficial for myself and the community we serve. Being a part of something bigger is truly fulfilling and worthwhile.’

Myles (pictured right) started volunteering for the Coastguard in January. ‘I have been marshalling at the vaccination clinics, assisting with a cliff dog rescue in South Ronaldsay and helped with a police cordon when a grenade was found in Stromness. Volunteering is a great way of achieving so many things no matter what a person wants from it you will always get so much more!’



Volunteering at The Loving Homes Dog Rescue

Thomas Silgoner, a 15 year old from Kirkwall has recently been awarded his 100 hour Ascent Saltire Award for volunteering. Thomas has been volunteering at The Loving Homes Dog Rescue

animal shelter in Holm since November 2020 for two or three afternoons a week. Each visit consists of an hour and a half with one of the dogs, taking them for walks and grooming them.



Thomas said that he feels that his confidence has grown over the time that he has been volunteering and he has really enjoyed it. He likes all of the dogs, but his favourite is a labrador/staffy cross called April, and they have grown to love him as much as he loves them – they sit and wait for him to arrive each day!

Chris Dannan, a trustee at Loving Homes Dog Rescue said ‘Thomas has been fantastic in his time volunteering here at Loving Homes Dog Rescue, rain or shine, he took his allocated dogs out and was very keen to learn about the dogs here. Really hope he will be able to come back at some point, we will miss him and April and Buddy certainly will, they struck up a real bond with him. Thank you Thomas, and congratulations on your award, brilliant achievement!’

If you are aged between 12 and 25 years old and are interested in volunteering, please get in touch with the Youth Development workers (Brian and Kirsty) at Voluntary Action Orkney on enquiries@vaorkney.org.uk

If you are 25 and over and are interested in volunteering, please get in touch with our Volunteer Development Worker [Sam Stringer](#).

Volunteers' Week 2021 – virtual but great!

Celebrating Volunteers' Week 1st to 7th June looked a little different again at VAO this year with online events and sharing local volunteer stories on Facebook, Twitter and on our website.

THANKS to all who took part in the week and to all Orkney volunteers who make a huge difference to our communities. And is not too late to join them! Whether you are an individual wanting to volunteer or an organisation who needs volunteers, get in touch to find out more.



And if you are already a volunteer and if you would like to share your story with VAO, our Volunteer Development Worker [Sam Stringer](#) would love to hear from you.

The Orcadian Community Youth Award

An event celebrating the achievements of young folk across the county has been set for August.

Scheduled to coincide with International Youth Day on August 12, this year's event will be pre-recorded and available to watch online on the VAO YouTube channel.

Organisers are at work putting together the showpiece, and this year have teamed up with The Orcadian to offer a new award.

The Orcadian Community Youth Award is a new section of the annual Youth Award ceremony and is looking for nominations from the public for deserving young people.

Do you know a young person (aged 10-25) who has helped their neighbours, done some fundraising, spoken out on important issues affecting them, or is a positive member of the community in some other way? If so, The Orcadian wants to hear from you!

"We're very proud of all the young folk doing great things with youth work and our awards programmes throughout the county," said Brian Cromarty of VAO.

"This year we wanted to highlight what young folk have been doing independently too, so the idea of a community award nominated by the public was born."

There are twelve awards available, with one recipient to be put forward for a prestigious Saltire Summit Award as well.

Email reception@orcadian.co.uk with the subject headline "Orcadian Youth Award" to nominate a young person for an Orcadian Community Youth Award.

For each entry, please provide:

- The nominee's full name, age, address, and contact number.
- In 200 words or less, tell us what the nominee has done to help their community.
- A picture of the nominee, for use as part of the awards ceremony should they be shortlisted.

The deadline for submissions is Monday, July 5, at 5pm.

Launch of food insecurity/dignity partnership group

Voluntary Action Orkney is hosting a new partnership group to coordinate the Third Sector's response to food insecurity and to support the development of a dignified food system in Orkney.

A dignified food system is one where everyone is food secure, with access to adequate, nutritious, and culturally appropriate food, without the need of emergency food aid. It is one where the right to food is understood as a matter of justice rather than charity.

The group will work across a range of issues, including income maximisation, cash-first responses, community growing schemes, community learning and the promotion of community spaces which bring people together around food.

The aim of the group is to share ideas, pool resources and expertise, and to coordinate our activity to maximise the support individuals receive. We will also work together to amplify the voices of people with lived experience and to gather evidence that demonstrates the underlying causes of food insecurity.

