



**Voluntary Action Orkney**

**Workplan 2021–2023**



# Introduction

## Background

VAO is a well-established and respected local charity operating as a company limited by guarantee and managed by a volunteer board elected by and from our membership. We have developed positive working relationships with the local third sector, public sector and community planning partners and have a lead role in The Orkney Partnership and Integration Joint Board, amongst others. VAO continues to respond to current and emerging needs and to deliver quality services which meet our charitable objects, the four main aims/roles of interface activity and which will ensure that the local third sector is recognised as an equal partner in the delivery of services to the Orkney community.

Our main activities are the promotion of community participation through supporting and promoting the development and sustainability of third sector activity ie volunteering, community groups, charities, voluntary organisations and social enterprises. We facilitate third sector engagement in planning structures through networking and collaboration with each other and with a range of local partnerships and agencies to influence decision making and to develop joint approaches to addressing local challenges. This work has increased in importance during the Covid-19 pandemic and through our strong networks and relationships we will continue to ensure the third sector is a major contributor to and beneficiary of recovery and renewal plans.

VAO recognises the importance of maintaining national relationships with the TSI Scotland network, the Scottish Government and other national agencies to ensure the views and interests of the local third sector and the communities they serve are fully integrated into policy design and implementation. Discussion, sharing of information and collaborative approaches to issues of importance to our communities and third sectors has been made much easier through the introduction and routine use of digital meeting platforms.

VAO is committed to the Fair Work Principles<sup>1</sup>: respect, effective voice, fulfilment and opportunity. The principle of security is more difficult to achieve due to the short-term nature of funding however staff continue to demonstrate loyalty and commitment to the organisation and those they support.

### **Vision:**

Orkney has sustainable, resilient, inclusive communities with a thriving third sector at their heart

**Values:** committed to equalities, fairness and human rights, committed to collaborative working, ethical, open and honest, flexible and responsive, nurture and develop our staff/volunteers, achieve excellence in all we do.

We also subscribe to the TSI Scotland Network values of leadership, collaboration, integrity, diversity, equality and excellence and to [community development principles](#).

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<sup>1</sup> Fair Work Framework 2016, Fair Work Convention

## Funding

We are funded by Scottish Government through an annual grant of £199,200, which underpins our capacity to develop, promote and manage a wide range of projects and services. Additional support is provided by Orkney Islands Council and by a number of other funding bodies and we continuously review our income generating services to ensure they are appropriate and sustainable as we work to become a more enterprising third sector organisation. VAO is also funded to deliver a range of projects that directly support vulnerable people, several of which have been co-produced with communities, third and statutory sectors.

## Current Priorities

This plan is being drafted at a time of unprecedented challenge as the impact on our communities and economy of Covid-19 becomes more evident and as lockdown eases. During the crisis period third sector organisations and volunteers across Orkney responded with speed and creativity and our role is to enable them to continue to do so as the needs of the most vulnerable in our community intensify. Whilst many of our existing activities will continue, they have been reviewed and refocused to enable the sector to respond to change, retain what worked well, to share experiences and learning, to develop effective partnerships and to grasp the opportunities now available to enhance their role in shaping recovery and renewal plans. We will continue to raise awareness of the sector's impact and to achieve recognition that the third sector is not a 'nice to have' but is as essential as the public and private sectors in the development and delivery of vital services and the creation of a sustainable, inclusive economy.

specific priorities are:

- promote collaborative cross sector working to address inequalities
- consult, engage and support communities to develop solutions to the issues they identify
- strengthen governance and risk management

This workplan sets out in the form of a logic model what we aim to do, subject to adequate resources, to meet changing local needs and the aims/roles set out by Scottish Government.

## Monitoring and Evaluation

To deliver the planned actions effectively and efficiently VAO will adhere to the internal, performance management system. Activities and performance will be evaluated quarterly and at six monthly staff/trustee development sessions. Should major adjustments be required we will consult with Scottish Government as main funders. We will also work to ensure that the organisation is well managed and utilises to good effect all available resources including board and staff skills and experience.

