

# Newsletter April 2023

## Local news and services

### Volunteers' Week 2023



2023 marks the 39th year of Volunteers' Week (1-7 June), when VAO will join thousands of charities and voluntary organisations recognising the contribution volunteers make across the UK. With this year's theme of 'Celebrate and Inspire' we hope to encourage people to be the change that we want to see and get involved in volunteering in whatever way works for them.

The contribution of volunteers is often unseen and unrecognised by many, visible only through the incredible impact of their volunteering, so taking the time during Volunteers' Week to celebrate their efforts and all they contribute to our local communities, the voluntary sector and society as a whole has never been more important.

Volunteer Development Worker, Alison Sharkey said: "Volunteers' Week is a chance to celebrate and recognise the fantastic contribution our volunteers make in Orkney. There's a huge breadth of volunteering going on in Orkney. In library archives sorting photographs, in kitchens baking for causes, or sharing a hobby with a young person or someone isolated at home. This is a chance for us to make sure they know how important they are."

VAO would love to hear from groups planning Volunteers' Week 2023 activities so we can help them make the buzz even louder. You could post a message on your social media using the special templates on the Volunteers Week 2023 website or you could email a thank you certificate to each of your volunteers. Use #VolunteersWeek to share your tweets, stories and messages of thanks nationally. If you tag VAO in your thank you on Facebook we can also share your post on our page.

More information is available here:

Volunteers' Week 2023 information <https://volunteersweek.org/>

Thank you certificates <https://volunteersweek.org/get-involved/resources/saying-thank-you/>

VAO can also promote any volunteering opportunities for organisations on our website and social media pages – just complete and return a Volunteer Opportunity form at <https://www.vaorkney.org.uk/volunteering/i-need-volunteers/>

To get involved in Volunteers' Week 2023 or for further information about volunteering in Orkney, visit [www.vaorkney.org.uk](http://www.vaorkney.org.uk) or contact Volunteer Development Worker, Alison Sharkey [Alison.sharkey@vaorkney.org.uk](mailto:Alison.sharkey@vaorkney.org.uk) 01856 872 897 extension 311.

## Adult Befriending Service - Intergenerational Group

### Befriending

The last eight months saw a successful partnership form between the Adult Befriending Service and Papdale Primary School. An intergenerational project aimed to bring people together from different generations in purposeful activities which would promote respect between generations and contribute to more connected communities. Inclusion, building relationships, developing communication and banishing stereotypical views were at the forefront of the project. The emphasis was to be shared learning, rather than seeing older people as a group who need to be entertained. Playing board games together would develop skills in communication, improve patience and resilience, increase self-esteem and confidence and encourage compassion, respect and empathy.



5-6 pupils attended the over 60s group at the Life Centre for three consecutive Monday afternoons. Week one involved a circle time game where all participants got to know one another. The pupils then choose a game they wanted to play and invited an older person to play it with them. Week two gave the over 60s the chance to teach the pupils a game which they liked to play. Week three offered an opportunity to play a different game with a different person. The project aimed to 'resurrect the board game' in a screen and gaming culture where we are losing the ability to communicate verbally and to prevent skills such as card playing from dwindling.

Tea, coffee and biscuits were served halfway through the session and the pupils handed out the milk and biscuits. There was an opportunity to sit and have a chat with new people.

A baseline assessment was carried out before the project began and the same questions were asked after attending the group for three weeks. It is clear that the project has been successful for both generations. Years of socialising have been missed due to the pandemic. This project provided an opportunity for both generations to socialise, sharing and developing knowledge, skills and values on their journey. Over the three weeks relationships were built and there was mutual respect for one another. There was always a calm, quiet atmosphere, creating an environment rich in opportunities for learning.



Communication was encouraged and levels of self-confidence when talking to new people increased. When asked what they would like to do next all the pupils said they would love to come back to the group to play more games and meet more people. When a group member was involved in a serious road accident there was an incredible amount of compassion shown. The pupils made cards which were delivered to the hospital.

The data showed that stereotypical views have definitely changed. 'Boring', 'slow', 'grey' and 'grumpy' have been replaced by 'kind', 'caring', 'cool' and 'fun'.

Without a doubt this project has led to a more 'connected community'. Schools usually manage to 'tick the intergenerational box' by inviting in grandparents. However, this project aimed to offer the opportunity to get to know people in the wider community. It has now continued with a P6/7 class.

