

Newsletter November 2023

Local news and services

Short film shines spotlight on the Young Person's Befriending Project

Hannah and Charis at the Young People's Befriending Project are looking for new volunteers! To find out about what it's like to volunteer with us, please watch our short film involving some of our current volunteers talking about their experience with the project. It can be found in [You Tube on the Voluntary Action Orkney channel](#).

More information about the Project is available on the [VAO website](#). If you are interested in volunteering or have any questions, please email hannah.rendall@vaorkney.org.uk



Trustees Week Celebration in Orkney

Trustees Week is always a highlight of the year at Voluntary Action Orkney, as it is a time when we celebrate the hard work, commitment and dedication of all Orkney's voluntary trustees, committee members and directors.

This year, the community development team at VAO ran a full programme of one-to-one sessions, training and development opportunities, and Clare, India and Davie would like to thank all of the trustees, potential trustees and old handers who came along to the sessions. We hope they were of benefit and make their roles feel less daunting for the year ahead!

The one-to-one sessions Clare and India held during Trustees Week were so successful, they have become a regular feature. A monthly 'surgery' session will now take place on the first Monday of each month (except January), starting with Monday 4 December between 10 and 12 noon. More information can be found in the next article.

On the back of this year's activities, there will be a focussed week of activities not just once, but twice a year in future - look out for opportunities to attend training and support sessions at our Spring Training Week from 15 to 19 April 2024 and in the usual Trustees Week slot from 4 to 8 November next year.

And once again, a very special and heartfelt thank you to all the volunteer trustees out there – without you Orkney just wouldn't be Orkney!

Social Enterprise and Charitable Organisation Sessions

Join our community development workers, Clare Gee and India Whitwell for our monthly 1:1 Social Enterprise and Charity Sessions. Choose a 30 min slot between 10am and 12pm on the first Monday of every month (except January).

If you have an idea, but are not sure how to make it happen, this session is perfect for you. Equally, if you are involved in an organisation that is already established, but you've got some queries or concerns, we can help!

Some things you could ask during your 1:1 session are:

- I have an idea, and I'm not sure if it's a social enterprise or charity.
- I need some advice surrounding my board.
- I need help with identifying funding sources.
- I need help with a funding application.
- I'm not sure how to move my organisation forward.
- I'd like help with my business plan.
- I'd like some advice around getting a building for my organisation.
- I need helping to build a suite of policies and procedures.

During this session, we can explore various topics related to social enterprise and charity, including innovative business models, sustainable practices, and effective fundraising strategies. Our expert community development workers will share their experiences and provide valuable insights to help you navigate the challenges and opportunities in this field.

To book your slot please visit our [Eventbrite page](#).

Our development workers will be in touch with your own Teams link ahead of your session. If you've got any questions or further info you'd like to supply, please email them to development@vaorkney.org.uk.

Whether you are a budding social entrepreneur, a charity enthusiast, or simply curious about making a difference, this event is perfect for you. Don't miss out on this incredible opportunity to learn, connect, and be part of the Orkney Social Enterprise and Charity community.

Free Wellness Wednesdays for 16-25s

Free Wellness Wednesday sessions will start in Kirkwall this week for young people aged 16 – 25 to help them shake off the winter blues.

Taking place each Wednesday at the Pickaquoy Centre between now and 20 December, and thanks to Mental Health Wellbeing Funding from the Scottish Government, the sessions give young people the chance to take some time out, kick back and relax, or get some valuable physical exercise - all with a listening ear nearby.

Working in partnership with the Pickaquoy Centre, the Council's Community Learning, Development and Employability team is offering free entry to the swimming pool and health suite 'chillout' sessions, use of the squash courts, and chats over a snack or a board game with youth workers in the café.

Youth Services team manager, Cheryl Rafferty, said: *"During the dark nights it's good to look after yourselves and take time out from routine to enjoy something new and some company."*

"Sessions will run from 7- 8:30pm and are free for 16-25s - just come along and register with the Youth Workers who'll be in the café ready to welcome you. All you need to do is show a Young Scot card. If you don't have one, come along with other ID and we can help you sort it out. Benefits of a Young Scot card includes free bus travel and discounts including at some supermarkets - which is a huge bonus during the cost of living crisis families and young people are experiencing."