**Role/Aim: Covid-19: Work constructively with Scottish Government, local partners and third sector in responding to Covid-19, as required**

Local Situation	Activities	Short Term Outcomes	Medium Term Outcomes	National Performance Framework/LOIP
<p>The third sector recovery and renew group was formed to enable a large membership from a diverse range of services and activities to identify the issues of importance to them and draw up and deliver an action plan. Their work has contributed to and influenced the work of statutory resilience groups and they wish to continue to meet to address collaboratively challenges for our community and vulnerable individuals as we begin to emerge from current restrictions</p> <p>VAO continues in membership of statutory resilience groups and continues to gather and report information from our network into these groups and in response to requests from national bodies, to ensure that any issues and challenges for our small communities are highlighted and dealt with. The results of our recent community consultations will inform community planning and the new LOIP.</p>	<p><b>Continue in membership of three joint community planning/local recovery and renew groups:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on people, community and economy</li> <li>• Co-chair the joint Strong Communities Delivery Group/Community Recovery Group</li> </ul> <p><b>Continue the work of the third sector recovery renew sub group:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to be inclusive of the diversity of the sector</li> <li>• to identify emerging needs and plan to address them</li> <li>• to inform statutory renew groups</li> <li>• to foster innovation and collaborative working within and between sectors</li> </ul> <p><b>Continue to gather and report third sector data</b> to inform local and national planning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• west mainland place standard consultation report</li> <li>• non-linked isles wellbeing survey</li> </ul> <p><b>Attend TSI North and TSI Chief Officers meetings to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identify and address areas of common concern</li> <li>• share information, learning and good practice</li> <li>• collate and present information that is representative of all TSI geographic areas</li> </ul>	<p>Local and national partners are better informed about the value to Orkney of third sector activity</p> <p>Organisations are able to identify and implement innovative solutions to the challenges they face</p> <p>Organisations are better informed of how to contribute to local and national policy and strategies</p>	<p>1 People are more involved in their local community</p> <p>5 Key decision making includes third sector input</p> <p>6 Third sector organisations are better able to contribute to a strong and inclusive local social economy</p>	<p><b>National Outcomes:</b></p> <p>We live in communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe</p> <p>We tackle poverty by sharing opportunities, wealth and power more equally</p> <p>We are healthy and active</p> <p><b>Local Outcomes</b></p> <p>Orkney's communities and individuals are fulfilling their potential</p> <p>Our people are resilient and live well</p> <p>Orkney has a vibrant economic environment</p>

**Role/Aim: Central Source of Knowledge about:** *the third sector locally, local and national policy and how it might affect local third sector, communities and citizens; how the third sector can contribute to those agendas*

Local Situation	Activities	Short Term Outcomes	Medium Term Outcomes	National Performance Framework/LOIP
<p>We maintain a database of all known local third sector services with contact details and directories available in printed and electronic form. Work to review these and to include additional information is not complete due to staff changes,.</p> <p>More data are required to full promote the economic and social impact of the sector</p> <p>Whist directory information is useful and valued the issue of access to information or lack of access comes up regularly in discussions with partners therefore it needs to be promoted and disseminated more effectively</p>	<p><b>Update current databases</b> to include additional third sector information eg annual income, number of paid staff and volunteers</p> <p><b>Update and publish directories of information:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adult Services Directory</li> <li>• Children's Services Directory in collaboration with the Youth Forum</li> </ul> <p><b>Improve the new website:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• improve third sector information search function</li> <li>• make directories more accessible</li> </ul> <p><b>Facilitate forums:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Third Sector Managers Group</li> <li>• Health and Social Care Sub Group</li> <li>• Youth Workers Forum</li> <li>• Recovery and Renew Sub Group</li> <li>• review terms of reference for each</li> </ul> <p><b>Review and improve the management information system:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• external and internal data gathering</li> <li>• collation of performance reports</li> <li>• promotion of achievements</li> </ul> <p><b>Review and update the communications strategy:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• stakeholder matrix</li> <li>• communication channels/media</li> <li>• newsletter format and content</li> <li>• dissemination of local and national information</li> <li>• promotion of third sector information</li> </ul>	<p>The quality and scope of local third sector information is improved</p> <p>Local and national partners are better informed about the value to Orkney of third sector activity</p> <p>Organisations are better informed of how to contribute to local national policy and strategies</p>	<p>1 People are more involved in their local community</p> <p>5 Key decision making includes third sector input</p> <p>6 Third sector organisations are better able to contribute to a strong and inclusive local social economy</p>	<p><b>National Outcomes:</b></p> <p>We live in communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe</p> <p><b>Local Outcomes</b></p> <p>Orkney's communities and individuals are fulfilling their potential</p> <p>Our people are resilient and live well</p> <p>Orkney has a vibrant economic environment</p>