For more information about the Adult Befriending Service please contact Pamela Scott at [pamela.scott@vaorkney.org.uk](mailto:pamela.scott@vaorkney.org.uk) or on 01856 872897 ext: 318

## Orkney's first student-led community law clinic launches in Kirkwall

A new student-led community clinic has officially opened in Kirkwall to help provide vital legal services to people living in the Orkney Isles.

The Orkney Community Clinic is a partnership between the Grampian Community Law Centre, part of Robert Gordon University's Law School, and the Orkney Blide Trust.

The confidential and independent service will operate virtually and offer legal support and guidance to Orkney residents on low incomes in the areas of social welfare law such as housing, employment, consumer rights, family law, and more.

The Clinic will operate every Thursday evening between 5pm - 8pm at the Blide Trust. Appointments can be booked by contacting [GCLC@rgu.ac.uk](mailto:GCLC@rgu.ac.uk)

Please click on the link for more information. <https://choose.rgu.ac.uk/news/news-2023/5919-orkney-s-first-student-led-community-law-clinic-launches-in-kirkwall>

## Focus on Mind-On

We are delighted to share some information from local charity Mind-On. If you would like us to share information about your organisation, please get in touch with [cecily.cromby@vaorkney.org.uk](mailto:cecily.cromby@vaorkney.org.uk)



### What does "Mind-On" mean?

When your mind is on something, you think about it or give attention to it. In Orcadian, it is used to remember something. That's exactly what the charity wants you to do, remember your own mental health and that of others and protect it.

### What does Mind-On do?

Mind-On SCIO runs a charity shop at 8, Albert Street, Kirkwall, the old Hydro Shop. All monies raised in Orkney are given out as grants to organisations based in Orkney, for the benefit of folk living in Orkney.

It is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO), established in January 2020 to advance the mental health of people in Orkney by providing funds to appropriate organisations for counselling and other services. The charity has a voluntary board of 11 trustees, three paid staff members, and many lovely volunteers.

Prior to registering as a charity, the organisation began following an initial idea from a community member for a pop-up charity shop in the old Lobbans butchers shop on Victoria Street. This was a community run organisation and to take the next steps to register as a charity, a Board of Trustees was needed. The organisation asked various community members if they would become Trustees and take the shop forward to become a Scottish registered charity.

### Why do you give the money you raise to other organisations?

There are many organisations and groups in Orkney doing great things with folk who need a little help with their mental health or who offer opportunities and projects that increase folk's sense of wellbeing and positive mental health.

The Board's skills lie with running a shop that raises much needed funds for these projects. There are others who have excellent skills to assist the Orkney community and we aim to support them.

Over the last 2 years we have donated over £60,000 to many local organisations to continue to deliver their wonderful work or to fund a particular project. Our aim is to assist them in these post Covid times of diminishing funds and rising costs.

This year's grant allocation is open for submissions until May 19th, 2023. Applications can be addressed to the Treasurer, Karen Scholes at 8, Albert Street, Kirkwall.

### **How do you make the shop stand out?**

By providing a light and airy shopping experience, with high quality goods at a reasonable price. We are very fortunate in having a wonderful, large window front, which is used to best advantage by our staff and volunteers to mark festive occasions and dates of interest. Whether it be Easter, Halloween, Dr Who, Christmas or summer/winter, displays done by our Retail Assistant catch the eye.

There is plenty of space for disabled access and well-behaved dogs are welcome, particularly assistance dogs! We have a changing room, a returns policy (within the month, with the receipt and all tags left on), and a warm welcome from whoever is behind the counter. We have also recently invested in setting up Gift Aid – raising an extra 25% income for the charity on appropriately donated and bought goods.

### **What's your desired customer experience?**

To feel welcome, to feel they have supported local causes, to have found great, re-purposed goods and to tell others about the shop!

### **How can I get involved?**

Oh yes please! Collect a volunteer application from the shop and come and join us!

Donate your unwanted items to the shop and register for Gift Aid if you are a taxpayer. We accept electrical goods and have them PAT tested, we take books, clothes, some furniture items, toys, bric a brac – in fact almost anything! We recycle everything we can't sell as far as possible.

Go on, you know you will!

## **Scottish Household Survey 2021 - Volunteering Results**

The Scottish Government published its Scottish Household Survey 2021 report this month and a rapid analysis of the volunteering data by Volunteer Scotland has highlighted some very interesting findings. Although formal volunteering participation is flat-lining at 27% (it was expected to decline), the importance of volunteers supporting their community/neighbourhood stands out, with nearly one third of Scotland's volunteers involved.

