

# Newsletter February 2022

## Local news and services

### Welcome Back Orkney – County-wide Coffee Morning

Following a successful application to the Communities Recovery Fund 2 (a Scottish Government Fund to support communities move from Covid lockdown to recovery, managed on their behalf by Highlands & Islands Enterprise), Voluntary Action Orkney has been working with Community Associations and community spaces across Orkney over the last few months to support them with practical initiatives, advice, training and supplies to support them to make the transition with confidence and Welcome Back Orkney to our precious and vital community halls and venues.

The Omicron variant of Covid reminded us that whilst we are working towards the new normal, Covid is still here. The work that our advisors and co-ordinators have undertaken alongside the Hall Committees has aimed to not only give confidence to them that activities can take place safely, but also to give comfort to the public that activities taking place in our community halls is as safe as possible.

As the project nears its conclusion, a number of venues will be hosting a county-wide coffee morning, an opportunity to invite communities back in for a blether and a cuppa. Please support your local community association, and the volunteers who have worked so hard to get these essential community hubs back open, and doing their bit to support people to get back involved in community-based activities.

The coffee mornings are taking place at the following venues and times:

#### **Saturday 12 March from 10am until 12 noon**

- Burray Community Hall
- Cromarty Hall, St Margaret's Hope
- Deerness Community Hall
- Evie Community Hall
- Flotta Community Hall
- Graemsay Community Hall
- North Ronaldsay Community Centre
- St Andrews Community Hall

#### **Saturday 12 March from 11am until 1pm**

- Rousay Community Hall

#### **Sunday 13 March from 2pm until 4pm**

- Quoyloo Old School
- Shapinsay Community Hall

Gail Anderson from Voluntary Action Orkney commented *"As we move into spring and a reduction in covid restrictions it is a perfect time for our community halls to put into effect the preparations that were supported by this funding to safely welcome back their communities"*.

Francesca Couperwhite from Highlands and Islands Enterprise said *“Communities in Orkney really rose to the challenges of covid, it is fantastic to now see so many of them using this funding to open up with confidence by hosting events to encourage the use of community halls and other facilities”*.

For more information, please contact [Clare Gee](#), Community Development Worker at VAO.

## Volunteering is back on!

**Have your volunteering plans have been affected by the pandemic?**

**Are you keen to see what might be possible again?**

We are delighted to be able to start getting out and about again to run some volunteering drop-in sessions at Kirkwall Library and the Pickaquoy Centre. The drop-in sessions are for anyone wanting to volunteer or organisations needing volunteers. No need to book, just pop by anytime for a chat about how we can help. Here are the next ones:

Monday 14 March 12-2pm– Pickaquoy Centre cafe

Monday 4 April 12-2pm - Kirkwall Library foyer

Wednesday 13 April 3.30pm-5.30pm – Pickaquoy Centre reception

If you're unable to attend the drop-ins, there are plenty of volunteering opportunities listed at the end of this newsletter and on the VAO [website](#) or contact Sam Stringer at [samantha.stringer@vaorkney.org.uk](mailto:samantha.stringer@vaorkney.org.uk)



## Growing Up in Orkney website



A new website tailored especially to young people in Orkney will launch on 7 March.

Put together with detailed input from young people, the 'Growing Up in Orkney' website is aimed at highlighting the local and national services which can help young folk enjoy a connected, happy and informed childhood.

The website is focussed on young people and tailored to different stages in their life - as children, teenagers and young adults. There are also areas for parents, carers, and professionals to find out about the services available for young people and who to refer to if needed. There is also a chat function available.

Commissioned by the Orkney Children and Young People Partnership (OCYPP) but developed by a wider project team, the website brings together a wealth of information from local services, groups, voluntary organisations, and charities.

The OCYPP works to make sure Orkney is a place where service providers and the community work together so that, as children and young people grow up, they get the right help, at the right time, in the right way.

Young people have been heavily involved in the Growing Up in Orkney website from the start, with members of the Orkney Youth Forum giving feedback on the design and content throughout - but the project team wants to ensure that process continues.

Andy Tait is Chair of the Orkney Youth Forum and sits on the new website's project team. He said: "The Orkney Youth Forum was contacted almost exactly a year ago to take part in the development of this website. As part of the project team we've worked closely with partners to identify and pull

in all the sources of information. We know we won't have captured everything though - so we welcome any feedback and are keen to hear from any organisations or groups that would like to be included."

