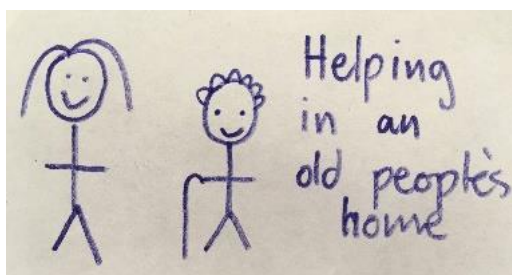
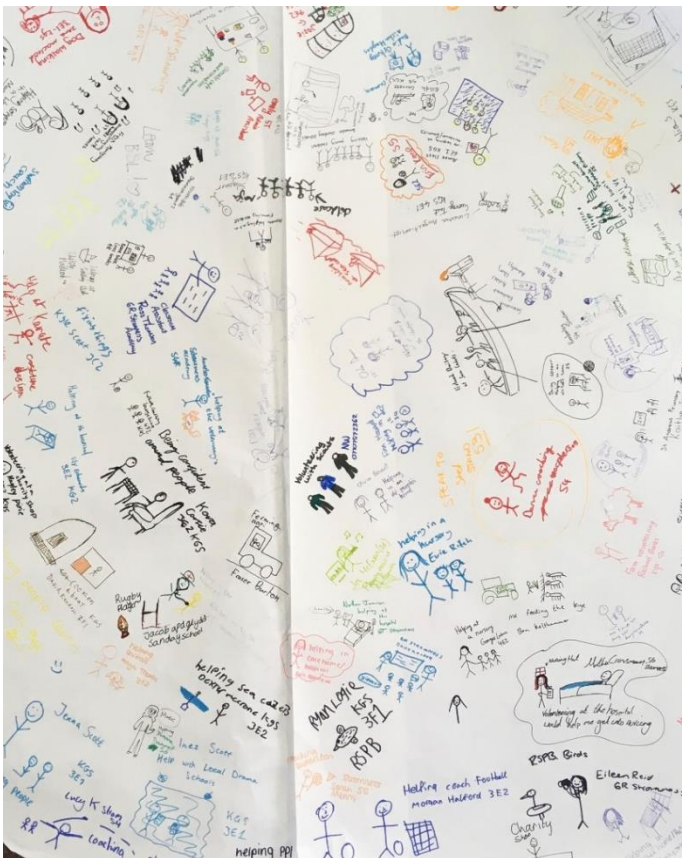


Newsletter September 2022

Local news and services

VAO at the DYW Careers Fair

VAO had a really busy time of it at this year's DYW careers fair, with young folk stopping past in their droves to help with our 'How can YOU volunteer?' display.



If you would like to find out more about volunteering opportunities for folk aged 12-25, please visit our [website](#) or contact [Brian Cromarty](#) on 872897 for a chat.

Tech Peer Mentor Project

There have been changes over the last few months and Willie Neish is now delivering the service on a reduced contract of three days a fortnight. Willie continues to support people with Tech problems or enquiries and to work with partners to advise on the different types of Tech that can be used to assist people with tasks in their own homes.

We have a Tech Library that is available for people to try different types of equipment to see if it works for them.

If you would like to borrow any of the equipment or discuss what may assist you, a member of your family or someone you deliver services to, please contact me at willie.neish@vaorkney.org.uk or 872897.

An example of the tech provided is the Amazon Echo Dot. These voice controlled speakers have multiple uses. You can make shopping lists, set timers, ask for news updates, check on the weather, ask for daily quizzes, play radio channels, stream music and songs and much more.

Great for:

- Social Isolation
- Mobility issues
- Increased control and independence
- Mental health and wellbeing

Some other uses:

- Phone any number using voice only
- Receive calls from Alexa devices
- Reminders of appointments, taking medication etc.
- Voice control to switch on/off lights, heating, adjust thermostats and find TV shows and more with compatible connected devices.
- Listen to Orkney Talking Newspaper
- Guided meditation/mindfulness



Please note that to use the Amazon Echo Dot, a person needs to be able to communicate with the device so if they are cognitively impaired or have difficulties with speech this may not be the most suitable device. Also, they must be linked to an Amazon account and wifi. As with all items in the Tech library, assistance can be provided.

