

Orkney Learning and Guidance Forum – update from members – November 2011

Skills Development Scotland – Joyce Slater

- <http://www.orkneycommunities.co.uk/COMMUNITYPLANNING/index.asp?pageid=926&msg=Content%20Updated>

The above report, Orkney Islands Council, Community Planning Partnership Report (June 2011) covers the following:

- School Leaver Destination Return 2009/10 Follow up results (March 2011)
 - National Training Programme Results (2010-11)
 - More Choices More Chances analysis
- OCPP Partnership Liaison Group meeting minutes of 28 March 2011 and 10 June are available on <http://www.orkneycommunities.co.uk/COMMUNITYPLANNING/index.asp?pageid=928>
 - Businesses of every size in Scotland can get help from SDS to build the skilled workforce they need in today's tough marketplace. The following programmes are available:

There is substantial support for [Modern Apprenticeships](#) (MAs), including 25,000 new ones for 2011/12.

20,000 of these are aimed at people aged 16 – 19 who have the ability to achieve a level 2 vocational qualification, or higher, or adults 20+ who are working in the Government's key economic sectors, as well as enabling sectors such as engineering and transport.

A further 5,000 places are being made available aimed at the 20 – 24 age group where long term unemployment has risen in the last two years.

Running alongside the MA programme is the [Employer Recruitment Incentive](#) (ERI) which offers businesses up to £2,000 - depending on size - to take on a Modern Apprentice or to create a new post for an unemployed person. Certain conditions apply to the ERI such as the individuals must have gone through one of SDS's pre-employment programmes, or have experienced significant barriers to work in the past.

For businesses who want to develop existing staff, support comes in the shape of [Flexible Training Opportunities](#) and the [Low Carbon Skills Fund](#). Supported by the European Social Fund, FTOs were introduced last summer to help small businesses weather the recession. Businesses with up to 150 employees can have 50% of staff training costs paid for by SDS up to a maximum of £5,000 for any one company.

The Low Carbon Skills Fund is a Scottish Government initiative aimed at encouraging businesses to access training that assists carbon reduction and energy efficiency.

Life Skills Centre – Tina Gilbey

- As a centre we have now been running the Work Programme for 4 months now, helping clients both furthest away and close to the labour market. We have been working closely with local employers to allow these clients to experience work placements in many different working environments so they can gain essential experience.
- We have had a good take up of Modern Apprenticeships in Hairdressing, Business & Administration, Accounts and Retail. Funding is still available and it is hoped these places will be filled by end of this year.
- Targeted Pathways funding has been obtained to allow 2 young people to enroll on this programme within the Retail sector. We are working in conjunction with Skills Development Scotland Kirkwall to fill these places, if anyone knows of a young person who needs advice, guidance and work experience and is in the age range of 16 to 19 and you feel would benefit from this 13 week programme then all referrals are to go to SDS, 2 Albert Street Kirkwall 872460.
- Training for Work has seen clients enrolling for qualifications such as Business & Administration, Manual Handling, Microsoft office and passing exams so well done to them. We can offer help and support to those clients that are looking to become self employed or employed but need certain qualifications before an employer will take them on.
- Job Centre Plus Support Contract offers advice, guidance and support in various ways. Clients can be referred by JCP to a 6 week course, 1 day a week where they are helped with job search, CV and letter Writing and job applications to name but a few skills. Also we have on a monthly basis specific sessions aimed at those clients that need to review their job skills, job readiness and their transferable skills to allow them to gain sustained employment.
- Our fifty/fifty shop is still going well, demand appears to be going from strength to strength and we have donated money to MacMillan and also in the process of donating to the Scottish Cot death Trust.
- We have been working with the learning link as part of our local partnership scheme to allow accessible learning for all. We have a fully functional suite of learning rooms that is wheel chair friendly and has allowed the learning link to offer additional support to one of their clients.

Orkney College – Linda Russell

- Most Further Education students undertook their induction for 2011/12 courses on the 25th of August 2011 with Higher Education student induction taking place on the 1st and 2nd of September. New courses in 2011/12 include Stepping Stones, for young people whose main barrier to learning is not knowing what they want to go onto study next and the MA in Archaeological Practice
- Courses for school pupils continued in August and included a new Skills for Work Course in Energy for 5th/6th years from Stromness Academy and Kirkwall Grammar School. KGS and SA pupils have also taken up HNC modules in Business at the College to compliment their school timetable and one pupil is undertaking a Level 1 module from Scottish Cultural Studies.
- A comprehensive programme of evening classes started in September, at both certificated and non-certificated level. New ones include Higher Human Biology, So you want to be a Councillor and Archaeology of the Highlands and Islands.
- Networking/on-line learning – plans are ongoing to make HNCs and HNDs available on a networked basis. Eventually it is hoped that more HNCs would be available at Orkney College.
- The Orkney College Awards Ceremony took place on Friday 30th September at 2pm in the Cathedral. The ceremony saw the first graduate with the BA in Childhood Practice, NPA Conservation of Masonry and the MSc Shallow Geophysics for Archaeology and Environmentalists.
- Northlink and Orkney Marine Services have jointly agreed to sponsor 20 places for young people to undertake the four mandatory pre-sea courses. Their combined contribution of £8,000 will boost the number of locally trained young people.
- UHI gained University status which means that it now has degree awarding power.
- New short course being delivered this year includes:-

