

# Newsletter November 2022

## Local news and services

### New Chief Executive at VAO



Voluntary Action Orkney are delighted to welcome Morven Brooks to post as our new Chief Executive.

Morven is an experienced leader who has most recently been CEO with Disability Equality Scotland. Morven's dedicated leadership helped guide Disability Equality Scotland through the COVID-19 pandemic and other unprecedented challenges, while ensuring the charity remained listening to the needs of disabled people.

Commenting on her appointment as Chief Executive with Voluntary Orkney, Morven said:

"It is a great privilege to become Chief Executive of Voluntary Action Orkney and to be given the opportunity to work with such a dynamic network where I live and now work. I recognise the immense challenges that are facing the Third Sector in Orkney, which are worsened by the current cost of living crisis.

I am fully committed to working closely with our members, partners and wider stakeholders to address these issues and build upon the strong foundations already in place to make sure the Third Sector in Orkney is recognised for all they do and more importantly address service delivery gaps where required.

I have been so warmly welcomed by all and very much look forward to meeting and working with the wider Third Sector here in Orkney"

### VAO Charities Christmas Bazaar 2022 – that's a wrap!

Thank you to everyone who took part in and visited the VAO Charities Christmas Bazaar on Saturday 26th November. Fourteen Orkney charities filled the St Magnus Centre with stalls selling Christmas cards and decorations as well as handcrafted toys, scented candles, home baking, calendars and more. Those feeling lucky were able to try their hand in raffles and tombola's all in support of a good cause.



To get everyone in the festive mood, young volunteers played carols in the foyer. Women's Aid Orkney were selected by representatives from the VAO Board to win the Most Festive Stall. Together the charities raised over £3200.



## Thank you from the Stronsay Defib Appeal

The Stronsay Defib Appeal is working with the Community Heartbeat Trust to raise funds for public access defibrillators to be sited in Whitehall village and Rothiesholm. They aim to raise funds to cover purchase, maintenance and installation costs as well as providing AED/defibrillator first aid courses for interested residents.

Fundraising will be ongoing. They have raised over £10,000 through various activities so far and have now been able to purchase 3 defibs with both the Whitehall village and Rothiesholm School installed and registered for use and South school in the process of installation. They have also been able to purchase a 4th which will arrive in the new year and will continue to raise funds for a 5th to offer everyone on the Island equal opportunity to access a community defib 24/7 as well as covering the ongoing maintenance annually.



The Trust would like to thank everyone that has donated, through the online appeal and the collection tins, as well as directly to the Trust privately - there are too many to name individually! They would also like to thank those that have arranged activities to support the Appeal and highlight that people in the community have gone above and beyond in these times of financial uncertainty.

- The Front porch and those involved in supporting this
- Christopher Maier and his one man show with a donation of £150
- Cooke Aquaculture for a funding award of £4,400
- Gaynor Smith for book sales donations
- The Book Nook
- Everyone that donated a raffle prize.

They are also grateful to NILPS for funding the refurbishment of the Phone kiosks to house the defibs - these look amazing and just like new thanks to Lee Hall and the care he has taken to get it just right. They look forward to what the heritage society does with the internal displays in the new year.

## Funding & Finance



### Communities Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund

The Communities Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund is open for applications. The funding supports local voluntary groups and third sector organisations to develop and deliver grass roots activities that help tackle issues such as social isolation and the cost of living crisis. Grants are available up to £10,000 for community based activities or the purchase of equipment.

There is a total of £75,000 to disburse for projects taking place between February 2023 and the end of February 2024. Successful applications will deliver against some or all of the local priorities for the fund, which were developed by a panel which included local statutory and third sector organisations and people with lived experience of mental ill health.

The local priorities are:

- Poverty
- Social isolation
- Prevention of Suicide
- Unpaid Carers
- Older People

The deadline for applications is Friday 13 January 2023.

Find out more here or to chat through your ideas, please contact [Clare Gee](#), Community Development Worker at VAO on 872897 extension 308.

**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 November update can be viewed [here](#)**

## Have your say



### Remembering Together Orkney

The Remembering Together Orkney team will be hosting a drop-in session on Thursday 19 January for third sector organisations. The session will be held at Age Scotland Orkney from 10.00-4.00 with tea, coffee and cake provided.

The event will help the team find out what a Covid memorial for Orkney should be like, asking people to help explore ideas, thoughts, experiences and feelings about the pandemic in Orkney and how it's affected people.

For more information please click [here](#) or contact [Emma Ainsley](#).