Annual Community Halls Event

For the first time in 3 years the annual event which brings together Orkney's community halls for networking, information exchange, training and a good old natter, took place in person rather than virtually, on 24 September.

The event was organised in partnership between VAO's community development team and Orkney Islands Council's Community Learning and Development Team and was hosted magnificently this year by The Cromarty Hall in St Margaret's Hope, who provided a really warm welcome and excellent refreshments.





For the first time we also had several Halls' committee members attend virtually via Teams as well as the Halls attending in person, and we had a great turn out with 14 Halls represented. It was great to be able to meet in person again after two years of online meetings.

It was a very busy agenda, with speakers talking about the benefits of Community Asset Ownership, the potential involvement of the Halls in the delivery of the 2025 Island Games, the do's and don'ts of using social media to market events and activities, and funding opportunities in particular for reducing utility costs and working towards net zero. As always, the quick-fire session where the Halls shared their successes, challenges and solutions was really useful. Not surprisingly many Halls are concerned about spiralling utility costs, and how to support their communities during the cost of living rise. There was also a great discussion from a couple of halls who are having real problems cleaning their floors since re-varnishing them during lockdown (the answer was NOT to use detergents and only hot water).

A huge thank you to The Cromarty Hall for hosting the event – we didn't have time to say a proper thank you at the end of the event! Also thank you to the speakers, but most of all a massive thank you to all the volunteers from the Halls for making the time to come. We all know how busy everyone is and it shows how useful the event is that folk are happy to give up their Saturday to come along and contribute.

New Blether and Brew session from RS Orkney

RS Orkney have added another venue to their Blether and Brew sessions. The sessions are open to everyone, particularly those who may feel lonely and isolated, and provide a warm, safe space for folk to come together, enjoy a cuppa, take part in art and crafts activities, or just have a chat.

The new session in the Deerness Hall will be held on Thursdays from 10.30-12.30 and is in addition to the longer running sessions held in Stromness and Kirkwall.

Stromness Library
Wednesdays 10.30-12.30

Kirkwall Library
Wednesdays 1.30-3.30

Deerness Hall
Thursdays 10.30-12.30

If you would like to find out more about the sessions, or would like posters to display, please contact [Yvonne](#) at RS Orkney on 877750.

RS ORKNEY
counselling, mediation & family support
Registered Scottish Charity No SC033864
Company Ltd by Guarantee 389028
A member of RELATIONSHIPS

For more information
please contact
yvonne@rsorkney.org.uk
or call 01856877750

LINC

Own my Life at Women's Aid Orkney

Women's Aid Orkney are offering the opportunity to be part of something exciting, a first in the UK! They are offering a 6-week course for young women aged 14-25 where they learn about healthy relationships, domestic abuse and more.



If you, or users of your service, would like to participate, please get in touch with [Lesley-Anne Millar](mailto:Lesley-Anne.Millar@orkney.nhs.uk) at 01856 877900.

Orkney Talking Newspaper

If you or a friend or relative living in or out of Orkney has difficulty reading newspapers on account of visual or physical impairment either temporary or permanent, you can receive a free weekly CD or USB stick of news from The Orcadian and a magazine edition approximately every quarter.

If you prefer to listen online, then visit the Orkney Talking Newspaper [website](http://www.orkneytalkingnewspaper.co.uk) and click on CURRENT RECORDINGS to access the current recording of the Orkney Talking Newspaper and Orkney Talking Magazine.

For further details contact Frances Chalmers at Orkneytn@gmail.com or on 07845 673322.

Keep reading for an interview with Frances at the end of this newsletter!