Take a look at the new Growing Up in Orkney website [here](https://growingupinorkney.co.uk) and contact [hello@growingupinorkney.co.uk](mailto:hello@growingupinorkney.co.uk) if you have any comments or suggestions.

## Food Dignity Project

The Orkney Food Dignity Working Group are currently leading some work in response to food insecurity and poverty in Orkney

With the recognition that low income is the primary driver of food insecurity, they are mapping the actions that stakeholders need to take to maximise people's incomes and to ensure that those who experience financial crisis receive early, joined-up, compassionate, dignified and cash-first support.

The involvement of the community and people with lived experience of food insecurity is essential to the success of this work.

The Group would be grateful for local organisations to support them by:

Encouraging service users to submit their stories of food insecurity. This can be done anonymously, and service users can give as much or as little information as they feel comfortable with. When we talk about food insecurity, we mean someone worrying about having the money they need to put food on the table. It's likely if someone is experiencing food insecurity, they're also experiencing other financial difficulties, like fuel insecurity. People can share their stories via an online form which can be accessed at [www.vaorkney.org.uk/food](http://www.vaorkney.org.uk/food)

Encourage the community to join a 'Community Conversation'. These will be taking place during the first week of March and will be an opportunity for everybody in the community, whether they have experienced food insecurity or not to share their ideas about what needs to happen to reduce food insecurity in Orkney. The Group would be grateful if you can share this opportunity on social media and with any mailing lists you have. People can sign-up to the event via an online form which can be accessed at [www.vaorkney.org.uk/food](http://www.vaorkney.org.uk/food)

If you have any questions or want to find out more about the Orkney Food Dignity Working Group and its work, please contact Harry Johnson and Nick Hopkins by emailing [foodgroup@vaorkney.org.uk](mailto:foodgroup@vaorkney.org.uk)

## Get involved in Tip of the day!

We are looking to create a 'Tip of the day' selection of activities that are available online for young people to look at on a daily basis. The aim is that it will allow them to start their day the best way they can, switch off from a bad day, or just have time to themselves. Each tip is something that can be done easily and takes no longer than 10 mins (unless you want it to!). The tips will then be transformed into something visual that will appear online. The hope is that others will then see ideas and give them a go themselves, hopefully discovering new ways to relax, unwind and take a few minutes to concentrate on themselves.



We are looking for young people who would like to bring the list of tips to life - we have quite a list now! This can be done in your own home, and can be using anything at all - computers, drawing, crafting or anything else that you think works well with the tip.

If this is something that might interest you, or someone you know, please get in touch with [enquiries@vaorkney.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@vaorkney.org.uk) or through [BrianKirstyVaorkney](https://www.facebook.com/BrianKirstyVaorkney) on Facebook.

## Free Social Anxiety Course from RS Orkney



Do you often feel anxious, panicked, or worried in social settings?

Do you struggle with speaking in public, talking to new people or friends?

Would you like to understand more about these feelings and

how to cope?

Relationship Scotland Orkney and student therapists from The Centre of Counselling & Therapy, Glasgow are facilitating a free 6-week course for those aged 18+ struggling with Social Anxiety.

These sessions offer a space to learn more about social anxiety, how to talk about it, learn practical tools to cope and provide an opportunity to meet others sharing similar experiences.

The weekly sessions launch on Zoom on Saturday 19 March from 10am – 12pm to Saturday 30 April 2022. Please note that there will be a break for the Easter weekend.

For further information and to register your interest please contact [sharon@rsorkney.org.uk](mailto:sharon@rsorkney.org.uk) or call Relationship Scotland Orkney on 01856 87 7750

## Legislation & Guidance

### New formal volunteering framework



Scottish Government  
Riaghaltas na h-Alba  
gov.scot

A Formal Volunteering Framework has been published by the Scottish Government this month, recognising the invaluable skills and experiences that come from volunteering and how these can increase

employability – helping the volunteer find, apply for, and gain paid work.

The framework asks organisations and employers to ensure volunteering experiences are purposeful, person-centred and fair for all. Volunteering should be mutually beneficial to the volunteer as well as the host organisation and opportunities given for volunteers to learn and develop skills useful for future employment.

You can download a copy of the framework [here](#) and VAO can provide any guidance you may need about implementing the framework for your volunteers.

## Funding & Finance

### Third Sector Emergency Covid-19 Funding

VAO is pleased to announce that the fourth round of the Third Sector Emergency Covid-19 Fund is now open. Organisations that are facing significant resource challenges as a direct result of the Covid-19 pandemic are eligible to apply for up to £30,000.

