

# Newsletter October 2023

## Local news and services

### Trustees Week Celebration in Orkney

This year, to mark Trustees Week, Voluntary Action Orkney (VAO) is thrilled to announce a week-long celebration. From Monday 6 of November until Friday 10 November, we are running free, online workshops designed to empower and educate third sector organisations and their trustees in the Orkney community.

We have been at the heart of community development in Orkney, working with volunteers, charities, and community groups to enhance the well-being of the community. With our deep-rooted passion for community development, we can't wait to work with third sector organisations across the islands as part of Trustees Week.

Morven Brooks, VAO's Chief Executive, said: "Some of our key workshop sessions include, 'What is Social Enterprise', 'The Role of Treasurer' and 'How to Fundraise'. We're also holding 1:1 surgeries throughout the week, perfect if you've got an idea, but not sure how to make it happen. Equally, if you are involved with an organisation that's already established, but you've got some queries or concerns, our dedicated team of community development workers can help.

"All the workshops will be conducted online, making them easily accessible to individuals and organisations across Orkney.

"Voluntary Action Orkney is committed to strengthening the community by providing educational and supportive resources for organisations and their trustees. These workshops are an excellent opportunity for trustees to enhance their skills and make a positive impact on the organisations they serve."

View the full programme events here:

<https://www.vaorkney.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Trustees-Poster-2023-Final-1.png>

To secure your spot in these informative workshops, simply visit Voluntary Action Orkney's Eventbrite page using the link below:

[www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/voluntary-action-orkney-vao-57632643133](http://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/voluntary-action-orkney-vao-57632643133)

For more information about Trustees Week email: [development@vaorkney.org.uk](mailto:development@vaorkney.org.uk)

Don't miss this fantastic chance to celebrate Trustees Week and expand your knowledge as a trustee in Orkney. We look forward to seeing you at the workshops!

## Orkney Drugs Dog available for community group talks



The Orkney Drugs Dog is keen to hear from any community groups who would be interested in a talk from the charity's dog handler, Kevin Moar.

The charity, which operates with two fully trained search dogs (Zoe and Keegan, pictured), plays an important role in reducing the supply and trade of illegal drugs in Orkney.

Much of their work sees them searching the entry points to the county, such as the ferry ports, airport, and package depots.

However, Kevin and dogs also give talks to people of all ages about the work the charity does and to raise awareness of the dangers of such substances and why the trade can have hugely detrimental effects on small communities such as those here in Orkney.

The charity is keen to hear from any groups who may wish to welcome Kevin along to a meeting. He would be happy to bring one of the dogs along to the session and talk about how they work.

Some of the topics covered would be :

- The work of the charity.
- Drugs awareness and the dangers of illegal substances.
- Impact to the individual, family and wider community.
- Drugs Box.
- Keegan and Zoe, how they are trained etc.
- How to report suspected drug issues (use, dealing etc).



If practicable then a short demonstration could also be conducted. This will depend on location and its suitability to conduct it.

Groups can contact [kevin.m@orkneydrugsdog.co.uk](mailto:kevin.m@orkneydrugsdog.co.uk) or [enquiries@orkneydrugsdog.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@orkneydrugsdog.co.uk) to express an interest.

Pictured left: ODD handler Kevin Moar with search dog Zoe during a recent trip to the Orkney Trefoil Guild.

## Community Events

### Clan Cancer Support: Wur Westray Connection

**The Orkney BRCA1 Gene Story: Beyond Westray - A talk by Prof. Zosia Miedzybrodzka**  
**Wednesday 22 November**  
**The Orkney Arts Theatre**  
**7pm for a 7.30pm start**

In March news that a gene variant in the breast and ovarian cancer gene BRCA1 that arose in 1600s Westray is common in Orcadians hit the news from Pierowall to New Zealand. Westray Development Trust funded a pilot study to get a system for NHS self-administered saliva testing up and running. CLAN has invited Prof Zosia Miedzybrodzka of the University of Aberdeen and service director of the NHS Grampian genetics service to tell us about the discovery of the variant, what it means for women and men with Westray ancestors and to discuss plans for how testing for the gene could be made available beyond Westray.