# Job opportunities



## Family Support Worker - Action for Children

Salary: £19,300 pro-rata plus £1700 Islands allowance

Contract/Hours: 3 year fixed term contract, part time 12 hours per week

This is an exciting time to join Action for Children, this job role is crucial in the development of the service in Orkney, in partnership with Orkney Island Council. You will be supporting Children and Young People who are impacted by substance and alcohol misuse through early intervention and flexible whole family support within the family homes, education settings and the community. Working with all partner agencies within Orkney (Orkney Health and Care, Education, Police, Health and the Third Sector) the post is integral in providing support to families at an early stage and the service identifies the young person's needs and responds effectively. A child centred approach will be at the heart of the delivery of this support.

Click [here](#) for more information.

# Training opportunities



## Funded Online Introductory Mental Health Awareness Training for Rural Organisations

Support in Mind Scotland is delighted to be working in partnership with Mental Health UK to deliver fully funded online introductory mental health awareness training to rural organisations and businesses with less than 50 members of staff.

The 4-hour 'An Insight into Mental Health' interactive course can help your staff team to open up the conversation about mental health and identify what changes can be made in the workplace to improve wellbeing.

Upcoming Course Dates:

- 6 and 7 December 09.30-11.30am both days via Zoom
- 12 January 09.30-1.30pm via Zoom

The course covers:

- What is mental health and mental illness
- An introduction to some common mental health conditions
- The benefits of managing stress
- A four-step process to building safe and supportive conversations
- How to look after you own mental health and wellbeing

For more information or to book a place, contact [Fiona Thompson](#), National Training Manager, Support in Mind Scotland. Find out more [here](#).

## Develop new skills through flexible online training

FutureLearn is for everyone – regardless of your stage of career. By registering or signing into your My World of Work Careers account, you will have access to FREE courses led by top universities and brands through FutureLearn.

To sign up, you must be 25 or over and living in Scotland.

The Scottish Government has provided funding for 5000 upgraded courses and you will receive access for up to 12 months.

The courses can help you upskill for your current job or reskill for a new role.

What can you get from FutureLearn?

- Access to courses led by top universities and brands
- A Certificate of Achievement to show employers when you complete a course
- Online access to learning to do in your own time, day or night
- Connection to a network of learners from over 190 countries

For more information click [here](#).

## Volunteering News

### Volunteer Voice

Lorraine Littlejohn shares her Volunteer Voice this month to tell us about her volunteer path-checking role with Orkney Pilgrimage St Magnus Way.

If your organisation has a Volunteer Voice to share with us, do get in touch!

#### How long have you been volunteering and what do you do?

I've been volunteering as a path-checker on the St Magnus Way for about 18 months. I check a section of the Way at the start and the end of the walking season and report back to the team on path conditions such as signage, way-marker posts and rubbish. My allocated stretch is from Waulkmill Bay across the moor to Greenigoe. It takes about three hours to complete the walk, and to check all posts and signs. Before starting this volunteering I had never walked this area before and I set off for my first check in March 2021 when the weather was reasonable but had been very wet. It was quite a struggle!



#### How did you hear about this volunteering?

I read in the East Church newsletter that Orkney Pilgrimage were looking for walkers to check sections of the St Magnus Way so I contacted Stuart Little (Chair of the group) to say I was interested.

#### What are the best things about being a path checker volunteer?

Well, I love walking and being out in the fresh air, so what better way to do it than look after a part of this wonderful 58-mile pilgrim walk, with friends to accompany me with laughter and good humour?

At the end of the summer, I took pictures of a lot of rubbish that had built up from the sea at the Salt Pan - which is usually a delightful dell at the edge of the sea. But this time the dell was full of

debris. This led to a group of St Magnus Way volunteers doing a 'bag the bruck' at the Salt Pan; a lot of work entailed but everyone was happy to be making a difference. So, if anyone out there loves to walk, why not make it a volunteering opportunity with the St Magnus Pilgrim Way? You could be finding parts of Orkney you have never seen before!



For more information about the St Magnus Way, please visit their [website](#) or [Facebook](#) page.

St Magnus Way are currently looking for a [social media volunteer](#) and [merchandise coordinator](#). Click on the links to find out more.

## Want to volunteer?

Did you know you can search for current volunteer opportunities in Orkney on the VAO website? Go to the Volunteering Opportunities [web page](#) and click on the SEARCH button. You can narrow your search by using the filter boxes too. You may find the perfect volunteer opportunity here already but if not, you can register with VAO as a volunteer and we can help find a role to suit you.

For all volunteering opportunities visit the VAO [website](#) or contact us on 872897 or at [enquiries@vaorkney.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@vaorkney.org.uk) for more information.

**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)**