**Role/Aim: Voice:** *ensuring a strong third sector voice at strategic level within local planning structures and nationally*

Local Situation	Activities	Short Term Outcomes	Medium Term Outcomes	National Performance Framework/LOIP
<p>Third sector representation and involvement in community planning and other local partnerships has improved considerably over the last year partly due to increased recognition of their contribution during Covid restrictions and the introduction of digital meetings; however work remains to be done to engage smaller, volunteer led organisations</p> <p>Third sector services are valued by partners and their visibility increased during Covid but the focus has primarily been on the work of health and wellbeing organisations. As we plan for recovery and renewal representation from a diversity of services will continue to be encouraged</p> <p>The sector as a whole values VAO's support in ensuring their views, concerns and insights are represented or reinforced within partnerships; however, communication within and between VAO and sections of the third sector could be improved</p>	<p><b>Continue to facilitate forums and networks to</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• share learning, contribute to local and renew strategies and plans,</li> <li>• share information and knowledge</li> <li>• provide peer support</li> <li>• nominate third sector representatives to local partnerships/forums</li> <li>• hear and inform local and national speakers</li> <li>• establish themed forums as required</li> </ul> <p><b>Continue to contribute third sector information and perspectives</b> to local partnerships and statutory services eg:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Planning Partnership</li> <li>• Integration Joint Board</li> <li>• Recovery and Renew Groups</li> <li>• Public Protection Committee</li> <li>• Children and Young People's Partnership</li> <li>• Strategic CLD Partnership</li> </ul> <p><b>Continue to attend regional and national TSI forums and networks to</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• share information and good practice internally and externally</li> <li>• agree a collaborative approach to national policy issues</li> <li>• raise awareness of the Orkney context</li> </ul> <p>Engage and involve the third sector in <b>local and national consultations</b></p> <p>(See Communication Strategy above)</p>	<p>Third sector organisations are more effectively engaged with each other and in local partnerships</p>	<p>2 Improved cross sector collaboration</p> <p>5. Key decision making includes third sector input</p>	<p><b>National Outcomes:</b></p> <p>We live in communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe</p> <p>We tackle poverty by sharing opportunities, wealth and power more equally</p> <p>We are well educated, skilled and able to contribute to society</p> <p><b>Local Outcomes</b></p> <p>Orkney's communities and individuals are fulfilling their potential</p> <p>Our people are resilient and live well</p> <p>Orkney has a vibrant economic environment</p>

**Role/Aim: Capacity Building:** *developing the capacity of volunteering, community groups, voluntary organisations and social enterprises to achieve positive change*

