

Volunteer Centre Western Isles

Newsletter



Volunteer Centre Western Isles and Third Sector Hebrides rewarded for Committing to Excellence

Volunteer Centre Western Isles and Third Sector Hebrides are both celebrating their recent achievements of "Committed to Excellence" status, having successfully participated in the Big Lottery funded Supporting Voluntary Action (SVA) Quality Matters project.



Anne Sobey TSH, Emma Campbell Researcher VCWI, Terri Davies Manager VCWI and Alasdair Nicholson CEO TSH

This internationally recognised award, presented by Quality Scotland, marks both organisations commitment to continuous improvement, which they demonstrated by carrying out an in-depth assessment of every aspect of their organisation and identifying and implementing key areas for improvement.

Alasdair Nicholson, Chief Executive of TSH said "Quality improvement is not the efforts of one person at any moment but the combined efforts of every individual and the whole team across our various community companies on a continuing basis."

Terri Davies, Joint Manager of the Volunteer Centre Western Isles echoed the sentiments of Alasdair Nicholson. "This award recognises the commitment of all our staff and board members to the continuing development of the Volunteer Centre and we were thrilled to hear the Volunteer Centre Western Isles is the first independent Volunteer Centre in Scotland to achieve the Committed to Excellence Award."

Roy Macphail, Development Worker for the Volunteer Centre Western Isles added "It was interesting applying the framework to our work supporting volunteering. It is important to us that the volunteers in our communities receive the best kind of support possible and the EFQM Framework helps us to do that."

Paul White, Director of Networks at SCVO and Chair of the SVA Management Group commented: This award represents a clear commitment from Volunteer Centre Western Isles and Third Sector Hebrides to strive for excellence and improve the services they provide to front-line voluntary organisations. The commitment made by the staff and management boards of the two organisations should not be underestimated and they should be justly proud of what they have achieved."



Peter Inger with the specially created donation box

THINKING OUTSIDE THE BOX

From my vantage point in the **Volunteer Centre**, I am privileged to see a wide variety of volunteer contributions from the Butt to Barvas. Our communities rely heavily on an individual's response to an expressed need.

Members of the **Ness Hall Committee** met at the beginning of January to formulate plans for 2011. This included a major focus on fund raising to cover costs for a phased renovation programme for the building. Peter Inger offered to make a special box for donations, to be used at forthcoming events.

Within three weeks he had delivered his promise. Using a piece of sheet metal, Peter designed a box with a special closing mechanism and a brass plaque to say all donations will be used for the hall restoration fund.

Every organisation consists of individuals with public and private areas of expertise. The best of our organisations create a forum where the dialogue is open and the debate is honest. Out of that debate, needs and aspirations can be rationalised. Initiatives can be identified and strategies formed. However, achievement is only possible when these strategies are adopted and pursued to a satisfactory conclusion by individuals.

Individual champions, like Peter, see an opening for their skills and offer a unique service that becomes a significant step in the momentum of progress and inspires those around them to greater endeavour.

Thoughts to ponder:

Leaders of organisations—do you know the public and private expertise of your members? It's your job to maximise their potential in pursuit of your organisation's development.

Members of organisations—are you tired of a passive role? Encourage the leaders of your organisation to be more dynamic and pro-active in utilising the skills at their disposal.

What are your organisational objectives for 2011? What skills are required to achieve them? Are these skills inside or outside your organisation?

If you wish to be an effective organisation, you will seek the answer to these questions and actively engage, at all levels, in their pursuit.

Co-Cheangal Innse Gall

Co-Cheangal Innse Gall—New website for Western Isles Third Sector goes live

In our last newsletter we were pleased to be able to announce the signing of a new partnership agreement between VCWI, VH, OHSEP, HVS and VABV to create Co-Cheangal Innse Gall.

Since then we have been working hard, delivering our services as usual whilst behind the scenes meeting regularly with each other in an attempt to provide a more joined up service to voluntary groups, volunteers and social enterprises.

Our first piece of joint work as a partnership was the development of a single website and we are pleased to announce that the website is now up and running.

Please take a moment to visit it at: www.c-cig.org.uk



European Year of Volunteering in 2011

More than 100 million Europeans engage in voluntary activities and through this make a difference to our society. A Eurobarometer survey in 2006 revealed that 3 out of 10 Europeans claim to be active in a voluntary capacity and that close to 80% of respondents feel that voluntary activities are an important part of democratic life in Europe. There is a vast array of notions, definitions and traditions concerning volunteering. However, what is common throughout Europe is that wherever people engage together in activities both society as a whole and the individual volunteers benefit and social cohesion is significantly strengthened.



European Year of Volunteering 2011

2011 will celebrate the 10th anniversary of the UN International Year of Volunteers (IYV): IYV 2001 demonstrated that high-level public attention for volunteers and their contribution to society leads to governments and other stakeholders committing to joint action. While the EU has increasingly paid attention to volunteering in all its forms over recent years, we are still far from a comprehensive strategy and action at the European level to promote, recognize, facilitate and support volunteering in order to realize its full potential.