Tickets for this free event can be booked here:

<https://www.tickettailor.com/events/clancancersupport/1045910>

Or by using the QR code.



## Funding & finance

### Communities Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund – Round 3

A grant fund aimed at supporting community-based initiatives that promote and develop good mental health and wellbeing within the adult population is open for applications.

The Communities Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund for adults has a total of £75,000 available for projects in Orkney, with the Fund being managed on behalf of the Scottish Government by Voluntary Action Orkney in partnership with the Orkney Partnership.

The projects supported will benefit communities right across Orkney, and can offer a wide range of activities, such as fitness and gentle sports, provide equipment and enable the set-up of self-help support groups, support those with long term and life limiting illness, offer access to learning and arts activities.

The 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 5pm on Friday 12 January 2024.

For further information, the application guidance and application form, please go to

<https://www.vaorkney.org.uk/communities-mental-health-and-wellbeing-fund/>

**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](#).**

# Training opportunities



## Heath Issues in the Community - Two short courses

Nicki Jaques from Rousay Egilsay and Wyre Development Trust is running two short courses as part of OIC's Community Learning and Development Partnership's programme of training.

The courses will explore the social model of health and look at how poverty and inequality can create barriers for people in relation to their health and wellbeing.

These sessions are for everyone working in health, social care or third sector organisations who are supporting people with their health and wellbeing.

### **The Social Model of Health**

**Thursday 23rd November 2023, 10am-1pm,**  
Kirkwall Community Centre

Session overview:

- Explore the difference between medical and social perspectives in relation to health.
- Explore causes and treatment of illness from a social model of health perspective
- Explore 'lay' and 'professional' perspectives to health
- Introduce different ways of thinking about health, including historical and cultural ideas

### **Poverty, Inequality & Health**

**Wednesday 29 November 2023, 10am-1pm**  
Kirkwall Community Centre

Session Overview:

- Introduce how poverty, inequality & social class can impact on health
- Explore the barriers to good health and identify what choices people in different circumstances may have.
- Explore the meaning of 'Equity in Health' and the different experiences and common problems
- To define poverty and gain a broader understanding of the issue and explore the idea of relative poverty and its link with social justice

To book a place on either or both sessions or to find out more please email [Nicky@REWDT.org](mailto:Nicky@REWDT.org)

When booking a place please include which session(s) you wish to attend, your name, role and workplace.

## Have your say



## **NHS Orkney Annual Review**

**9 November 2023, 6pm, via Teams**

Annual Reviews continue to be a key part of how NHS Boards are held to account for delivering healthcare and spending public money appropriately and following 2 years of a reduced format, due to the pandemic, are returning to the original format. This year, NHS Orkney has not been selected for a Ministerial visit, however, they have chosen to adopt the same format, with ACF, APF and patient/carer sessions ahead of the public engagement session on the evening of 9 November 2023.



The Public Session is being held on Thursday 9 November 2023 at 6pm, via MS Teams. Patients, local community, partners, and staff are welcome and encouraged to join. If you would like the link and joining instructions, please email [ork.corporateservices@nhs.scot](mailto:ork.corporateservices@nhs.scot)

Further information is available on the NHS Orkney website, link below. Documentation will also be uploaded closer to the date and the meeting will be recorded and published on the website for who are unable to attend.

<https://www.ohb.scot.nhs.uk/nhs-orkney-annual-review-2023>

## National Islands Plan - Consultation Events

**6 November, Stromness**

**7 November, Westray**

Scotland's first ever National Islands Plan was published in 2019. It is now being reviewed as required by the Islands (Scotland) Act 2018, which may lead to the publication of a new National Islands Plan. The Scottish Government has stated that it wants to work with local authorities, island communities and relevant sectors and partners to ensure this process is as thorough and effective as possible, providing them with vital feedback from those most impacted by the National Islands Plan.