Local Situation	Activities	Short Term Outcomes	Medium Term Outcomes	National Performance Framework/LOIP
<p>Orkney's third sector has continued to be flexible in their service delivery to ensure the most vulnerable in the community have been and are supported. However, many have been closed throughout and the result of our recent consultation has found that many will require additional support in eg governance, funding, financial management, health &amp; safety, volunteers to sustain their organisation and to reopen their services.</p> <p>Strong connections were developed within and between communities, third sector and partners during Covid restrictions and a realisation that we need not return to the way things have always been done. This provides an opportunity for innovation and enterprise.</p>	<p>Provision of <b>one to one and one to many support</b> to third sector organisations to meet their specific needs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• information, guidance, resources</li> <li>• training and development sessions including introduction of e-learning</li> <li>• facilitation of networks, learning circles</li> <li>• business planning/feasibility studies/ community consultation</li> </ul> <p>Promote and develop <b>volunteering for all</b><sup>2</sup> utilising new approaches:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• promotion of opportunities</li> <li>• development of employee volunteering</li> <li>• development of micro volunteering</li> <li>• youth volunteering</li> <li>• supported volunteering</li> </ul> <p>Promote and develop <b>effective volunteer management</b> in a post Covid environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• website resources and links</li> <li>• volunteer management training</li> <li>• risk management</li> </ul> <p>In collaboration with local partners <b>promote, facilitate and support the development of an enterprising third sector</b><sup>3</sup>; to address emerging recovery and renewal priorities post covid-19 with a specific focus on enhancing the sustainability and developing the capacity and capabilities of organisations and communities across Orkney</p>	<p>Organisations have increased access to the support, resources and knowledge they need</p> <p>Volunteers and organisations have an improved volunteering experience</p> <p>Organisations have improved ability and capacity to develop innovative services</p>	<p>1 More people are involved in their community</p> <p>4 Third sector organisations are better able to respond to local need</p> <p>6 Third sector organisations are better able to contribute to a strong and inclusive local social economy</p>	<p><b>National Outcomes:</b></p> <p>We live in communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe</p> <p>We tackle poverty by sharing opportunities, wealth and power more equally</p> <p>We are well educated, skilled and able to contribute to society</p> <p><b>Local Outcomes</b></p> <p>Orkney's communities and individuals are fulfilling their potential</p> <p>Our people are resilient and live well</p> <p>Orkney has a vibrant economic environment</p>

<sup>2</sup> Volunteering for All – Our National Framework, Scottish Government

<sup>3</sup> Inclusive Growth Through Social Enterprise, Scotland's Social Enterprise Action Plan 2021-24, Scottish Government, 2021

**Role/Aim: Connect:** providing leadership, vision and co-ordination to the local third sector to better respond to local priorities, including through partnership and collaboration

Local Situation	Activities	Short Term Outcomes	Medium Term Outcomes	National Performance Framework/LOIP
<p>Orkney has a strong and empowered third sector however many, particularly, small community groups continue to face challenges in accessing the resources they need.</p> <p>In common with all services, those challenges have been exacerbated by the Covid-19 crisis and the uncertainty of funding to sustain and develop their organisations at a time when need has and will increase</p> <p>As a result of Covid, connections and relationships within and between sectors have been strengthened. These need to be developed further to ensure that our collective, local resources are utilised to meet the needs of Orkney's people, communities and economy as current restrictions are eased</p>	<p>Facilitate <b>connection and communication</b> between the third sector, statutory sector and wider community:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• continue in membership of local partnerships</li> <li>• continue in membership of all local recovery and renew groups</li> <li>• ensure third sector involvement in recovery and renew groups</li> <li>• increase third sector membership of local partnerships</li> <li>• gather third sector information/views for submission to local and national agencies and partnerships</li> <li>• disseminate information/guidance using a range of media channels</li> <li>• facilitate of meetings, events, forums and net</li> <li>• utilise on-line meetings/platforms to connect and communicate more effectively with geographically dispersed organisations</li> <li>• increase membership of existing third sector forums</li> <li>• take the lead in community consultations in collaboration with partners</li> </ul> <p>Establish an outreach approach <b>to facilitate links between organisations/services from all sectors</b> with similar aims, similar challenges and similar aspirations to share learning, develop new ways of working, joint projects and or collaborative approaches where appropriate.</p>	<p>Organisations are more connected to each other and better able to collaborate</p> <p>Organisations are able to identify and implement innovative solutions to the challenges they face</p>	<p>2 Improved cross sector collaboration</p> <p>3 Third sector organisations are better able to lead and develop shared agendas</p> <p>4 Third sector organisations are better able to respond to local need</p> <p>6 Third sector organisations are better able to contribute to a strong and inclusive local social economy</p>	<p><b>National Outcomes:</b></p> <p>We live in communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe</p> <p>We tackle poverty by sharing opportunities, wealth and power more equally</p> <p>We are well educated, skilled and able to contribute to society</p> <p><b>Local Outcomes</b></p> <p>Orkney's communities and individuals are fulfilling their potential</p> <p>Our people are resilient and live well</p> <p>Orkney has a vibrant economic environment</p>