One Course Fits All - this is delivered by staff from the Hospitality department and includes Customer Care, Food Hygiene and Manual Handling.

All ECDL materials have been updated using Windows 2010.

There has been increased range of periodic training for HGV and PCU drivers including First Aid for Drivers and Manual handling for Drivers.

Homemade was developed - this is a textile and craft course which enabled participants to learn new skills and produce their own unique item.

Blide Hoose (Orkney Blide Trust) - Hannah Cameron

Blide Hoose has now been running for 4 months, and was officially opened on the 6th September. This is our new service which focuses on involving members in the daily work of the Trust which is usually generated by the members who attend. The results so far have been astonishing as we have seen members beginning to demonstrate what they can do and what they can achieve.

The members in the **administration, education and employment unit** have been very busy. As a unit we are responsible for a variety of duties which include typing up minutes from meetings, looking after reception, taking calls, processing invoices, keeping statistics, publishing and distributing newsletters and lots more.

The **employment and education** components of the unit are still very fresh but we are hoping to develop these further over the coming months. We have recently started a literacy group on a Monday afternoon run at the Blide Trust by Kathy Jowett from Orkney College. Members work in a group but are each given their own individual tasks to meet their learning needs. Staff also support members who are interested in getting back into education by assisting with course and funding research, applications and arranging appropriate support that members may need while undergoing the course.

We very recently started a **job club** on a Thursday morning. Members and I get together and look at the jobs advertised in the Orcadian that week. If a member has an interest in any of the vacancies, they can be supported to fill in an application form, write a CV and a covering letter. The job club can also support members with any individual requirements they may have to look for work.

Members have been very busy in the **catering unit**, preparing and cooking food, serving in the café and doing the washing up! We also have to ensure that we comply with all Health and Safety regulations in the kitchen and in serving food. Drinks and snacks are available all day along with hot and cold filled rolls and a cooked meal at lunch time.

We do extra catering if asked and we now cater for the monthly Net Working Lunch of the Social Work Department at Orkney Islands Council. This is good for us and for the members as it provides real work, encourages work to a deadline, and allows members to meet Social Workers in a more "social" context.

The **gardening unit** has also been very busy by providing fresh produce to use for the healthy lunches that we cook in the catering unit.

Over the next 3 months we hope to attract new members to our service. We are also hoping to set up a transitional employment placement in a local business that will allow members to try out work with plentiful support from the Blide Hoose.

Orkney Library & Archive – Gary Amos

- **Bookbug**

The Scottish Book Trust Bookbug Scheme (previously Bookstart) continues to go from strength to strength with high numbers of parents and children attending sessions at the Library & Archive and other venues. In addition to this the Scottish Book Trust are now working with The Dolly Parton Foundation to deliver the Foundation's 'Imagination Library' scheme that provides all 'looked after' children under 5 with one free book every month. OIC Social Services Department will be co-ordinating the delivery of books.
- **Space2Learn Project**

The Public Library Quality Improvement Fund (Scottish Government) awarded in 2009 to the Library & Archive enabled the creation of 2 distinct learning environments within the building. In addition during 2010 and 2011 the legacy of this project has ensured that free 1-2-1 IT training has been undertaken by an ever increasing number of people. With the age profile of those undertaking training predominantly 50 + and with no or little prior experience of IT the project has demonstrated that it is helping to overcome the 3 main barriers to digital inclusion – Access, Confidence, and Inclination.
- **New Stromness Library**

The plans for the new Stromness Library and Pier Head redevelopment are nearing completion after many years of work. Close working with Malcolm Fraser Architects has resulted in plans for a spacious, modern and fit for purpose library and One-Stop-Shop facility placed at the heart of Stromness. Plans are currently going through the local planning process before matters are finalized and the work put out to tender.
- **Librarians On Loan**