The following demographic groups had a particularly strong volunteering contribution to their community/neighbourhood:

- 37% of disabled volunteers
- 36% of 'white - other British' volunteers
- 40% of rural-based volunteers
- 37% of volunteers aged >60.

More information is available here: [https://www.volunteerscotland.net/news/research-evaluation-blog/scottish-household-survey-2021-results?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=Scottish%20Household%20Survey%20-%202021%20Results&utm\\_content=Scottish%20Household%20Survey%20-%202021%20Results+CID\\_9cefb69c4798665a7ad396f3a1d54037&utm\\_source=Email%20CM&utm\\_term=VIEW%20FURTHER%20HIGHLIGHTS%20HERE](https://www.volunteerscotland.net/news/research-evaluation-blog/scottish-household-survey-2021-results?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Scottish%20Household%20Survey%20-%202021%20Results&utm_content=Scottish%20Household%20Survey%20-%202021%20Results+CID_9cefb69c4798665a7ad396f3a1d54037&utm_source=Email%20CM&utm_term=VIEW%20FURTHER%20HIGHLIGHTS%20HERE)



# Legislation & guidance

## Distributed Denial of Service (DDOS) attacks

We are pleased to share the following information from Police Scotland on Distributed Denial of Service attacks:

As a result of our national law enforcement collaboration, we are issuing this cyber alert regarding DDOS as, we are aware there has been an increase of reports from organisations affected by this type of cyberattack.

DDOS or DoS attacks, are one of the methods cyber criminals use to effectively attack and hinder the network and operating systems of organisations. These attacks can be effective against even the most protected targets.

This type of attack will home in on your organisation and will be launched for multiple devices used by the cybercriminals.

The intention can be to simply attack your website or more critically, your control systems which you rely on for processing your business needs. A successful attack will lead to your denial of service in terms of access to your data as well and your business service input and output.

We must remain vigilant to DoS, as it is not possible to fully mitigate the risk or the affect it would have on your operating model.



Protecting against a DoS attack.

- Know your operating model especially where there is most demand on your services which could be overloaded.
- Ensure your service provider/s can, and are ready to, support your network should an attack affect your service and that they can deal with any surges to your network.
- Is your Incident Response plan/s to a cyber incident, current to ensure it is, designed to support resilience and business continuity.
- Do you have confidence that your approach to cyberattack meets the needs of your business and you have an up to date structure of right people within your CIRT (Cyber Incident Response Team) ready to respond.

Cyberattacks are devastating and in further support against a DoS, we have included the following links to our partner agency the NCSC (National Cyber Security Centre).

A minimal Denial of Service (DoS) response plan - <https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/collection/denial-service-dos-guidance-collection/a-minimal-denial-of-service-response-plan>

Stay protected online with a Cyber Action Plan - <https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/cyberaware/actionplan>

Cyber Security Toolkit for Boards - <https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/collection/board-toolkit>

Police Scotland are sponsors for membership to the CiSP platform which is free to join. If your organisation is not a member or if your organisation would like more information on what CiSP is and does, please follow the link here <https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/cisp/home>

We are also ambassadors and members of the Cyber Scotland Partnership and would encourage your organisation to visit the Cyber Scotland Partnership website, and in particular this link - <https://www.cyberscotland.com/category/resources/resilience/> - to learn about the support you can

gain and also with regard to the Cyber Essentials scheme at Cyber Essentials - <https://iasme.co.uk/cyber-essentials/>

## Funding & finance

### Energy support for SCVO members

Utility Aid is the UK's largest energy broker for the not-for-profit sector.

If you are a member of SCVO (Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations) you have free access to Utility Aid's expertise. Their dedicated team provide a high-level service - here's what YMCA Scotland had to say about their experience:

"With spiralling costs to our gas and electricity, Utility Aid made contact just at the right time as I was beginning to review our options. They were very efficient and found YMCA Scotland cheaper deals for both gas and electricity very quickly."

Request a free utility bill audit with Utility Aid by clicking on the following link:

<https://www.utility-aid.co.uk/contactform/SCVO>

**VAO produces a monthly Training & Funding Update which 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 latest update can be viewed [here](#).**

## Community events

### Orkney Carers Conference 18 May 2023

The conference for unpaid carers will take place at the Pickaquoy Centre on Thursday 18 May and has been organised by Orkney Health and Care (OHAC) with the support of the Carers Strategy Group, a local multi-agency forum aimed at improving support for and awareness of unpaid carers.