Funding & Finance

Communities Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund Round 2

After a really successful round of this Scottish Government funded scheme which saw 18 projects in Orkney delivering a range of activities to support community wellbeing following the Covid Pandemic, we are about to launch a second round of this Fund. A total of £75,000 will be available for grass roots small scale projects which aim to improve wellbeing. The priorities are very similar to Round 1, however, there is a recognition that the cost of living crisis and rising levels of poverty are more prominent than last year, whilst the social isolation resulting from the Pandemic has become less urgent a concern.

Applicants will be able to apply for a maximum of £10,000 for capital or revenue. The Fund will open to applications on 17 October, however, the deadline for applications is not until 13 January so you have plenty of time. Projects can last up until 28 February 2024.

Application forms and guidance for the Fund will be available on the VAO website so please look out for those once the Fund has opened. If you want to discuss your project idea, need help with developing a project or completing the application form, contact Clare Gee, Community Development Worker at clare.gee@vaorkney.org.uk or phone 872897 extn 308.

Energy costs - UK Government Support to businesses and charities

Through a new government [Energy Bill Relief Scheme](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/energy-bill-relief-scheme), the government will provide a discount on wholesale gas and electricity prices for all non-domestic customers (including all UK businesses, the voluntary sector and the public sector) whose current gas and electricity prices have been significantly inflated in light of global energy prices. This support will be equivalent to the [Energy Price Guarantee](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/energy-price-guarantee) put in place for households.

It will apply to fixed contracts agreed on or after 1 April 2022, as well as to deemed, variable and flexible tariffs and contracts. It will apply to energy usage from 1 October 2022 to 31 March 2023, running for an initial 6-month period for all non-domestic energy users. The savings will be first seen in October bills, which are typically received in November.

As with the Energy Price Guarantee for households, customers do not need to take action or apply to the scheme to access the support. Support (in the form of a p/kWh discount) will automatically be applied to bills.

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 and let us know you would like to be added to the mailing list. The September update can be viewed [here](#).

Have your say



Third Sector Cost of Living Survey

We are very aware that the current economic environment is having a detrimental impact on people in Orkney. The cost of living crisis and the anxieties it has brought to individuals, families, and communities, means that third sector services and activities are facing an increase in demand at a time of rising costs.

We would like to know how the current challenges are affecting or are likely to affect your organisation and would be grateful if you would take a few minutes to complete this short [questionnaire](#) by Wednesday 12 October:

The information you provide is anonymous and confidential and all responses will be collated into a short report to provide an accurate picture of the issues affecting Orkney's third sector to share with local and national partners. It will also help us to develop a programme of support which we hope will be beneficial to you at this difficult time.

If you have any questions about this survey, please contact VAO at enquiries@vaorkney.org.uk or calling 01856 872897.

Remembering Together Orkney arts project gets underway

Remembering Together is a national programme supported by £4.2m provided by the Scottish Government to bring together communities and artists/creative practitioners in collective acts of reflection, remembrance, hope and healing. Its anticipated projects could take many forms, from gardens, visual art and sculptures or physical structures, to work that is digital or can exist in many locations.

In Orkney, the project is being led by local artists Emma Ainsley and John Phillips. Emma and John are hoping to meet up with as many folk as possible to explore ideas, experiences and feelings about the pandemic - *'it's very important that we hear from lots of folk from all around Orkney to have their say in what a memorial should be'*.

John and Emma can be contacted on emma@ainsleyphillipsprojects.com or by mobile/text message to 07534283808 (Emma Ainsley) or 07946735096 (John Phillips).

Wheels 2 Work (W2W) – mopeds or e-Bikes

Using information collected from recent consultations, 'Your Community ...Your Voice' and 'Orkney Matters', one issue that was mentioned by many, was transport and access to services.



A potential option for individuals would be the creation of a 'Wheels 2 Work' scheme - a scooter loan scheme helping individuals to access work/ education or training. At this time of increasing fuel costs this could also be a more affordable option for people (of any age but, potentially more young people or people getting back into work).

When might one use it?

For example: A farming job advertised, no public transport to the farm (in the middle of the countryside!), it was a very early morning start, one could not apply without own

transport but, with a moped as transport, you could accept the job, which would then allow you to pay a small hire charge for the moped.