The closing date for applications is 9:00am on Monday 7 March 2022.

For more information and an application pack please contact [David Campbell](#).

## DigitalBoost Development Grant

The grant is open to all businesses across Scotland who are looking to enhance their service or organisation using digital technology, platforms and innovation.

All sectors, including the third sector, can apply. It is funded by The Scottish Government in conjunction with Business Gateway and its DigitalBoost programme.

- Businesses and organisations who are VAT registered can apply for grants of up to £20K.
- Businesses and organisations who are not VAT registered can apply for grants of up to £5K.

Click [here](#) for more information.

**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](mailto:enquiries@vaorkney.org.uk) and let us know you would like to be added to the mailing list. The February update can be viewed [here](#).**

## Training opportunities



### Child Protection Training

Child Protection Committees Scotland, with support from the Centre for Excellence for Children's Care and Protection and Scottish Government, is delivering a series of free, online learning events from March to June 2022. Across four webinars, child protection leaders and practitioners across Scotland will have opportunities to engage with key speakers and organisations on child neglect and practice.

The first of these webinars takes place on 17 March from 9:30-11:00am lead by Dez Holmes, Director of Research in Practice, on Thinking Critically about Adolescent Neglect.

For more information or to book a place, please click [here](#).

This event is open to those with a role in addressing child neglect at an operational, policy or strategic level including practitioners, managers and leaders from social work, health, education, police and the third sector.

### Emergency First Aid at Work

Orkney College are running Emergency First Aid at Work training. Dates for this one day course are still to be confirmed. Please contact [WBO@vaorkney.org.uk](mailto:WBO@vaorkney.org.uk) for more information.

### Online Introductory Level Food Hygiene Course

Please contact [WBO@vaorkney.org.uk](mailto:WBO@vaorkney.org.uk) for more information about the REHIS Elementary (Introductory) level Food Hygiene course

# Volunteering opportunities

## Greener Orkney - Winter beach cleans

Come along on the following dates and locations to help collect litter from the beach and do a marine conservation survey.

27 March 2022 – Warebeth at 11.30am

24 April 2022 – Barrier number 4 car park at 2pm



All equipment is provided. Any last-minute changes will be posted on the [Greener Orkney Facebook page](#) nearer the time. Email [greenerorkney@gmail.com](mailto:greenerorkney@gmail.com) for further details.

## Home-Start Orkney Trustee



Home-Start are seeking individuals who can offer their time and skills. You should have an interest in the well-being of children and families living locally, and the ability to work effectively as part of a team, and part of a valued local organisation.

For more information about the Work of Home-Start Orkney, please visit their [website](#) or contact [postmaster@homestartorkney.org.uk](mailto:postmaster@homestartorkney.org.uk)

## Befriender - VAO Adult Befriending Service

The Adult Befriending Service is encouraging volunteers to come forward to be a befriender to an older person needing a bit of company and a blether.

It's a very rewarding way to spend a spare hour a week and helps to brighten someone's day - and your own!

We match you to a befriender and run a full training programme to help you on your way to having fun, sharing your interests, or getting out and about in the community, with expenses covered. For further information and a chat about the role, please contact the Adult Befriending Service on 01856 872897 or [enquiries@vaorkney.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@vaorkney.org.uk) to speak with Kasia or Kathy.



## Girl Guiding Kirkwall

Girl Guiding Kirkwall are looking for lots of different volunteers to get involved as [group leaders](#), [committee members](#) and [guide hall cleaners](#). Please click on the links for more information about the roles.



## Board members at Orkney Islands Property Developments

Orkney Islands Property Developments are looking for new volunteer members to join the current Board of Directors.

OIPDL is a private landlord and letting agency company which provide a whole range of housing rentals and projects around Orkney, including extra care/sheltered housing, student accommodation and general lets.

Board meetings are usually held in Kirkwall every 6 weeks, so if you can spare a few hours each month and have an interest in housing matters around Orkney, please contact Anne Whitton for more information on 881435 or e-mail [anne@oipdl.co.uk](mailto:anne@oipdl.co.uk)

Click [here](#) for a complete list of current volunteer opportunities. If you would like a paper copy of the list or an alternative format, please do request this.

For information about volunteering contact Sam Stringer, Volunteer Development Worker [Samantha.stringer@vaorkney.org.uk](mailto:Samantha.stringer@vaorkney.org.uk) or visit our VAO website [Volunteering pages](#) to find out more.

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](mailto:Cecily.cromby@vaorkney.org.uk)