A new European Alliance website has been established - www.eyv2011.eu/ - with opportunities to find out what is happening elsewhere in Europe, to download and use logos, and to post your own events. The EYV Alliance is an open, informal group of a growing number of European networks active in volunteering and will use EYV 2011 to say: **"THANK YOU"**: Celebrating and recognising the efforts and contribution of volunteers and volunteering organisations. **"YOU CAN"**: Empowering, promoting and facilitating new people to volunteer.

Locally, the VCWI hopes that all volunteer-involving organisations will take the chance to make the most of EYV and mark it in some form, even simply by using the EYV logo during the year: we can send it out to any organisation that requests it. The VC itself is about to start collecting the stories of volunteers who either come from elsewhere in Europe to volunteer here in the islands, or have gone to another European country to volunteer. If you know of anyone who fits these categories, please get in touch with the VC - we would love to hear those stories!

2011 European Year of Volunteering—Funding available for your events

To help celebrate EYV, the Voluntary Action Fund (VAF) with funding from the Scottish Government, is dedicating small grants to promote and celebrate the work of volunteers in Scotland. Grants will be awarded for activities that clearly contribute to:

- Increasing the number of people engaged in volunteering
- Increasing the diversity of volunteers especially those from disadvantaged groups
- Volunteers feeling valued and supported

The grant is open to community groups and voluntary organisations with an annual income below £250,000; however groups with an income below £100,000 will be considered a priority.

It is expected that the majority of grants made will be around £500; although grants of up to £1,000 may be awarded for exceptional projects.

Applications will be considered twice a year and should be submitted by 15 April 2011, 15 September 2011.

Groups wishing to apply for a European Year of Volunteering small grant can download the application form and guidance notes from the VAF website at www.voluntaryactionfund.org.uk. Alternatively contact Patricia at the Voluntary Action Fund, either by telephone on 01383 620780 or by e-mail at Patricia.McKibben@voluntaryactionfund.org.uk.





The Army Cadet Force (ACF) is a Youth Organisation that trains young people between the ages of 12-18yrs, Life skills, Independence and Teamwork—through various activities including First Aid, Military Skills, Expeditions and DoE. We have Detachments in Barvas, Harris, Stornoway, Back and Uist. Our numbers are increasing so we are looking for Adult Volunteers who would like to gain



the same skills and become Adult Instructors. Previous experience is not necessary as full training will be given. We train one night of the week and four weekends in Uist over the year as well as a fortnight camp in the summer. An allocation of 28 paid training days is given for weekend training and camp attendance. If you are interested please contact in the first instance Mr Dane Millar Tel/fax 01851702562 or e-mail: caawesternisles@1highlanders.co.uk

DWP Staff Volunteering Programme

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) has an employee volunteering programme which gives staff the opportunity to work for a day (or possibly more) with voluntary organisations across Scotland that have links to the Department and its customers.

The scheme is for all staff in the Department who want to learn more about their customers, make a real difference on behalf of charities and voluntary groups, or get involved in volunteering but aren't sure how to do it. They have 10,000 staff days to offer - could your charity or voluntary community organisation benefit from DWP volunteers' support? If so they would like to work with you. Placements have included staff working as assistants in day centres, hospices, charity shops, cafes, with carers' organisations, at homeless shelters and in major community projects such as the renovation of gardens and communal areas.

Whilst many staff volunteer for placements individually, there are often also opportunities to volunteer as a team with other groups of DWP Staff. Interested? Want to find out more? To find out more contact: Jean McAllister DWP Volunteer Manager for Scotland - Tel: 07920 768 476 Email: Jean.McAllister@dwp.gsi.gov.uk

News from OSCR

The Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO) is a new legal form designed specifically for Scottish charities which is expected to be available from April 2011. SCIOs are intended to help charities enjoy the benefits of incorporation, including limited liability and legal personality, without being subject to the dual regulation charitable companies currently face. For more information contact: **Lorna Edwards Development Manager** Tel: 01382 346844 (direct dial) Email: lorna.edwards@oscr.org.uk Web: www.oscr.org.uk

The Scottish Centre for Intergenerational Practice has released a new publications

An Introduction to the Protection of Vulnerable Groups Scheme explains the Protection for Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Scheme that the Scottish Government will introduce in February. It gives an overview of the new scheme, explains some of the terminology used, clarifies who needs to join the scheme and gives information about how to join and fees. The new system came into operation on 28 February 2011. http://www.scotcip.org.uk/SCIP_publications.html

A warm welcome to the newest Volunteer Centre member of staff.

Emma Campbell has been recruited to take up a researcher post based in the Stornoway office. On a six month placement with us through the Future Jobs Fund Emma will be calling, emailing and visiting groups and volunteers all over the islands to gather your stories and capture real life photos of volunteering over the next few months.

We are really grateful to the future jobs fund for giving us the opportunity to employ Emma in this new and exciting role. Emma is pictured with Terri on the front page of the newsletter.