People can also attend online via Teams.

Believed to be the first of its kind in Scotland, and possibly the UK, the event is aimed at exploring the key challenges for unpaid carers and the support that could make a huge difference to their quality of life, and those they care for.



Feedback from the day will help inform a Carers Strategy for the next five years aimed at setting out how local services can better support carers in Orkney, and an action plan.

The Orkney Dementia Choir will open and close the day with a performance, with attendees being led through a series of talks and focus groups by hosts for the day, Gillian Skuse, CEO of Age Scotland Orkney (and serving Orkney Islands Council elected member), and John Richards, former Orkney

Islands Council housing chief, retired Councillor, and long time champion of the challenges facing carers.

Importantly, the afternoon will see facilitated discussions aimed at enabling carers to talk about their challenges and the changes they would like to see to policy and services, and learn from each other.

The day will close with a panel discussion and Q&A.

The day will run from 9:45am through to around 2pm with an option to attend online.

For more information or to book your place click on the link below. Places can also be booked by calling Crossroads Care Orkney on 01856 870500. [www.orkney.gov.uk/carersconference](http://www.orkney.gov.uk/carersconference)

## Volunteering news

### Need volunteers to help your organisation?

We can help match up volunteers to opportunities, so if your organisation, charity or community group has a volunteering opportunity, let us know. We can spread the word, promoting this on our website, social media and to volunteers we are meeting in person or at events. Just complete and return a Volunteer Opportunity form to get started - <https://www.vaorkney.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Volunteer-Opportunity-form-2022.pdf>

### Latest volunteer opportunities

Here are some of the latest volunteer opportunities, click on the links to find out more.



**CLAN** - Clan is looking for craft enthusiasts to stitch a drove of knitted hares, ahead of The Big Hop Trail launching this summer. Find out more: <https://www.thebighop.co.uk/knit-your-own-hare/>

**Young Archaeologists Club** - Are you interested in archaeology and heritage and enjoy working with young people? Then come

and be a YAC leader and help organise and deliver fun, hands-on, creative activities and visits. They are looking for both a branch Leader and assistant for the Orkney Young Archaeologists Club.

<https://www.vaorkney.org.uk/volunteering/volunteering-opportunities/#/opportunity/a0g0800000V7Hx3AAF/leader-assistant-leader?distance=10&page=3&view=widget>



**VAO** - Help build volunteering in your community by becoming a Volunteer Ambassador with VAO. We need enthusiastic people to reach out and recruit new folk by attending regular information days at community events and the local library.

<https://www.vaorkney.org.uk/volunteering/volunteering-opportunities/#/opportunity/a0g0800000VhnBDAAZ/volunteer-ambassador?distance=10&page=5&view=widget>



**Orkney Folk Festival** - This year is the 40th anniversary of the Orkney Folk Festival running from May 25 - 28. Come and experience the festival's magic in a unique way and help make it happen. The festival is looking for front of house volunteers as well as volunteers for the festival shop. Click on the links below for more information:

<https://www.vaorkney.org.uk/volunteering/volunteering-opportunities/#/opportunity/a0g0800000VhvSAAAZ/front-of-house-volunteer?distance=10&page=3&view=widget>

<https://www.vaorkney.org.uk/volunteering/volunteering-opportunities/#/opportunity/a0g0800000VhvSFAAZ/festival-shop-volunteer?distance=10&page=3&view=widget>



**Big Help Out** - The Big Help Out is a unique initiative which forms a part of the King's Coronation. Starting on Monday 8th May, it's a chance for everybody to experience volunteering in their local area. Thousands of organisations – from the biggest to the smallest and most local – have been registering opportunities at <https://thebighelpout.org.uk/> where the app will link you up with what's happening near you, or in a category of volunteering that interests you most. Organisations with volunteering opportunities, or if you who would like to take part in the day, should visit [thebighelpout.org.uk](https://thebighelpout.org.uk) to find out how to take part, register opportunities, and show their support.

For all volunteer enquiries contact:

Alison Sharkey - VAO Volunteer Development Worker  
01856 872897 extension 311  
[alison.sharkey@vaorkney.org.uk](mailto:alison.sharkey@vaorkney.org.uk)  
[www.vaorkney.org.uk](http://www.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](mailto:Cecily.cromby@vaorkney.org.uk)**