If you wanted to take on a job in a restaurant that closes long after the last bus has left or a warehouse job that starts at 4am in the morning!

Case study:

"I was in foster care with Merv and Sarah for 3 years. They helped me get a wheels to work bike so I could get a job and see my friends. I worked in little cafe and I couldn't catch a bus because there wasn't one. I saved enough money to buy my own bike, a Virago, which I still ride now. Thank you Wheels 2 Work for giving me the opportunity to work and meet friends." Katy P. aged 20 from another W2W scheme

What age?

Anyone over 16 years.

Currently we are just gathering evidence if there is enough interest in Orkney and if it is a positive response, then we can plan to gather interested partners to take the project further and apply for some funding to make it happen. So we have circulated a [survey](#) (which is currently still live to gather any last minute responses).



If you would like to be involved in the future development of this work or discuss this further please email mark.bailey@vaorkney.org.uk or call 872897.

Scotland's People 2022



BBC One Scotland are currently seeking nominations for 'Scotland's People 2022' with Jackie Bird.

Over the past two years, Jackie has travelled Scotland meeting many of the nation's unsung heroes and learned of the care and kindness they've given others - and we need your help to nominate those you believe deserve to be recognised as one of Scotland's People 2022.

Do you know somebody special who has gone above and beyond to help those around them?

Someone who has been an inspiration and deserves a thank you from the nation?

If you have an unsung hero, or heroes, you'd like to nominate, all you have to do is go to www.bbc.co.uk/scotlandpeople

Get Involved in Designing the National Care Service

An invitation from Scottish Government:

'We want to have a National Care Service that best fits the needs of everyone in Scotland.'



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
gov.scot

To do that, we need to hear from people directly. This is what co-design means – working alongside the people who use and deliver health and social care services, and the organisations which represent them, to ensure we get a future organisation that works for everyone.

We're now looking for people to help us with this process, to understand the changes that are needed and checking if these changes are possible and practical.

Applications are now open to take part in this process and there are two ways to participate. If you're living in Scotland and have views on how you think the future NCS should look, you can apply to take part in our Lived Experience Experts Panel.

If you represent an organisation in Scotland with an interest in health and social care, you can apply to take part in our Stakeholder Register.'

Click here for more [information](#).

Dates for your diary

Open days at ORSAS

Orkney Rape & Sexual Assault Service (ORSAS) are holding open days over the next few months at 26 Bridge Street, Kirkwall. The open days are open to all and will be an opportunity to find out more about services and speak to staff.

Wed 26 October 12-3.30

Wed 30 November 12-3.30: 16 Days of Action

Wed 21 December 12-3.30: Celebration

Here is a brief overview of the services offered by ORSAS:

- ORSAS supports anyone aged 13+ of any gender who has experienced rape or any other forms of sexual violence at any time in their life. Information and support for non-abusive family, friends and professionals is also provided.
- ORSAS use Rape Crisis Scotland's Emotional Support Resourcing Model, developed over 40 years' experience in line with NHS Scotland's National Trauma Framework
- ORSAS offers Specialist Sexual Violence Advocacy for people who decide to disclose to police and are in their journey in the court & legal process.
- ORSAS campaigns to improve services for survivors – Forensics, Ask Angela, Press Reporting, 16 Days of Action, NSPCC Talk PANTS.
- Our Specialist Sexual Violence Prevention Worker is engaged in schools & youth settings delivering Rape Crisis Scotland's Sexual Violence Prevention Programme
- ORSAS trains teachers in the Equally Safe in School initiative.
- ORSAS also delivers COMET+ a tailored prevention programme for looked after children and children with additional needs (secondary school up to age 25)
- ORSAS provides opportunities for participation to strengthen survivor's voices & engage communities around the issues of equality, feminism & human rights. Our Equality Hub is a Hate Crime Reporting Centre and hosts Greener Orkney's Kirkwall Community Fridge.