The Scottish Government have arranged two consultation events in Orkney. Please click on the links to Eventbrite to book your place.

Stromness Library, 6 November 2023, 6.00pm to 8.00pm

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/national-islands-plan-review-stromness-tickets-738209563677?aff=oddttdcreator>

Westray Learning Centre, 7 November 2023, 2.30pm to 4.30pm

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/national-islands-plan-review-westray-tickets-741476525247?aff=oddttdcreator>

The purpose of the National Islands Plan (the Plan), as set out by the Islands (Scotland) Act 2018 (the Act), is "to set out the main objectives and strategy of the Scottish Ministers in relation to improving outcomes for island communities that result from, or are contributed to by, the carrying out of functions of a public nature".

The deadline for responding to the consultation is fast approaching, midnight 7 November 2023. The link below gives details on how you can have your say.

Click on the link to view the National Islands Plan - <https://www.gov.scot/publications/national-plan-scotlands-islands/>

## 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



**Species on the Edge** - Do you care about your local wildlife and want to inspire others to take action? The project is looking for young people aged 16-25 from across the Species on the Edge project areas to join the Species on the Edge Youth Panel.

Panellists will meet online to discuss issues relating to the natural environment and will be supported in developing their own local projects to help more people connect with nature. There will also be the opportunity to join a spring

residential.

<https://www.nature.scot/doc/species-edge-youth-panel>

### Trustees Week 6-10 November

As part of Trustee week VAO will be highlighting all the amazing organisations in Orkney that you could support by becoming a trustee. You might have specific skills you can offer like being well organised, good with figures or solving problems. You might have a lived experience that will ensure the right voices get heard. If you would like to chat about being a trustee or find out more about a particular role get in touch with us at VAO.

**Mind on** - Mind On supports positive mental health in Orkney. Could you help this charity do its vital work by sitting on its board? The main requirement is an ability to work cooperatively with patience, an open mind and a pragmatic approach.

<https://www.vaorkney.org.uk/volunteering/volunteering-opportunities/#/opportunity/a0g0800000SsLJFAA3/trustee?distance=10&page=2&view=widget>

**Friends of Guiding** - Empower girls to find their voice. Friends of Guiding want you to join their friendly, inclusive group who work together to ensure that the Kirkwall Guide Hall runs smoothly. There are lots of roles from practical, hands on managing the hall to helping with the figures and chairing meetings.

<https://www.vaorkney.org.uk/volunteering/volunteering-opportunities/#/opportunity/a0g0800000SsIRsAAN/committee-members-orkney?distance=10&page=1&view=widget>

**Orkney Zero Waste** - Inspire people in Orkney to live more sustainably and join Zero Waste as a board member. Harness your passion for reducing, reusing and recycling waste in order to help protect Orkney's rich natural environment and help shape an organisation with a vision you can get behind.

<https://www.vaorkney.org.uk/volunteering/volunteering-opportunities/#/opportunity/a0gQD0000003teHYAQ/board-member?distance=10&page=2&view=widget>

**Orkney Japan Association** - Work with talented and dedicated folk from Orkney and Japan, learn new things and have fun while helping build cultural connections, especially for young people in Orkney. Join the board of Orkney Japan Association as Secretary and help this organisation keep bringing people and cultures together.

<https://www.vaorkney.org.uk/volunteering/volunteering-opportunities/#/opportunity/a0gQD0000008ilRYAQ/secretary?distance=10&view=widget>

**Quoyloo Old School** - Help keep this community hub running by joining the board of Quoyloo Old School. A Treasurer is needed to oversee their accounts, an ideal volunteering role if you are numerate, a team worker with good communication skills and would like to give something back to your local community.

<https://www.vaorkney.org.uk/volunteering/volunteering-opportunities/#/opportunity/a0g0800000QhjLcAAJ/treasurer?distance=10&page=3&view=widget>

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)**