The group meetings once a month, via Microsoft Teams.

If you are a third sector organisation or a community group working on any of the above issues and who wishes to get involved, or to find out more, please contact: enquiries@vaorkney.org.uk

Funding & Finance

Tesco Community Grants

Tesco Community Grants will award funding to charities and community organisations for local projects that focus on supporting children and families. Projects that tackle food poverty are also invited to apply.

Funding pots of £500 to £1500 will be available for projects and Tesco customers will be able to choose which project receives the most funding by voting in store every time they shop.

The scheme is open to registered charities and not-for-profit organisations, via an on-line application form. Greenspace Scotland's team of friendly Community Enablers can support you to apply or answer any questions.

Find out more [here](#).

Did you know that VAO produces a monthly Training & Funding Update? It contains useful information and links about current training and funding opportunities as well as enterprise and governance advice. To sign up, email: enquiries@vaorkney.org.uk and let us know you would like to be added to the mailing list. The June update can be viewed [here](#).

Job opportunities at VAO

Operations Manager: COVID-19 Community Testing Service

Hours: 35 a week - fixed term end of march 2022 hours

Salary: £30,899 (including DIA and Pension Contribution)

Closing Date: July 9, 2021 @ 5:00 pm

VAO is currently working in partnership with the NHS and Orkney Islands Council to ensure the availability of COVID-19 testing Kits across Orkney. As such we are looking to recruit to two new posts to support the Community Testing Service.

This is an exciting, hands-on role where you will direct and manage a portfolio of operations across Orkney through the partnership group (which comprises VAO, NHS Orkney and Orkney Islands Council).

You will play a vital part in shaping and implementing a wide range of operational functions to maintain and develop the testing initiative which includes the use of a mobile unit to cover Orkney Mainland and the linked isles.

You must be flexible, motivated and have the ability to work effectively within a small staff team and with a wide range of partners. Organisational management experience is beneficial and you will have excellent communication and interpersonal skills.

For further information, please click [here](#) or contact Rosalind Aitken on 01856 872897

Porter: COVID-19 Community Testing Service

Hours: 25 a week – fixed term end of march 2022 hours

Salary: £23,071 pro rata (including DIA and Pension Contribution)

Closing Date: July 9, 2021 @ 5:00 pm

VAO is currently working in partnership with the NHS and Orkney Islands Council to ensure the availability of COVID-19 testing Kits across Orkney. As such we are looking to recruit to two new posts to support the Community Testing Service.

We are looking to hire two porters to provide direct and vital support to the Testing Service Operations Manager, through undertaking responsibility for the logistical demands of the Orkney COVID-19 testing service, ensuring the delivery of a smooth-running efficient service to the Orkney Mainland and surrounding Isles.

For further information, please click [here](#) or contact Rosalind Aitken on 01856 872897

Island Self Management Group Co-ordinator

Hours: 21 hrs per week hours

Closing Date: July 12, 2021 @ 5:00 pm

Salary: £27,723 pro rata (including DIA and Pension Contribution)

We are looking for a skilled and highly motivated person to help us develop a new project. You will work alongside people with long-term conditions who live on the ferry-linked isles, developing groups that support self-management. We particularly welcome applications from those with a lived experience of a long-term condition, or who live on one the isles.

For further information, please click [here](#) or contact Harry Johnson on 01856 872897

Volunteering opportunities

What is micro-volunteering?

Want to volunteer but don't have much time or can't make a regular commitment?

Micro-volunteering could be for you!

Micro-volunteering works a little differently –

- it is a small one-off task
- it can be done from home or close to home
- everything you need is provided online, including training
- it only takes a few minutes to a few hours to complete
- no regular or long term commitment is expected
- no special equipment or knowledge is required other than using a computer/mobile with an internet connection
- it supports the wider work of local, national and international organisations



Opportunities may include counting butterflies, listening to dolphins, digitalising sea level records, and transcribing early 20th century notebooks of women astronomers. Get some ideas here and why not give it a try!

Dates for your diary

Relationships Scotland Orkney AGM

Tuesday 13 July 2021

The Relationships Scotland Orkney AGM will be held on 13 July 2021 at 5pm in Zoom. The Agenda includes a Special Resolution to amend the Articles of Association to allow for online meetings.

Please contact enquiries@rsorkney.org.uk if you would like to attend, and a link to the meeting will be sent to you.

If you would like to promote your organisation, an activity or project or have an interesting story to share, please contact Cecily.cromby@vaorkney.org.uk