September saw a visit from a team of librarians from Shetland Library as part of the Scotland's Islands funded 'Librarians on loan' project. The aim of the project is to provide both a cultural exchange in the form of events for the public in the two island groups while enabling library staff to exchange best practice and forge new ideas. The first leg here in Orkney saw a poetry night and children's events and activities while the return visit in 2012 is still being planned.
- **Revised Opening Hours**

Largely due to the effects of both budget reduction and a reduction in staffing the Orkney Library & Archive will be reducing its opening hours by 4 hours per week. This will mean the removal of 2 days late opening. The Library & Archive will be open between 9.15am and 5pm on all days except Monday and Thursday which will continue to be open until 7pm.
- **Family Learning Week**

A week of activities organised between the Childcare Partnership and the Library & Archive took place for Family Learning Week between the 30th May and 5th June. Over 200 visitors to the events enjoyed a wide variety of activities.
- **Health Visitors Clinics @ The Library & Archive**

An interesting and fruitful spin-off from Family Learning Week is that Kirkwall Health Visitors now hold their clinic for the 2 year old developmental checks at the Library & Archive. The activity has been piloted since Family Learning Week and is proving both effective and popular with both the Health Visitors and families. Families have the opportunity to use library services both before and after the clinic and the uptake of library services by families that would not perhaps normally engage with the service has been significant. The scheme looks set to continue for the foreseeable future.

Voluntary Action Orkney – Fraser Devine

Adult Befriending Service

- Very busy with 1 to 1 befriending. Matching, supporting and managing volunteers and their befriendees. Still a tremendous demand for the service.
- Linsey has been developing the Intergenerational Group Befriending, and this has been taking place at St Rognvalds House, with the residents there and some of the young people from the Connect project.
- We have a new member of staff starting within this project, (Nov) as we received funding from the Change fund.
- Group befriending continues once a month at Eunson Kloss – with difference activities themes for each month.
- In the first 6 months of the year the project has trained 9 volunteers to date & 6 to be trained starting in Nov, once the new staff members starts.

Young Person Befriending Project

- Hannah has been evaluating and reviewing the project, in time for reporting back to funders. It's always a busy time, and she uses the school holidays as it's a good time to get hold of all the young people.
- She's also been working on a press release, to promote the project and get some new volunteer for the next round of training.
- She's trained 4 new volunteers over the last quarter and is in the middle of matching them up with their young people.
- Also, organising the MADD day event to be held in early October. The volunteers and YP are filling and sending shoe boxes to Eastern Europe.

Youth Development

- Saltire promotion. A big push with the launch of the new youth volunteering programme, which is replacing the old MV award. This has been heavily promoted in schools, and had a few pictures and pieces in the paper.
- Youth Workers' Forum – continuing the good work of bringing together all the groups and organisations who work with young folk in the county.
- Brian has been supporting and working with the Charities committee at KGS, and they've been busy planning lots of fundraising events for the next few months.
- Drop ins at both KGS and SA.
- Introduction of Saltire to all secondary school years.
- Volunteering placements – lots of, after the drops in at both schools.

Supported Volunteer Project

- Lots of new supported volunteers over the last 3 months. All registered and placed. Also new volunteering opportunities secured as well.
- The project delivered 2 'events' during the summer. One - an activities day at The Picky Centre, which included a showing of the new Harry Potter Film. The second was a day trip to Westray with 7 of the supported volunteers.
- The project now supports 55 supported volunteers.

Connect Project

Lots of activities/learning opportunities over the last 3 months,

- Have taken part in two world heritage talks. One visit to Maes Howe and one visit to Happy Valley which included talk on surrounding sites such as Ring of Brodgar and Standing Stones of Stenness.
- 5 young people receive the new SALTIRE Awards for volunteering.
- As part of the continued recycling project the young people are involved with, they decided to visit "SteptOZ's Yard" in Stromness.
- 2 young people from the project have taken part in the 2 week sail challenge on the tall ships.
- 3 young people who completed the Intergenerational Befriending Training with Linsey Drever have completed their induction at St Rognvalds House and have taken part in two sessions with residents.

- Young people have taken part in session to look at healthy eating.
- Young people have now completed all the recipes and animations for Generations Growing Together cook book. Launched 11th Nov at Eunson Kloss! – going to be a highly sought after Xmas present I think! All proceeds going to support the Intergenerational work at Eunson Kloss and other establishments.
- Young people have continued to work with Kay Hume SDS developing a DVD highlighting the importance of good interview techniques.
- Manning a stall on Dounby Show day. Young people managed to raise £236 for Generations Growing Together.
- Young people have started to redecorate the entrance and stairway to Connect.
- Young people have enjoyed two trips with the local rangers, one to the Ness of Brodgar and one to Birsay looking at rock pools.
- Young people have continued to tend to vegetable plot at Blide.
- 4 young people travelled to Edinburgh to take part in the Festival of Politics in the Scottish Parliament Buildings. Young people travelled by plane to the event and had a really good day. Young people were responsible for setting up a stall in the market place that depicted what The Connect Project does. This gave the YP a fantastic opportunity to discuss the Connect Project with others as well as look at other project from all over Scotland.
- Young people took part in four events during Orkney Science Festival.
- Young people took part in a guided tour around a tall ship.
- All young people travelled to Hoy and completed a walk to the Old Man of Hoy.