Orkney Money Matters



Worrying about money?

If you need urgent support, you can call Orkney Citizens Advice Bureau's crisis number: **01856 875 621**

his phone number is staffed from 9:00am - 5:00pm • Monday to Friday.

You may also be eligible for a Scottish Welfare Crisis Grant. You can apply at: www.orkney.gov.uk/swf

If successful, you will receive a payment within two working days.

If you want help understanding the support available to you, Orkney Citizens Advice Bureau's Money Matters Links Workers can help.

They will make sure you are receiving any financial support you are entitled to. Also, they will connect you with other services who can help.

Email: LINKS@orkneycab.casonline.org.uk

Call: **01856 875 266**

Supported



Community Events

Creative Scotland's National Touring programme

In late September Orkney played host to My Doric Diary, a 50-minute musical that toured the Community Halls in Stenness, Flotta, Egilsay, Burray and the Cromarty Hall in St Margaret's Hope.



Creative Scotland's National Touring programme offers high quality professional touring across Scotland for free! Better than that, promoters can operate a box office (at whatever level they feel suits their communities) and keep 80% of the ticket sales. Only 20% of ticket sales goes to the Company, as most of their costs are covered by the grant they get from Creative Scotland.

Feedback from the Community Halls was very positive.

Burray: *"The performance was way above expectations and thoroughly enjoyed. The audience was small but very complimentary of the evening indeed. Hopefully if we were lucky enough to have this opportunity again, this enthusiasm will filter through to a bigger audience. Thanks again to all involved and especially the wonderful cast and crew of My Doric Diary."*

Egilsay: *"It was a beautifully put together play which was thoroughly enjoyed by all who attended. Some mentioned it was better than expected and they could have sat through more. The cast and helpers were a lovely group of people who were willing to adapt - an essential skill in the Orkney Islands. It was a great learning experience for all involved. On behalf of Egilsay Community Association, I would like to thank everybody involved for giving us an afternoon to remember and we all hope there will be more."*

Flotta: *"Over a quarter of Flotta residents enjoyed this performance, and many expressed that the performance exceeded their expectations. We hope this can be a regular event in our calendar. Thankyou."*

If you would like to host future events, please get in touch with Emma Gee, Arts Officer, Orkney Islands Council at Emma.gee@orkney.gov.uk or 01856 873535 ext 2406.

Funding & finance

Orkney Zero Waste Grant Scheme

Are you interested in Reusing, Repurposing and Recycling Orkney's waste? You can apply for a £200 grant from Orkney Zero Waste for projects associated with:

- Waste Repurposing and Reuse
- Waste Reduction
- Waste Recycling
- Travel within Orkney associated with the aims of the grant scheme
- Training within the aims of the grant
- The scheme has two grant periods each year (spring and autumn).

It is open to:

- Individuals from age 5 (supported by parent/guardian if under 18 years old):
- Community Organisations
- Schools
- Church Groups
- Charitable Groups

Find out more by visiting the [Orkney Zero Waste website](#).

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 and let us know you would like to be added to the mailing list. The latest update can be viewed on the [VAO website under help for groups](#).

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. You'll find the form in our [Volunteer Opportunities section on our website](#).

Chest Heart and Stroke Scotland - Support Chest Heart and Stroke Scotland as a Volunteer Community Connector, any time or anywhere, giving as much or as little time to the tasks as you wish. As long as you have access to a smartphone, tablet or computer you can get involved. For more information visit the [Volunteer Opportunities section of our website](#).



Access Orkney

Access Orkney - Would you like to make a difference for disabled people in Orkney? Access Orkney is a new group of volunteers who work to improve access and inclusion for disabled people in Orkney. They are looking for a volunteer notetaker for their meetings. For more information visit the [Volunteer Opportunities section of our website](#).

Orkney Nappy Library - Are you keen on reusable nappies and have the time to attend 2-3, hour-long meetings a year? Orkney Nappy Library are seeking directors as part of their move to become a formal social enterprise. For more information visit the [Volunteer Opportunities section of our website](#).



Orkney
Nappy
Library

For all volunteer enquiries contact:

Alison Sharkey - VAO Volunteer Development Worker
01856 872897 extension 311
alison.sharkey@vaorkney.org.uk
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