Assumptions	External factors that might affect outcomes
<p>The importance to our community and economy of a sustainable third sector is recognised and supported</p> <p>VAO maintains and develops positive relationships with the local third sector (ie community groups, voluntary organisations, social enterprises and volunteers) and statutory agencies</p> <p>VAO gains intelligence through supporting and connecting with the local third sector</p> <p>VAO is secure, can be trusted and delivers services to a high standard</p> <p>VAO is effectively governed and adopts a culture of continuous improvement</p> <p>VAO has capacity to ensure intractable, emerging problems are identified and addressed in collaboration with stakeholders</p> <p>There is recognition that good governance is essential to the efficiency, effectiveness and reputation of local third sector organisations</p> <p>The level of volunteering in Orkney can be increased</p> <p>The level of enterprising activity in Orkney can be increased</p>	<p>VAO's ability to secure required additional resources to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to engage with, interpret and disseminate policy/legislative information in a way that enables and encourages a geographically dispersed sector to respond effectively</li> <li>• to respond to additional challenges posed by the impact on our sector, community and economy of Covid-19 and of Brexit</li> </ul> <p>VAO is able to retain/recruit staff with the required skills and experience</p> <p>Local third sector organisations ability to secure the resources required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to sustain and develop their services</li> <li>• to engage with policy/legislation locally and nationally</li> </ul>

## Separately Funded Projects and Services

Activity	Outcomes	LOIP	National Outcomes
<b>Isles Wellbeing Project</b> (in collaboration with islands, HIE, RGU, TOP and OHAC)	improved access to services, increased wellbeing and community led service development	Orkney's communities and individuals are fulfilling their potential  Our people are resilient and live well  Orkney has a vibrant economic environment	We live in communities that are inclusive, resilient, empowered and safe  We tackle poverty by sharing opportunities, wealth and power more equally
<b>Adult Befriending Service</b>	Older people are less socially isolated and are able to live at home for longer		Our people are able to maintain their independence as they get older and are able to access appropriate support when they need it
<b>Children and Young People's Befriending Project</b>	Children and young people have improved life chances		We grow up loved, safe and respected so that we realise our full potential
<b>Connect Project</b>	Children and young people have improved life chances		
Continue to work with Orkney Island Council to finalise preparations for a <b>new shared accommodation</b> building	Organisations have improved access to the support and resources they need		
Deliver the <b>community link practitioner</b> project in collaboration with NHS Orkney and three GP practices	Improved patient health and wellbeing Reduced pressure on GP practices Enhanced contribution to addressing health inequalities in Orkney		
<b>Dismantling Barriers Co-producing Solutions Project</b> (Community Planning Partnership, Strong Communities Delivery Group Action led by VAO)	Communities', including those who are seldom heard, have confidence, capacity and capability to influence and develop services alone or in partnership		We live in communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe
Establish and deliver a <b>Tec Peer Mentor Service</b> in collaboration with Orkney Health and care	Increased confidence in and usage of technologic solutions Reduced pressure on small work teams Increased access to services		We tackle poverty by sharing opportunities, wealth and power more equally



Supporting The Orkney Community

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