Two of the young people have moved into employment.

Volunteering

- General volunteering very busy before and after the summer holidays, quieter during.
- VAO is part of a pilot group, for a new project called MILO. This is a project which maps the third sector in each local authority area. This will give a detailed picture of the third sector in each area, and form part of a national data base.
- Working with the national Saltire pilot group, to launch and trial the new Saltire Awards. We're just coming into the evaluation period. The award will be launch nationally in April 2012.
- Working on funding applications for the Supported Volunteering project and the YP befriending project.
- VAO stall/stand/tent at Dounby Show. First time we'd tried going to a 'show', and it was good to have a presence at one of the shows.
- Several enquiries from groups re PVG Scheme.
- Met the new staff from SCIP – Scottish Centre for Intergenerational Practices, as there are new key people at the top there now. Possibly some IG training/events in the New Year! They visited us last month.
- Have 3 groups currently interested in working towards VAO's Quality Volunteering Award, one started, one to start in the New Year and one just initial enquiry.

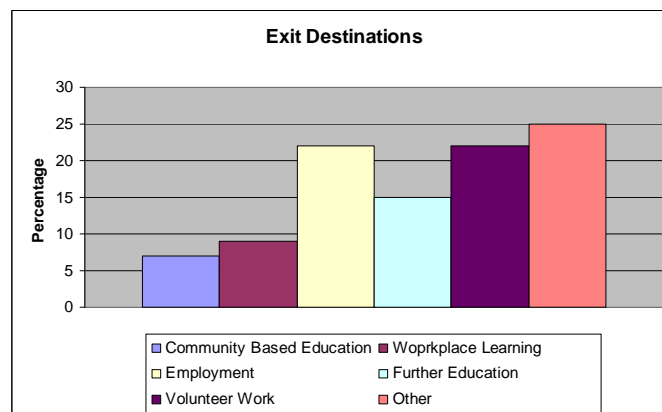
Development Work

- Training sessions delivered or facilitated in the last 6 months have included, Roles and Responsibilities of Charity Trustees, First Aid via Red Cross, PQASSO implementer training, Speak Up Speak Out (public speaking training), over 2 days, SCIO (New legal structure), Social Media information session and Treasurer's training.
- Annual Community Halls meeting, jointly organised with OIC CLD happened in May in Rendall. Good turn out of over 20 representatives from 11 halls and associations receiving information on licensing, insurance, renewable energy, a new quality system for village halls and the SCIO.
- 2 window displays highlighting the work done in the county by the adult and child protection committees and the training resources available for voluntary groups held in VAO's window during May and August.
- 5 organisations assisted to complete their annual accounts and, if a registered charity, their return to OSCR. Accounts also independently examined.

- 8 groups who received funding assistance received funding through their applications to funders.
- Website, Facebook and training emails used as a method of transmitting relevant information to members on a regular basis.

The Learning Link – Pattie Hartley

- It has been a busy year here at The Learning Link. In April we received an “excellent” for the work we do with adult learners from Her Majesty’s Inspectors of education. We were also commended for our work with volunteer tutors and our accredited training course.
- Over the year we have taught 75 adult learners and currently have 12 volunteer tutors working with students.
- There are seven people undertaking our volunteer tutor training and they will complete the course and be paired with students early in the new year.
- Collating our annual statistical information has shown where our adult students go on completing their work with us.



- We continue to run four ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) classes – two evening classes, one in Kirkwall and one in Stromness as well as two afternoon classes in Kirkwall. Combined with this we organised one-to-one sessions with migrant workers unable to attend our group classes because of work commitments.
- Our specialist ICT classes continue to attract some of our slightly older learners, who are introduced to a whole new world of social networking, emails and the internet. Many of these students are enjoying keeping in touch with friends, children and grandchildren using this medium.
- Our adult learners continue to astound us with their dedication, commitment and enthusiasm for learning and their stories can be found in the latest edition of our newsletter, *Newslink*. Please contact Pattie on 879200 or email patricia.hartley@thelearninglink.org.uk for your copy.
- Another note of interest is the growing number of young people heading through our door, interested in achieving a myriad of skills.