For more information about ORSAS or the open days, please email contact@orsas.scot

The benefits of Community Asset Ownership - Date TBC

An event focussing on the benefits of community asset ownership, the funding available for land and building purchase and the things to think about if your group or organisation wants to take ownership of a local building for community benefit will be taking place in November. Look out for further information in the next VAO newsletter.

Training opportunities



National Trauma Training Programme (NES Education for Scotland, Turas)

Does your role involve working alongside or serving people who may be affected by trauma?

If you are likely to be working alongside or serving people who may have been affected by trauma, whether that is known or not, then the NES Education for Scotland Trauma Training Programme will help you think about how to consider this in your day to day working life.

More information on the free online modules can be found [here](#).

You will need to register with TURAS Learn to access the first of these resources, but anyone with an email address, no matter what their location or role is, can register free of charge. To register please click [here](#).

How Good is our Community Learning and Development? 4th edition

The framework was published in draft form in 2021 to allow practitioners across Scotland and HMIE to use it in their practice and then provide feedback. The CLD HMIE Team from Education Scotland ran a series of webinars in late 2021 to support practitioners to become familiar with the draft framework. As a result of feedback from practitioners, small changes have been made to the final document.

HMIE are now planning to run a series of webinars from October 2022 to April 2023 aimed at the CLD sector. Date and times are as follows:

- [Revisiting the Framework](#) Monday 3 October 11.30-12.15
- [Governance for Boards, management committees and trustees](#) Tuesday 4 October 11-12
- [Improvements and standards](#) Wednesday 12th October 1-2pm
- [Impact on supported, funded or commissioned organisations](#) Monday 31 October 11-12
- [Improvements in Performance](#) Monday 21 November 10-11am

Each webinar will have a theme and use Quality Indicators to help practitioners explore how they could use them to improve practice. The first five webinars are now available for booking via the links above.

Volunteering News

Trustees week 2022 Making a difference in changing times

Trustees' Week 2022 is coming soon 7-11 November 2022 so don't forget to save the date and take this chance to thank your trustees and celebrate the amazing contribution they make. Trustees look after the assets of a charity or a voluntary organisation including property, money and equipment and a board of trustees are responsible for making sure the organisation aims, objectives and purposes are fulfilled. Many Trustees are volunteers who work incredibly hard to keep our local community groups and charities going.



**TRUSTEES'
WEEK
2022**



The theme of Trustees' Week 2022 is 'Making a Difference in Changing Times' and there will be links throughout the week to events, training and guidance for trustee on the www.trusteesweek.org website. Are you a trustee for an Orkney organisation and would like to feature in our newsletter to share your experiences of being a volunteer? We would love to hear from you. Or perhaps your group is looking for new trustees to join your board? We can help spread the word and promote your opportunity to the community during Trustees' Week 2022. Get in touch using the contact details below.

Volunteer Voice – Orkney Talking Newspaper

Frances Chalmers is a volunteer with Orkney Talking Newspaper – OTN - and here she shares her experiences of volunteering as the Orkney Talking Newspaper Co-Ordinator. If you are inspired to volunteer with Frances or would like to share your volunteer voice in our newsletter, let us know!



How long have you been volunteering with OTN?
20 years

What time do you give to OTN each month?

It can vary, depending on the number of volunteers available at any one time, especially during the holidays, but it averages at about 3-4 hours per month.

Why did you choose otn to volunteer with?

Well, apart from the fact that it provides a much needed and very welcome support to visually impaired people, I liked the tasks involved which suited me and once I started, I couldn't stop!

What does OTN do as an organisation?

Basically, each week groups get together to turn the Orcadian into a recording. This recording can be in the form of a CD or a computer USB file. Players can be provided for anyone without the needed equipment. We bring an audio version of the newspaper – and an occasional 'magazine' of interesting articles – to folk who have difficulty reading the physical paper, be it through eyesight problems, physical limitations or reading issues.

How long has OTN existed and why did it start up?

OTN began in 1983. It was put in place after the idea was put forward by a small group of three people. The 'famous story' about the first tape is that it was done in a council office with just a tape recorder - and the mike was hung on the back of a chair!



What do you do as a volunteer there?

I personally have two roles. In the first one, I work with others to select items from the paper and write an Introduction. That says who was involved in putting together the talking newspaper for that week then describes things like supplements to the paper, fundraising successes, weddings, graduations, road disruptions, music performances, new shops, interesting advertisements, etc. My other role is as a reader. Then I read the articles verbatim, as chosen by the preparation team. These items are recorded and head for the final product.

What other ways do people volunteer with you?

Folk are surprised how much work is involved in producing a recording each week and that it takes one person to write the Introduction, two people to Prepare the articles for reading, three Readers and one Recorder. Then it takes three people to make all the Copies of the recording that are required and to prepare them for Despatch. The CD/USB sticks are sent by Royal Mail who do not charge for that service. So there are lots of roles and opportunities

What skills/experience/knowledge do volunteers need?

It helps if you can read and, for those who measure the length of articles, being able to count is useful. But, all joking aside, what anyone really needs is an interest in the subject and an enthusiasm for it. There is always room for anyone with a technical flair to address the sound desk, microphones and recording equipment but training and support is always available.



What's the best thing about being a volunteer?

The other volunteers! It's a great organisation and I can honestly say that, in all the years I have worked for it, I have always looked forward to my shifts.

Anything else you want to tell us.....

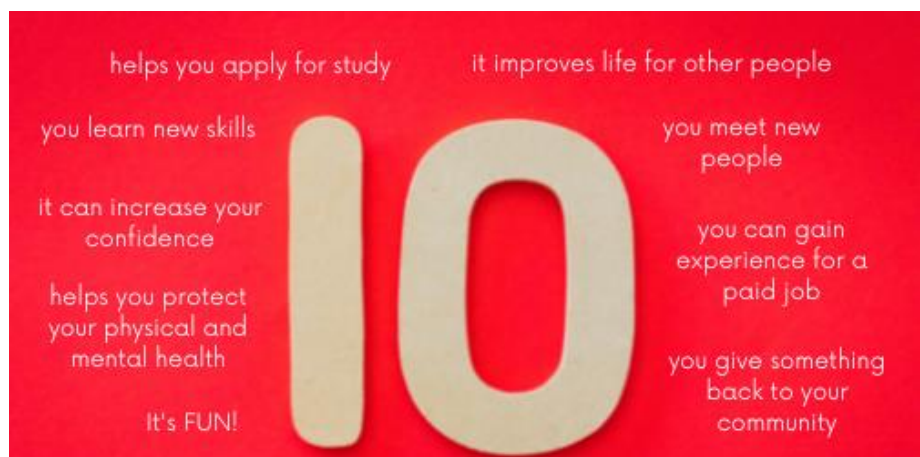
Don't hesitate to volunteer. Come along and see what we have to offer and you won't be disappointed. I have a visually impaired friend who receives the Talking Newspaper and truly appreciates it. When, during lockdown, the recordings were broadcast on Radio Orkney, even those without sight problems told me they enjoyed it!

How can I volunteer at OTN?

The Orkney Talking Newspaper team are looking for volunteer recorders. Find out more [here](#).

Want to volunteer?

Here are 10 great reasons to give it a try! To find out more and to see the latest volunteering opportunities on the VAO website pages click [here](#) or see the list below. Don't see an opportunity to suit you? Get in touch and hopefully we can help find something that does.



Good with numbers and love cats? Volunteer as [Orkney Cats treasurer](#)

Good at admin and love dogs? Volunteer at [Loving Homes Dog Rescue](#)

Support a young person in Orkney – become a [befriender](#)

Work from home as [merchandise co-ordinator for the St Magnus Way](#)

Looking to gain experience in retail? Become a [Mind-On shop volunteer](#)

Need volunteers?

Need new volunteers, committee or board members for your organisation but don't know how to find them? Fill in the [Volunteer Opportunities form](#) on our website and send this to Sam who can give you advice and help promote your opportunities.

Contact Sam

Sam Stringer - VAO Volunteer Development Worker
01856 872897 extension 311
samantha.stringer@vaorkney.org.uk

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